

1255520

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and run and is registered to provide care for up to two children of the same gender.

The manager was 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 SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 2 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 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: 12 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/02/2020	Full	Good
20/11/2018	Full	Good
14/11/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children experience nurturing care that enables them to begin to overcome previous life trauma and develop emotional resilience. The relationships that staff establish with children are a particular strength of the home.

Over time, children learn to trust staff and develop a sense of belonging. One child described the staff at the home as her family. Another child felt that staff had enabled her to 'get to where she is now'.

Children feel valued by the staff. One child commented: 'They have taught me how good life can be.'

Children are offered lots of activities that are both fun and rewarding. Activities include visits to beaches and zoos and walks in national parks. Staff make good use of this time spent with children to strengthen relationships and enable children to talk about matters that are important to them.

Children who have moved in and those who have moved on from the home have done so in a planned way. One child who has recently moved into the home was given the opportunity to visit and meet the staff prior to moving in. Another child, however, did not benefit from having an up-to-date pathway plan prior to leaving. It was not clear what future services had been committed to support this move.

A child new to the home expressed frustration at the lack of progress in finding a tutor to enable her to sit imminent exams. Although staff had made enquiries about this with the local authority, they did not take the initiative to ring the company directly.

Staff are sensitive and supportive of children's identity and family relationships. Through the advice and support from staff, children are enabled to successfully sustain relationships that are important to them.

Children are supported to develop the skills and knowledge they will need in adulthood. However, there is no clear means of assessing a child's strengths or areas of need before they move on from the home. It is not clear from staff records what children have learned and accomplished, or whether there are outstanding needs.

Staff encourage children to develop aspirations and value paid employment. For example, one child successfully worked full time over the summer months. This experience gave her a sense of accomplishment and pride in her abilities. She commented: 'Staff gave me the support for me to be able to do it.'

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

Children become safer through living at the home. Staff offer ongoing advice and support to enable children to make more positive choices. As a result, over time, incidents of children going missing from home have decreased.

Children and social workers consider that key to this success has been how staff work with children. Staff balance and recognise children's needs for growing independence alongside boundaries that need to be maintained. One child said: 'They have maintained me on a steady path.'

When incidents of children going missing from home do occur, staff are proactive in trying to stay in contact with children and securing their safe return to the home. Staff understand children's histories and vulnerabilities well.

Children feel emotionally supported by the staff. They feel safe at the home and that staff care about them. This support offered to children is further complemented by children having ready access to therapeutic input.

Some actions from strategy meetings, however, have not resulted in clear plans. For example, although a recommendation from the social worker was to work in line with a safety plan, this was not subsequently developed by the manager or staff. Consequently, there was no clear guidance given to staff as to the details of the checks to be completed. As a result, records completed by staff are not sufficiently detailed.

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

The manager is enthusiastic and creates a learning culture within the home. Staff feel supported by the manager and say the support they receive enables them to fulfil their roles.

The manager understands the children well and leads from the front. One child said of the manager: '[Name] has always been by my side; he has always fought for me. He knows what he is doing.'

The manager provides clear leadership and motivates staff to work as a team. He provides regular supervision, is present in the home and accessible to staff and children. Staff have access to a range of training and readily available support from the home's psychologist.

There are suitable systems in place to assist the manager in monitoring the care that children receive. Plans are developed in the home that cover important aspects of children's lives. However, these plans do not clearly identify goals or how these will be measured and reviewed for progress.

Following a strategy meeting, the manager has not ensured that a clear plan was developed for staff to follow. On another occasion, when a strategy meeting had been requested by the manager, it is not clear why this did not take place, and it was not followed up with the local authority.

Although the manager has asked the local authority when a child's tutoring is due to start, this has not been successfully challenged, nor pursued with the education providers directly.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 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>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>This particularly relates to ensuring actions formulated as the result of strategy meetings, such as the creation of safety plans, are followed through and implemented by staff. Also, that staff actions, when following such plans, are clearly recorded.</p>	30 April 2022
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry.</p> <p>(Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))</p> <p>This particularly relates to ensuring that children have up-to-date pathway plans.</p>	30 April 2022
<p>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p>	30 April 2022

<p>if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5(c))</p> <p>This particularly relates to ensuring that educational services to children are delivered in a timely way. Also, that requests for strategy meetings receive a response from the local authority.</p>	
<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 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>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f))</p> <p>This particularly relates to developing the home's placement plans to be specific and measurable, and that they are reviewed. Also, that children are clearly assessed for their readiness for independence and those assessments are used by staff to guide their work with children.</p>	<p>31 May 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: 1255520

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Steven Lambert

Registered manager: Robert Sellers

Inspector

Pauline Yates, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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