

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC065855
Inspector	Andrew Hewston
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Cambian Childcare Limited
Registered person address	Pinnacle House 2 Oakwood Square, Cheadle Royal Business Park CHEADLE Cheshire SK8 3SB
Responsible individual	Stephen James Nevitt
Registered manager	Joanne Louise Mansfield
Date of last inspection	18/03/2014

Inspection date	10/07/2014
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Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	adequate
Quality of care	adequate
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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This home is an intake and assessment home, taking young people for a period of between 8 and 12 weeks. During this short time young people are assessed and a report completed suggesting future placements that may be appropriate. The staff work hard during this time to settle the young people into the home, collate all the necessary documentation and complete an assessment relating to the needs of the young people. The staff team effectively care for young people, promoting safe behaviours and creating well known and effective boundaries for young people to live within.

There have been one concern about the service that Ofsted has asked the registered provider to investigate: about care practice and managerial support. This has been concluded by the provider and concerns have not been upheld, either by the provider through their investigation or by Ofsted at this inspection.

This inspection highlighted the need for developments in the ability to offer education to young people, the need for contact arrangements to be clear within records and the need for full health information to be within care files. The home requires some redecoration to decrease the level of damage in the home and also to ensure that young people live within a healthy environment.

The management team are aware of the skills and experience of the staff team and strive to develop improvements consistently within the home for the young people. Young people have good relationships with staff. Behaviour is well managed and continues to improve. Restraint is rarely used. Young people feel safe and are kept safe. Incidents of young people going missing are reducing. Any allegations against staff are handled appropriately.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides a short-term intake and assessment service on a contract with a single local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to three young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/03/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
23/07/2013	Full	adequate
08/03/2013	Interim	good progress
15/08/2012	Full	outstanding

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
18 (2001)	the routine of the home is organised so as to further children's participation in education, including regular attendance at school and participation in school activities of children of compulsory school age, regular attendance at college where applicable and private study (Regulation 18 1b)	30/09/2014

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure young people are supported and encouraged to maintain and develop family contacts and friendships, subject to any limitations or provisions set out in their care plan, placement plan and any court order (NMS 9.1)
- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated (NMS 10.3)
- ensure staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the children and purpose of the setting, and training keeps them up-to-date with professional, legal and practice developments and reflects the policies, legal obligations and business needs of the home (NMS 18.1)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **adequate**

Young people develop an awareness of their current circumstances and are supported with looking at future placements or plans relating to their care. This helps young people to prepare for their change in living arrangements due to the short term nature of their assessment placement. This is a significant achievement for the young people. Young people develop an awareness of living within a communal environment, sometimes for the first time, and are supported by staff throughout this time.

Young people learn the importance of a healthy lifestyle through a range of health checks being completed and also the promotion of menus that include both the young people's likes as well as healthy choices. This helps to support young people starting to take responsibility for their own health. Young people also develop an awareness health risks including sexual health and drug / alcohol use through information in the home and discussions with staff.

Most young people develop in their educational ability through experiencing differing provisions. Although staff promote education, some young people have not been able to access an educational placement that meets their needs.

Young people continue to have contact with individuals that are important to them. Contact arrangements are risk assessed and non-permissible contacts are clear within young peoples files. Not all contact details are clearly recorded however and this may impact on the ability to keep in touch with their families or important friends.

Young people participate in an independence programme to learn practical skills such as shopping and cooking, budgeting and washing to help them prepare for adulthood.

Quality of care **adequate**

Staff show a consistent awareness of the needs of the young people and form appropriate attachments with them. Young people are able to discuss differing staff that they get on with and those that are responsive to their views, one young person said that 'some staff are really good at listening to you and understanding how difficult it is to be here, not really knowing what the future will be.'

Regular formalised discussions are completed at the home including group meetings and more individualised key working sessions. These are well recorded and include a wide range of topics for discussion including menus, activities, behaviours, festivals and local events and

complaints. These regular meetings ensure that information is shared about issues within the home and also allows young people's wishes and feelings to be taken account within the running of the home. All young people have their own key workers who also meet with young people to support them and talk about their assessment and future plans.

Young people are aware of the complaints system due to information around the home, information within their admissions pack and through discussions with staff. All complaints are well recorded including both the initial complaint format and the investigation outcome letters. Complaints that are made are responded to swiftly and young people state that they like to get the letter showing that their views have been responded to. Where complaints come from external sources these are also responded to in a timely manner.

All young people have placement plans from the placing authority. These inform the assessment process and are reviewed on a regular basis. A social worker stated that the home was 'very diligent with making sure all of the necessary paperwork was in place' from the point of the young person's admission and then throughout their time at the home. Staff are aware of the differing needs of the young people through the placement plans and key information that states specific important information relating to their time at the home.

Young people's health needs form part of placement planning and the staff work hard to ensure that health professionals are involved with areas needing specialist expertise. Referrals are made to support young people's mental health needs and staff promote and help young people with these. Medication administration is completed thoroughly to ensure young people's well being and Looked After medicals are completed within a short period of admission. Not all of the records of the medicals are in place, although the management team are rigorous in attempting to receive them.

Young people enjoy a range of activities that are offered by the home's staff and are able to discuss how they have been supported with activities although they were aware of some staff being more proactive with being involved with activities than others. Young people are also able to spend time on their own outside of the home when appropriately risk assessed to ensure their safety.

The majority of young people access educational provision and talk positively about these. Some have not attended any education since they have been at the home and although the staff have attempted to engage them in educational activities no package of provision has been organised. As a result, young people have not all been supported to achieve their educational potential.

Some areas of the home require redecoration due to young people damaging the property. The rear windows are in need of attention due to damage and some rear fencing is in a poor condition following the removal of trees. A bucket containing

used cigarette ends is outside the backdoor, despite no young people smoking in the home for over a two month period. Leaving such an item in view of young people does not promote a healthy lifestyle. Other communal areas of the home are well maintained and comfortable. Young people state that they like their rooms and they are able to personalise them to an extent. Damaged items within bedrooms are replaced to support them having a pleasant environment.

Keeping children and young people safe good

The majority of the young people feel safe within the home and all are able to discuss staff and external professionals such as social workers, advocates and parents that they are able to talk to when they feel unhappy. Staff are responsive to the behaviours of the young people and where bullying behaviours occur it is vigorously challenged and discussed, with both the victim and perpetrator. This helps to support young people feeling safer within the home.

Behaviour management strategies are in place to promote positive behaviours from the young people. This includes a monetary reward structure with personalised targets to improve both their individual behaviours and their ability to live within a communal environment. Young people are able to discuss their own targets and how these change when they have been achieved on a regular basis. No restraints have been necessary at the home since the last inspection although staff have received updated training and appropriate recording systems are in place to safeguard the welfare of young people. Consequences for poor behaviours are fully recorded and monitored by the manager, with suggestions for more relevant sanctions than purely fining when appropriate.

The level of young people going missing has dropped significantly since the last inspection. The staff are aware of how to respond to such behaviours and good links are in place with the local Police. Risk assessments are changed in response to missing events and all necessary bodies are informed including social workers. As a result for those young people currently in the home, going missing is a rarity and their safety is supported.

The staff team have a strong awareness of the expected responses to safeguarding and child protection concerns. Where these have occurred the manager has a full chronology of the event and subsequent actions. Effective relationships are in place with the local safeguarding board and police to promote an effective and swift response to safeguarding concerns. This promotes appropriate protection to both the young people and the staff that work with them. The risk of abuse is minimised because staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to whistle-blow should any concerns arise.

Young people are protected from unsuitable people gaining employment by a good recruitment process. Visitors to the home are asked to sign in and identification is

checked. This further ensures young people are protected from significant harm. The home has strong and effective health and safety systems that are built around comprehensive risk assessment. Gas, electrical and fire safety systems are tested regularly by qualified engineers to support the safety of both staff and young people.

Leadership and management

good

The home is led by an experienced and competent management team. Senior staff set high expectations for the home. As a result, staff model a commitment to delivering good standards of care. The registered manager has been in post since August 2012 and is qualified up to NVQ level 5 in care, ensuring that she is fully aware of her role and the expectations of caring for young people.

Previous requirements made at the last inspection have been responded to, showing that the management are responsive to the inspection process and the development of the home. The mix of young people within the home is now appropriate and assessed through a preadmission risk assessment approach. Necessary documentation relating to young people is in place, this includes placement plans that have been signed by placing authorities. The safeguarding policy that was previously in draft has now come into practice. Arrangements for young people's education has been strengthened, although not all young people have been able to access the services due to the lack of the local authority resources.

The home has a statement of purpose that is up to date and clearly shows the role of the home and how young people's needs are able to be met within it. All young people have a children's guide on admission that highlights key rules and expectations, as well as giving a range of information about the home and who to contact if they are unhappy.

The home is well staffed and the level of staff turnover is relatively low, this supports a level of stability for the young people. Staff state that they enjoy working in the home, 'everyday is different and it is great to feel as though you are making a difference in young people's lives, giving them something positive to remember.' All staff receive regular supervision and are additionally supported by annual appraisals. Staff state that they can always talk to the manager or colleagues if they want to discuss issues relating to the care of the young people. The induction process to the home is appropriate and levels of training is sufficient to enable them to provide a good quality of care. Some staff state that there is a lack of additional training to enhance the basic training expectations. This is confirmed by the training records and shows that the staff are not always able to meet the diverse needs of the young people fully.

The registered manager actively and regularly monitors the quality of care provided, including consultation with young people about their welfare, parents and social workers. There are a range of quality assurance tools in place within the home that

ensure regular monitoring of outcomes for young people and quality of care. External monthly monitoring is completed well and includes discussions with young people. Staff notify the relevant authorities of significant events in a timely manner and with a good level of detail.

Records are secure and written to a good standard. Records of daily living are factually accurate and written in a style that is accessible to young people. This promotes transparency and openness.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.