

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	24/08/2016
Unique reference number	SC065855
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	Sharon Edney
Registered manager	Shane McCarthy
Inspector	Lisa Walsh

Inspection date	24/08/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
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	Good

SC065855

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Staff knowledge of young people's risks and vulnerabilities is underpinned by good safeguarding systems and procedures.
- Staff ensure that young people feel safe and are protected by good safeguarding practice in the home.
- Staff encourage young people to develop their level of responsibility to prepare for the transition to adulthood.
- Staff encourage young people to sustain positive relationships with their family.
- The manager ensures that young people's care is personalised, well planned and takes into account their individual needs.
- The manager and staff ensure that young people's views and opinions are central to the running of the home and carefully considered in all decision making.
- The manager makes sure that staff work well with other agencies to promote positive outcomes for young people.
- Managers and staff ensure that every young person has the opportunity to develop personal and social skills and to spend time in freely chosen play and leisure activities through the extensive facilities available in school and the surrounding grounds.
- Healthcare is an integral part of everyday practice. Young people have easy access to health professionals who oversee their physical, emotional and psychological well-being.
- There are a few shortfalls in practice. These include the implementation of bedroom alarms without the necessary individualised risk assessments, multi-agency input into the area of risk assessment, the frequency and recording of supervision and the appropriateness and safety of staff sleeping quarters.

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

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 (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
The registered person must ensure that— (b) children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and (c) any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— (ii) is necessary and proportionate; (iii) is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and (iv) allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21(b)(c)(ii)(iii)(iv))	30/10/2016
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must, with specific reference to the staff sleeping room, take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home. (Regulation 251(a))	30/10/2016
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). (2) When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46(1)(2))	30/10/2016

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the design of the home provides staff that sleep in the home overnight with appropriate accommodation and facilities to do so. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.26)
- make sure that a record of supervision is kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- make sure that the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions are kept and ensure that both the person giving the supervision and staff member have a copy of the record. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for three young people, male or female, up to the age of 18. The home offers care for young people with individual behavioural, and/or emotional needs. The home is privately owned.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/04/2015	Full	Good
03/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/07/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Staff have a very positive view of the young people and work hard to engage with them. This helps young people to feel confident about their relationships with staff and supports their progress. Young people are in good health. Staff ensure that they are registered with primary healthcare and specialist services. This ensures that young people can access services and receive treatment without undue delays. This in turn helps to enhance their physical, emotional and psychological well-being. For example, when young people have anxieties about accessing the dentist, they are sensitively supported to engage through preparation within key work sessions. Care planning includes input from multi-agency teams to create a responsive plan that reflects the young person's needs and the responsibilities of staff in meeting their emotional and psychological health. Where appropriate to do so, young people are encouraged to develop their level of responsibility in preparation for the transition to adulthood. This is reflected in the key skills that young people have developed. For example, some young people are supported to plan, shop and cook their own meals. Young people are also encouraged and supported to manage a budget for their money and to make plans for the future. This ensures that young people are able to improve their own resilience and life skills. Staff encourage young people to express their views through young people's meetings and informal conversations and during communal mealtimes. One young person reported, 'The staff are good at listening to us and help us when we need help.' Young people say that they understand how decisions are made and the degree to which they are able to influence these. This enhances their day-to-day experience of living in the home. Staff hold regular key-worker sessions with young people. The quality of the key working is excellent; the sessions are of a high standard, with a clear focus on a young person's specific needs. For example, some young people have shared that they engage in relationships beyond the home. Sensitively delivered key working about healthy relationships has taken place. This means that young people are supported to make safer choices and are protected from becoming involved in negative or exploitative relationships.	

Education is well supported. Young people benefit from individual education packages that reflect their learning needs and challenge any barriers that they face. When young people do not have suitable school placements, staff work in partnership with specialist education agencies to reduce disruption to young people's learning. Staff work closely with the education provider and the local authority to ensure that young people make meaningful progress with their education. For example, one young person has recently completed his GCSEs and is due to attend college in September. In order to prepare him for the transition, staff sourced a summer sports academy course. The young person engaged very well with this provision, throughout the summer break. This experience has allowed him to develop confidence and interpersonal skills, which will assist him greatly in moving forward to college.

Young people maintain contact with their parents and carers in situations when it is safe to do so. Staff are available for parents to discuss the current and future needs of the young people. When contact restrictions are in place, staff clearly explain these. Young people receive practical and emotional support to attend contact visits. This means that young people are not isolated from their families.

Young people enjoy a wide range of social activities. These include swimming, playing football for a local team, trips out to places of interest, cycling and cinema trips. Staff discuss any identified areas of interest with young people and endeavour to arrange for them to try out new things during their time at the school. This means that young people are given opportunities that help to keep them fit, while enabling them to acquire new skills and improve their self-esteem.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people say that they feel safe. They confirm that bullying does not take place in the home and, if any issues were to arise, they feel confident that the staff would appropriately address these concerns. Staff receive comprehensive training on safeguarding, and are clear about safeguarding procedures should they need to use them. Staff continue to refer any safeguarding incidents to the relevant professionals. They know how to keep the young people safe and work well with other professionals to manage risks. The manager works collaboratively with other professionals to manage young people's risks, such as the local authority and police. Safeguarding notifications are appropriate. Staff are clear about the use of the internet and monitor this closely. Young people are well supported to learn how to keep themselves safe, both in the community and online.	

Assessments clearly identify potential risks for young people within the community and highlight the strategies used to reduce these risks. These assessments are subject to ongoing monitoring and reviews to reflect any changes in young people's needs and emerging risks. This demonstrates that the welfare and safety of young people continue to be priorities. However, a recent change to the staffing arrangements within the home has resulted in a move from having waking night staff to introducing two sleeping in staff. In an attempt to support this change, the home has installed a bedroom alarm system, which alerts staff to young people getting up in the night to use the bathroom. This change has been implemented without any young-person-specific risk assessment regarding the necessity of this alarm system. Based on the individualised risks associated with each of the three young people, the alarms are not necessary or proportionate. Some young people find the alarms 'annoying', and have been woken at night when they have been set off. The manager reflected on the use of the alarms during the course of the inspection. After careful consideration, the manager has determined that the current young people in placement do not require this additional measure of surveillance. Therefore, the alarms will be deactivated.

Young people's complex needs mean that they can at times display extremely difficult and challenging behaviour. Staff have a good understanding of these behaviours and know what action to take to address them. This ensures that young people, including the most vulnerable, benefit from effective support and protection. Teaching young people to be accountable for their own behaviour is central to the ethos of the home. The use of negative sanctions is low because staff deploy a strength-based approach to supporting young people to take responsibility for their behaviour. Emphasis is placed on verbal de-escalation. Staff receive training in the appropriate use of physical restraint but only ever use this as a last resort. There have been no incidents of physical restraint of the current young people since the last inspection.

Young people do not engage in risk-taking behaviours, such as substance misuse or self-harm. Incidents of young people going missing from the home are low. This is because staff work with young people, their families, social workers and local police to identify triggers to these events. Staff understand the risks to young people of sexual exploitation. They know the signs and symptoms and proactively monitor all young people. Young people's safety is promoted through detailed missing from home plans. These specify the actions to be taken by staff and others to ensure that young people are quickly located and returned to the home. This integrated approach to protecting young people means that young people become increasingly safer.

Young people know how to make a complaint. Young people are clear that their concerns are taken seriously. Staff make sure that complaints made directly to them are thoroughly investigated and that young people receive a written response.

The registered manager ensures that location risk assessments include local statistical data regarding crime and community resources. However, the assessment does not include multi-professional input to the degree necessary to ensure that local areas of risk and other children's homes in the vicinity are known. This hinders staff in supporting young people to keep safe during free time within the community.

Staff undertake regular health and safety checks, routine servicing of equipment and robust risk assessments to ensure that the home is safe for young people.

Staff are trained in fire safety procedures, and they ensure that young people take part in fire evacuation drills so that they understand how to leave the home safely in an emergency. The recently identified additional staff sleeping quarters have not been assessed by the local fire service. The staff office now stores a single futon bed for the second night staff member to use. Many of the staff have complained that this sleeping accommodation is unsuitable and uncomfortable, and that the facilities are preventing them from sleeping. Staff feel that the change has impacted staff morale and their capacity to be energised and responsive to the young people during their next working shift. With exception to this room, the accommodation in which young people live is of a good standard and is well maintained and decorated. Young people have the opportunity to personalise their bedrooms, enhancing their sense of identity and belonging.

Young people are protected by the organisation's robust recruitment practices. Staff are vetted and assessed as suitable before any appointment is confirmed. These procedures promote the safety of the young people by preventing unsuitable adults from working with them.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has been in post since February 2016. He is currently enrolled on the level 5 diploma in leadership and management and is expected to gain the qualification in September 2017. In addition, the home has nine members of staff. Of these, eight are qualified to level 3 diploma in childcare or have a suitably equivalent qualification. The remaining one member of staff is currently working within his probation period. There is a good balance of experience among the staff team; they are a strong staff team who are child-focused and committed to improving the home. The registered manager understands young people's individual needs, and ensures	

that staff have the skills and knowledge to meet them. Effective team meetings ensure good communication and consistency of practice across the staff group. All staff attend these meetings. Mutually supportive and respectful relationships exist across the staff group. These demonstrate positive role models and consistency for the young people.

Staff talk positively about the support that they receive, especially in relation to the registered manager. However, staff supervisions do not routinely take place. Furthermore, supervision sessions that do take place are not consistently recorded as required in the company policy. This limits opportunity for managerial oversight and staff development. The registered manager is aware of this shortfall.

The registered manager is aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses and has recently implemented processes to improve monitoring further. An independent visitor undertakes monthly visits and produces a report. The registered manager finds these useful. These visits, together with other systems, enable the manager to monitor the quality of care. As a result, young people benefit from consistency of care that achieves better outcomes than previously.

The registered manager ensures that the statement of purpose clearly demonstrates the aims and objectives of the home. This makes it possible for parents or placing authorities to have a clear understanding of services available. The registered manager ensures that young people are provided with an informative children's guide, providing them with information that is important for them to know and understand.

The registered manager ensures that staff receive regular training and have the skills and competencies necessary to meet the diverse needs of the young people whom they look after, and that there are systems in place to ensure that important training is regularly updated or refreshed. This will help to ensure that a suitably qualified staff team delivers high-quality care to young people.

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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