

# 1262657

Registered provider: Sandcastle Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home may provide care and accommodation for single gender occupancy only.

**Inspection dates:** 11 to 12 December 2018

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 6 February 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/02/2018	Full	Good

## 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 children’s views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>develop positive relationships with them;</p> <p>engage with them; and</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children’s care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that each child—</p> <p>is enabled to provide feedback to, and raise issues with, a relevant person about the support and services that the child receives. (Regulation 7(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(b)(i))</p>	<p>31/01/2019</p>

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people make exceptional progress in all areas from their starting points. This is attributable to the strong positive relationships that staff form with young people. Young people believe that staff care about them, and staff actions and their evident dedication to young people support this. Young people are fully invested in their placement and fully engage with their plans. They understand what is required of them to progress their plans and are highly motivated to achieve this.

Staff go to great lengths to promote family contact for young people. An example of this

is staff travelling a significant distance each day to support a young person with home contact, due to his mother having to be at work. This allowed the young person to have an extended contact period, which went very well and contributed to a plan being put in place for him to be rehabilitated home. Another example is when a young person was distressed about being in care for the first time at Christmas. As she was not allowed to visit her family home, staff at the home have arranged for her family to come to the home on Christmas Day to spend Christmas together there. This includes collecting and transporting the large family to the home on Christmas Day.

Young people have improved attendance at education. Even when their school is a significant distance from the home they arrive punctually and in a good frame of mind to attend to their studies. Both young people's schools report that relationships between themselves and the home are extremely positive and that communication is regular and effective.

Young people access the therapeutic support that is offered to them weekly. Staff are keen to learn about therapeutic care and put this into practice. They have strong links with the therapist who provides them with training and support for each individual child. One young person is particularly well engaged in therapy and has felt sufficiently safe with the therapist to discuss significant personal issues around gender identity. The therapy is rooted in research, which informs the practice of both the therapist and staff team.

One young person is transgender and has started to make the transition while in the care of the home. Although staff were not experienced or knowledgeable in this area, they have gone to extensive lengths to support and help her express and feel comfortable with her gender identity. They have also sourced specialist training to improve their understanding of the issues. The young person feels completely comfortable in expressing her identity and staff advocate for and champion her, which evidences their support, genuine acceptance and understanding of her feelings. The young person is supported to access lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups locally and has attended two Pride events. One professional described the home in superlative terms: 'It is a truly amazing home, especially in how they have supported (X) regarding her gender identity. They are friendly and caring and go out of their way for her.'

Young people report that they feel cared about and that they have close relationships with staff. They believe that staff listen to them, want the best for them and will advocate on their behalf. One young person scored the home 11 out of 10 for how much she liked living there and how well she was looked after. Parents similarly feel that the staff are doing an exceptionally good job in caring for their children. One parent commented, 'I have seen a vast improvement in (X). It has been a positive move for her. She is a lot calmer and has strategies to manage her anger which work. The staff are great, she is safe and well cared for. I can't thank them enough.'

## **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

Young people at the home are settled and display very few risk-taking behaviours. This shows excellent progress from their starting points, where both showed significant risks in some areas. Young people report that they feel safe, that staff keep them safe and that their risks have reduced since they were initially placed. Both young people have made remarkable progress in improving their ability to regulate their emotions, and because of this they do not get to a heightened state where they become a risk both to themselves and others.

External agencies consulted as part of this inspection spoke in highly positive terms about how well young people's risks have reduced over the course of their placements, and of how well the staff safeguard them. The home involves specific external agencies as appropriate. For example, one young person has regular support from independent sexual violence advisers. Another young person has completed a youth offending order. He has not committed any further offences and as a result has been allowed to have both free time and internet access, which shows a huge progression for him in risk reduction.

Risks for young people are understood and recorded. Their risk assessments identify specific actions for staff to manage and reduce their risks. Staff are highly vigilant and work hard to ensure young people's safety. The close and trusting relationships between staff and young people allow the young people to share their worries and concerns with staff, and this contributes to young people's feelings of safety and resultant reduction in risk-taking behaviours. Staff focus on praising and rewarding positive behaviour, which motivates young people to respect rules and boundaries and keep themselves safe.

Since the last full inspection there have been no incidents of missing from home, drug or alcohol misuse, restrictive physical intervention or police involvement due to criminality. Additionally there have been no significant incidents of damage to the home, something that was evident at the home's last inspection.

Previously the match of young people in the home resulted in them becoming involved in negative behaviour together. The most recent addition has been well matched to the other young person and their risk areas do not have an impact on one another in any way.

Young people benefit from living in a safe environment where health and safety is given a high priority. Safer recruitment practice ensures that adults employed to work at the home do not pose a risk to young people.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The home is led by a strong and focused manager, who ensures that young people are provided with a nurturing environment and that staff are provided with support and development opportunities. Staff spoke highly of the management ethos and the support

and supervision available to them. Parents and external agencies also spoke in extremely positive terms of how well the home is managed.

The manager has very good knowledge of each young person and can clearly articulate the progress they have made since they were placed in the home. He fully understands the local authority plan for each young person and ensures that young people are supported to work towards their goals. Where they are making good progress towards their plan but the placing authority is slow in taking action on the plan he advocates on the young person's behalf.

There is a thorough induction process in place for new staff and an extensive ongoing training package for staff who are employed to work in the home. External training that is specific to the young people is sourced appropriately.

Good internal and external monitoring systems are in place, although the one recommendation made at this inspection relates to the independent visitor ensuring that he engages with young people to gather their views about their care, which would further enhance the quality of the reports.

Files and records in the home are well organised, and local authority documents are chased if they are not provided by the social workers within a reasonable timescale. Records are clear but some could be more in-depth to better evidence the outstanding service that the young people are provided with.

Relationships with external agencies are excellent. Staff were observed to be in constant contact with other professionals throughout the inspection. Feedback gathered by the manager and by the inspector is consistently very positive in respect of the safety, progress, experiences and the home environment provided for young people.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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:** 1262657

**Provision sub-type:** children's home

**Registered provider:** Sandcastle Care Ltd

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

**Responsible individual:** Joann Snelson

**Registered manager:** Leon James

## Inspector

Charlie Bamber, social care inspector

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