

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 no registered manager in post.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 December 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: Inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Following the previous inspection, a case review was held, and two compliance notices were issued under section 22a of the Care Standards Act 2000. These relate to regulation 12 (the protection of children standard) and regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard). These were monitored as part of this inspection and the provider had taken sufficient action to meet the notices.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/10/2022	Full	Inadequate
01/03/2022	Full	Good
28/05/2019	Full	Outstanding
08/05/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home and another child has moved in. The transition planning for each child was individualised and adapted throughout the process to ensure that each child's views, wishes and feelings were considered. Social workers said, 'Staff went over and above to make sure that the move was well planned,' and 'The plan was changed to ensure that it was right for [name of child].'

The children spent time talking to the inspector about their progress and experiences and expressed their positive view of living in the home. Most children have lived in the home for a long time, and positive relationships were observed with staff. There was laughter in the home, and children and staff were observed enjoying activities together and making plans for the Christmas period.

All the children talked about the positive changes that the responsible individual had introduced into the home since the last inspection. They talked positively about the newly introduced routines and boundaries, including new, age-appropriate bedtimes.

The children are in education, training and employment. They have made progress at their individual provisions. Education records now include the progress that children have made and the targets they are working towards. During the inspection, children sought out staff after education to talk about how their day had been. Staff provided appropriate advice and support to encourage children's learning and development.

Progress is recorded and evident in all aspects of children's health because staff are now well informed about their needs. Consequently, children are physically fit, and their general health is regularly reviewed. Staff ensure that children's emotional well-being is thoroughly addressed. They work closely with the company's therapists to ensure that children are receiving the right levels of support to improve their emotional well-being.

Children are supported and encouraged to maintain and develop time with their families and friends, in accordance with their care plans and placement plans. The staff are proactive in their approach and have helped, in some cases, to rebuild relationships with family members. For example, one social worker commented that, 'The staff team works hard with mum to help her understand the importance of setting appropriate boundaries. Family time has improved and the quality is much better.'

The responsible individual and staff have taken steps to ensure that the home is clean, warm and homely for children. This has made it a more welcoming living environment for children. However, children's bedrooms still require attention. The responsible individual confirmed that this work is planned for January 2023.

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

Since the last inspection, immediate action was taken to ensure that an allegation made by a child was reported and recorded appropriately. Training has been provided for all staff on how to deal with allegations. Staff were confident in the processes in place and how to deal with a whistle-blowing concern.

The responsible individual and staff have ensured that all risk assessments are now up to date and include all known risks. The risk assessments include strategies that staff are expected to follow to reduce all known risks for each child. Review dates are in place, although staff are now using the risk assessments as live documents, updating them as incidents occur.

A review of all recent safeguarding concerns has taken place. Appropriate strategies are now in place to ensure that internet access is safely managed. Daily monitoring systems have been introduced, and all staff have access to children's passwords. The staff have completed direct-work sessions with all the children. This work addresses numerous areas to help the children stay safe. For example, it covers internet safety, community safety and substance misuse.

Since the last inspection, there has only been one missing-from-home incident. This was appropriately and safely managed by staff. This demonstrates that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping the child safe. Furthermore, since the previous inspection, staff have had safeguarding training, including topics such as missing from home and exploitation. Staff told the inspector that this was helpful. This training has helped staff fulfil their roles.

Since the last inspection, medication procedures have been reviewed. Recording is detailed and includes all relevant information. A weekly audit has now been introduced for managers. This will ensure that errors are quickly identified and rectified. Staff have received medication refresher training and are clear on the expectations regarding the safe administration and recording of medication.

Negative behaviour displayed by children is addressed by the staff team using a restorative approach. This approach encourages children to reflect on any concerning behaviours and take responsibility for their actions while also gaining an understanding of the impact of their behaviours on others. Consequences are now age-appropriate and recorded with clear management oversight. There have been no physical interventions since the last inspection. However, work has been completed with all staff about the procedures in place and how any incidents should be recorded and reported.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been a period of change since the last inspection. The registered manager in post at the time of the last inspection is no longer employed by the

organisation. The responsible individual has offered consistent managerial oversight during this time.

A new manager has been recruited to work in the home. He has relevant experience and has spent individual time with the children, the responsible individual and the staff team. He has reviewed the audit plan for the home to understand the strengths and further areas for development in the home.

Leaders have taken action to address the shortfalls identified at the previous inspection. Rotas are now clear and include all relevant information, including the hours that managers work. All staff have received relevant training, and a new monitoring system is in place to ensure that training remains current and supports staff in meeting children's needs. Team meetings have been held, and all staff have received reflective supervision to support them in their roles. Children's key documentation has been updated, and missing information from the placing authorities is now in place.

Children and staff spoke about the improvements in the home since the last inspection, such as changes to bedtimes for children and staff working more consistently as a team. Staff like working in the home and feel well supported in their roles by the current management team. They report that they feel more empowered in their roles and are listened to. Staff said, 'There are now clear management structures, the paperwork has improved and a much higher standard of work is expected,' and 'I feel everybody has worked extremely hard since the last inspection and really pulled together. The children are all thriving. This is a great family environment for the children and the staff team.'

Professionals are extremely positive about the how the home is contributing to children's progress and how well the staff communicate with them. Professionals reported that, 'Staff communicate well and provide consistent updates,' and 'I receive weekly updates, which cover the child's engagement, routines and behaviours around the home.'

Internal monitoring of the home is now more robust and supports the manager's understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the home. However, external monitoring of the home still does not provide a robust evaluation of practice in the home.

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 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 ensure that the report provides a clear statement of opinion and robust evaluation of practice in the home.</p>	24 January 2022

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: 49 Whitegate Drive, Blackpool FY3 9DG

Responsible individual: Andrew Rourke

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Michelle Edge, Senior His Majesty's Inspector

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