

Children's home's inspection - Full

Inspection date	24/08/2016
Unique reference number	1230416
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Cambian Childcare Ltd
Registered provider address	4th Floor, Waterfront, Hammersmith Embankment, London W6 9RU

Responsible individual	Michael Coleman
Registered manager	Olubunmi Fabusuyi
Inspector	Jane Partridge

Inspection date	24/08/2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

1230416

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Children are making progress from their starting points. They are engaged in education and have reduced incidents of missing and incidents of self-harming behaviours.
- Frequent updates to risk assessments ensure that staff are working with current information, which helps to reduce presenting risks and promotes the safeguarding of the children placed.
- Children can identify staff with whom they have developed a trusting and dependable relationship.
- Staff listen to children and help them to find strategies to manage their anxiety and stresses.
- Managers and staff work particularly closely with the wider professional team to deliver consistent, safe, individualised care to the children.
- Children engage in a vast range of activities, which offer them fun experiences and build their confidence and self-esteem.
- Regular reflective supervision ensures that the staff have the opportunity to discuss the needs of children and how the challenges that the children face have an impact on their well-being and practice.
- The inspection identified the following shortfalls:
 - a lack of personal effects making this a recognisable space for the children who live there;
 - a lack of garden furniture and outside activities;
 - a lack of recognition of positive behaviour;
 - gaps in staff knowledge about the role of the designated officer and the processes used to safeguard children;
 - gaps in reviews of sanctions and consequences;
 - inconsistency in the provision of independent return interviews;
 - communication with parents.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12: The protection of children standard: In order to meet the protection of children standard, with particular regard to understanding the role of the designated officer (previously LADO), the registered provider must ensure that staff: (2)(a)(v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person.	21/09/2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Ensure that staff provide a homely environment with particular regard to the personalisation of the living areas and appropriately furnished garden area. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Ensure that staff encourage an enthusiasm for positive behaviour through the use of positive behaviour strategies. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.13)
- Ensure that, when a child returns home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return-home interview. Homes should take account of the information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

- Ensure that the home develops effective working relationships with parents.
(‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 52, paragraph 10.3)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home offers care and accommodation for up to three children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties who have been subject to or are at risk of child sexual exploitation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
Not applicable		

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
This recently opened home provides care and accommodation to children who are at risk of, or have been subject to, child sexual exploitation. Children's past experiences significantly affect their well-being. As a result, they present with highly complex risk-taking behaviours, putting their welfare at risk. Although the home accepts emergency admissions, preferred entry into the home is through a planned transition process. The home works with other agencies and the child to ensure as smooth a transition as possible in a bid to reduce any presenting anxiety. Children receive a children's guide, which sets out the home's operations, informing them of expectations and the support available to them. Children placed have begun to make positive, trusting relationships with members of staff. They can identify those whom they will seek out to share their thoughts and any concerns with. One child reported: 'I would tell her because she listens to me and reassures me.' Another child added: 'She knows me. If I have a problem, we talk about it and she is straight on it.' Staff undertake regular key-work sessions with each child. These offer space and time to explore events or feelings and help to cement good relationships. Children benefit as these trusting relationships offer a dependable adult to whom to begin to tell their story. Staff invest time in the children, and children feel heard and valued. Although it has been a relatively short time since placement, children have made progress. Children who were previously out of education now engage full time. One child is using school and the support of staff to further a career in catering. She commented: 'Staff support me. They allow me to use my cooking skills.' Staff support her to cook and bake, enhancing her independence skills. A social worker commented about another child: 'She is so proud that she is being put forward for her GCSEs.' Staff are recognising and supporting children to reach their potential and to open up their future career options. The home offers children a wide range of activities and social opportunities. Children actively engage in sporting and leisure pursuits, offering both physical exercise and fun. They gain a sense of achievement as they undertake the usual childhood activities, and beauty-pampering sessions help to build self-confidence. The stable staff group works closely with the wider professional team to ensure the well-being of children. The children present with high-risk behaviours, such as self-harm and high anxiety. Staff take advice and guidance in putting strategies in place to safeguard the children. Frequently updated risk assessments and daily logs mean that staff work with the most current information to safeguard children.	

They have also helped children to devise strategies to manage their own thoughts and feelings. A safe word, used by one child ensures that she has space to 'just be', and time for her to calm and manage her negative thoughts. For another, a diary is proving a successful way for her to record difficult periods. This is shared with staff who respond accordingly. The staff team offers a predictable environment in terms of the consistency of the boundaries set and staff are empathetic to the children's previous experiences. Children are beginning to self-regulate without the need to harm themselves or to put themselves in potentially harmful situations.

Staff work with general practitioner (GP)s' practices, hospitals, mental health colleagues and sexual health services to ensure that holistic individual health programmes are set to meet the health needs of children. Staff educate children about food and nutrition to aid healthy diets.

Staff recognise the importance of family relationships to the children placed. Due to the nature of assessed risk, children placed are a long way from home. Staff facilitate contact in line with the care plans. This ensures that contacts are safe, while maintaining family ties and a sense of identity.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The help and protection of children are fundamental necessities for this home as children placed display high-risk behaviour associated with past experiences. Frequent updates to risk assessments, taking into consideration any new behaviour and taking guidance from the wider professional team, ensure that staff know current risks and put strategies in place to safeguard children. The children adhere to clear and consistent boundaries, reiterating what is safe and acceptable behaviour. One social worker commented: 'They are honest with her. They tell her when things are unacceptable and she accepts that.' This clear approach offers children a predictable environment where safe behaviour is promoted. One child, whose self-harmful behaviour is deemed high risk, commented: 'They keep an eye on me. I have a waking night. I know I get annoyed about it sometimes, but I know they do it for me. It feels safe.' Another child said: 'The home has got me back on stable ground.' Children entering the home arrive with a range of historic risky behaviours and display anxiety-associated behaviours. High episodes of missing from care prior to	

placement are commonplace. When children have gone missing from the home, close working with partner agencies and a clear missing-from-home protocol with the police ensure a rapid response. From placement, the episodes of missing from home have reduced significantly. Risks are minimised and children become increasingly safe.

Physical intervention is rarely used but, when it has been, debriefs have taken place with both the children and staff concerned. As trusting relationships between children and staff develop, the need for physical intervention decreases.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
A number of shortfalls have led to this judgement area requiring improvement. That is not to detract from the good outcomes in others areas, which, without solid leadership and management, could not be achieved. This inspection sets one requirement. While the managers have significant information for staff about the role of the designated officer, some staff are unable to evidence their knowledge in this area. As this home offers care for children at high risk, it is imperative that staff have full knowledge of all safeguarding procedures. This lack of knowledge has the potential to leave staff and children vulnerable and unprotected. This inspection has set five recommendations. There is no doubt that this home offers children a stylish and well-presented home. However, there is a lack of personal effects, except in the bedroom areas. This makes it unrecognisable as the home of the children placed. In addition, while the home boasts a large rear garden, a lack of garden furniture and activities means that children are not able to fully realise its potential. One parent spoken to reported a lack of communication from the home. These working relationships are crucial to success in delivering the care plan. The home applies consequences for both positive and negative behaviours. However, negative consequences outweigh the positive consequences. While managers reported that praise is frequently given, children do not always experience the recording of praise for their positive behaviours. There were some occasions, when the home first opened, when the manager both gave and signed off sanctions. This does not offer sufficient scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. Finally, children returning home from an incident of missing are not always	

provided with independent return interviews. The manager has chased up local authorities on numerous occasions, yet these interviews have not taken place. Thus, the home is unable to take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect children.

The manager is suitably qualified for the role. He has been in post since the opening of the home. He brings a wealth of experience, having started a career in health and social care in 2005, working as both practitioner and manager in adult and children's services. He has good relationships with the children placed. One commented: 'He treats us like we are his own children and rings in, even when he is not on shift, to see how we are.'

The manager has brought together a permanently employed new staff team to offer stability and consistency to the children. New recruits undergo a range of checks and references to ensure their suitability to care for children in placement. A formal induction programme ensures that they are equipped with the basic information about how the home and organisation operate. A mandatory induction training schedule and a range of ongoing training provide a route for staff to develop their professional competence. The manager has enrolled all eligible staff onto the required social care diploma course.

Staff receive regular formal and informal supervision. A reflective approach offers staff opportunities to discuss the needs of children placed. It also offers an arena for staff to consider the professional and personal impact of working with traumatised children. Staff speak highly of the availability of managers and their skills in supporting practice. Staff feel valued members of the team, a key factor in staff retention and offering consistency to children.

A particular strength of this home is the close working relationships with the wider professional team. It takes advice and guidance from partner agencies to help and support children to reduce risk-taking behaviours and to safeguard their welfare. One social worker commented: 'They talk to her, especially when she wants to self-harm. We feel that staff are really helpful and really positive.' Frequent professional communication ensures that all parties receive updates on current events, and weekly reports provide useful overall summaries.

The home has received one complaint: a child reported an incident of feeling bullied. The manager acted promptly and robustly, addressing the inappropriateness of such behaviour. He also arranged for the child to discuss the matter with a senior manager to assure the child that the matter was taken seriously and that actions were put in place to reduce further incidents. All staff have undertaken training in this area of childcare and, again, managing incidents of bullying have been reiterated to staff.

The manager has a range of tools with which to monitor the quality of care that the service delivers. There are both organisational and personally developed templates, offering key information in an easily accessible format. The manager has a good understanding of the strengths of the home and areas for

improvement.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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