

1254055

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation and is registered to provide care for up to four children.

The home's ethos of care is one of immediate acceptance and empathy, irrespective of a child's circumstances. The home is flexible and responds to each child's unique set of needs.

There is a registered manager in post. She registered with Ofsted in June 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 28 May 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/05/2019	Full	Outstanding
08/05/2018	Full	Outstanding
08/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
30/10/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, four children were living at the home. Children are supported to move into and out of the home in a planned way, and said that, on arrival at the home, they had felt welcomed and safe.

Prior to moving into the home, children can meet with the staff team and other children living in the home. This helps to ease any anxieties that children may have. Although managers ensure that the child's needs are captured in their moving-in plan, this does not consistently consider the needs of other children and the skills of staff. However, this shortfall has not affected children.

All children said that they like living at the home. They said, 'I like it here and get to go out with my friends in the park', 'I wouldn't change anything about this home, it's good', 'I have lived here for the longest. I like it. The staff are good, my bedroom is great and staff listen and help me' and 'I love walking the dog and going to the park.'

Children enjoy positive relationships with staff. Staff were observed to provide care in a calm and nurturing manner. This helps children to develop trust. They feel assured that the adults caring for them will meet their needs. Children enjoy spending time with staff. They were observed to seek adult attention in positive ways.

Children's health and well-being are promoted well by staff. Staff ensure that healthcare plans identify children's individual needs. Statutory health assessments have been completed, and children are supported to attend medical appointments as required. The home's therapist visits regularly and works with each child individually. This promotes children's mental health and emotional well-being.

Most children were not in full-time education before they came to the home. All children are now in education and training and are supported to attend daily. This promotes their academic progress and gives them opportunities to make friends and learn social skills.

Staff support children to spend meaningful time with their families and friends. Children are supported to manage any difficulties they may have with their family relationships. This helps children to manage family dynamics and ensures that they maintain good-quality relationships with people who are important to them.

The home and garden are not always maintained to a high standard. Children's bedrooms require maintenance to ensure that children live in a clean, warm space, and remedial work is required throughout the home environment. The rear garden had a significant amount of cigarette stubs strewn across the ground. Locks on some communal doors restrict children's access to all shared areas of their home.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Children confirmed that they feel safe in the home. Direct-work sessions have been completed with children to help them understand how to keep safe when out in the community. Throughout national lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff helped children understand why they needed to listen to government guidance and not go out of the home. Despite this work, some children struggled and still left the home. However, staff were proportionate in their responses and followed strict measures when children returned to ensure the safety of everyone.

Children have individualised plans that identify risks to their safety and well-being and provide guidance for staff on how to manage these risks. However, some of the plans lack clarity and contain inconsistent information. This can lead to confusion for staff who do not always work in the home.

Restrictive physical intervention is used only as a last resort. Records show that staff use a range of de-escalation techniques as described in children's positive behaviour support plans. This helps children to manage their behaviour and avoid potential physical interventions.

When children go missing from the home, staff take immediate action to locate them and report the episode of going missing from home to all relevant safeguarding professionals. This ensures a multi-agency response. Children are welcomed back to the home and staff prioritise their safety and well-being before having discussions about the risks children may face when visiting unsafe areas.

Positive-behaviour support is consistently promoted in the home. Sanctions are proportionate, although the registered manager's oversight of all incidents is not consistent. This is a recording issue and has not affected decisions made by staff to help children manage their emotions and behaviour.

Medication is administered in line with children's prescriptions, and records are well maintained. When errors in recording are evident, discussions take place with staff about expectations and responsibilities.

Safer-recruitment processes are not consistently followed, and not all required information is obtained to demonstrate that safer-recruitment processes have been adhered to.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The current manager has been registered with Ofsted since June 2021. She understands the needs of the children. She is supported by a committed deputy manager. Staff said that they feel supported and listened to, and that communication with the management team is good.

Management monitoring of all records completed by staff requires improvement. The quality and content of children's daily records are variable. In addition, the registered manager has not ensured that the formal register detailing the nature and type of establishment children are moving from and to is complete. This absence of detail means robust tracking of admissions and discharges in line with regulatory requirements is not met.

Staff receive supervision that is focused on the needs of children. However, the recording of the sessions is variable. The registered manager accepted the shortfalls in recording and identified how oversight by managers could be improved.

The staff team has access to a broad range of training and development opportunities. Staff embrace these opportunities, and they are positive about the training available. The recording and updating of training records need to be improved to ensure that staff have their developmental and training needs met.

Internal and external monitoring systems require improvement. An independent visitor conducts visits monthly. However, the independent visitor has not reviewed the environment, including the garden, to identify all risks, hazards and access restrictions. Their report does not provide a robust evaluation of practice in the home. This is not supporting the registered manager to understand the deficits in recording in the home and the immediate improvements required to the environment.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(d))</p>	30 April 2022
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(h))</p>	30 April 2022

<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(d))</p>	<p>30 April 2022</p>
<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4: and</p> <p>ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that information in relation to all admissions to and discharges from the home are recorded.</p>	<p>30 April 2022</p>
<p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and</p> <p>the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the independent visitor should review the environment, including the garden, and identify any risks, hazards and access restrictions. The report should provide a clear statement of opinion and provide robust evaluation of practice in the home.</p>	<p>30 April 2022</p>

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the social care common inspection framework. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1254055

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Limited

Registered provider address: Sandcastle Care Ltd, 49 Whitegate Drive, Blackpool
FY3 9DG

Responsible individual: Andrew Rourke

Registered manager: Natalie McGarry

Inspectors

Michelle Edge, Social Care Inspection Manager
Julia Toller, Social Care Inspection Manager

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