

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC066187
Inspector	Hannah Bates
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	Victor Takadiwa
Registered manager	POST VACANT / Fiona Samantha Rees
Date of last inspection	11/11/2013

Inspection date	01/12/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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The home provides good quality care. Staff invest in young people and have high aspirations for them. The home actively promotes education and staff support young people to learn. As a result of this, young people achieve. Young people take part in activities within their community and the home encourages them to have hobbies. This promotes their self-esteem. Young people enjoy good health. Effective multi-agency working promotes the emotional health of young people.

Young people are safe within the home. The home is committed to promoting young people's safety and completes robust risk management plans with them. Young people work towards reducing risk taking behaviours. They feel safe and risk taking behaviours have reduced. Young people engage in regular key working sessions. This empowers young people and gives them goals to work towards.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides short-term care and accommodation for up to three young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is operated and managed by a private organisation, in partnership with a local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/11/2013	Interim	good progress
14/05/2013	Full	good
14/02/2013	Interim	good progress
11/10/2012	Full	adequate

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure children understand how their views have been taken into account, and where significant wishes or concerns are not acted upon, they are helped to understand why (NMS 1.2).

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people's educational attendance and achievements have greatly improved. They attend education and the home views education as important to young people's outcomes. The ethos of the home is that there should be no restrictions to the educational achievements for the young people. Young people access extra tuition to supplement their educational timetable. Staff support young people to develop interests. Homework is a priority and staff support young people with this. The home supports young people to learn and this takes place both in school and at home. This promotes young people's resilience and sense of self-worth, and offers them good role modelling about the importance of learning.

Young people achieve and get to have new experiences. For example, young people enter community sporting events supported by staff. This gives young people encouragement to achieve and builds their self-esteem. Young people's predicted GCSE grades have improved and they achieve well above what was expected of them when they first arrived at the home. This boosts their self-esteem and means that they move on from the home with aspirations.

Young people have goals and work towards these within the placement. They work towards having independent time in the community. Young people learn how to modify their behaviour to social settings and the home has clear expectations about how young people should behave when in the community. Regular focused key working sessions take place with young people. These sessions focus on risk taking behaviours, appropriate relationships and goals for young people to work towards. A reward system encourages young people to achieve these goals. They are encouraged to understand and take control of any unsafe behaviours. A young person said: 'This home has changed my life'. Young people gain a sense of achievement when they reach their goals. This promotes their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth.

Young people are actively involved in their care planning. The home works openly and transparently with young people. Staff share risk management plans with young people ensuring young people are aware of the responses from the home to their risk taking behaviours. There are no surprises and young people feel empowered. Risk taking behaviour is monitored and reductions in unsafe behaviour are rewarded. Young people develop better awareness of their risk taking behaviour and how to keep themselves safer.

Quality of care

outstanding

Staff ensure that young people's health needs are met. When young people smoke, there is an active response from staff to encourage young people to stop smoking. Information is widely available about support services to help them stop smoking. This promotes young people's good health.

Staff prioritise young people's emotional health needs. There are strong links between the staff and the in-house clinical team. Staff have regular consultations with the in-house psychologist to discuss young people's behaviours and how they can meet the young people's changing emotional needs. Staff are constantly reviewing how they work with young people to make sure that they offer the best care they can. Staff liaise closely with CAMHS and Barnardo's to ensure that a holistic approach to care is provided to young people. Staff provide good quality care to young people and assessments are of a high standard. Staff observe and assess young people robustly. Behaviours that could potentially unsettle young people are dealt with quickly. Assessments make clear recommendations regarding future placements for young people. This promotes young people's emotional wellbeing and future life chances.

The home works effectively with young people's families. There is regular communication and the home meets with parents to look at any risk management issues. The home encourages families to work with them on the risk management plan for their child. This promotes strong partnership working and consistent boundaries across all settings. Young people receive consistent and robust boundaries from important people in their lives. This increases their safety and well-being.

Staff are positive role models for young people. They teach young people about consequences of behaviours and young people are encouraged and supported to acknowledge their actions. Young people learn how to resolve conflict and take responsibility. This gives young people the opportunity to develop the necessary skills and understanding about how to modify their risk taking behaviour. Staff invest in the young people and have high aspirations for them. They support young people to complete homework and work creatively with them to get them interested in extracurricular learning. A social worker said: 'The home has done above and beyond for the young person. There is such a difference from where the young person was at the start of the placement compared to where they are at now. The young person has aspirations for the future and didn't have that before the placement'.

Staff manage transition plans for young people sensitively and on an individual basis. Staff share assessments and transition plans with young people. Wherever possible, young people are prepared for when they move. They visit their new placements which gives them the opportunity to ask the questions that are important to them. Young people have a proper ending to their time at the home. This enables them to be able to make the move to their next placement in a positive way. This promotes young people's feelings of self-worth.

The home is located in a quiet residential area but with good transport links into the city centre. The home is nicely decorated and feels like a 'home'. There are comfortable communal living areas and the young people and staff members regularly sit together as a group. It is secure and there is a large back garden that the group enjoys using. Young people contribute to the décor of the home. They invest in the home environment.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people are safe and feel safe. There is minimum use of physical intervention, with the focus being on de-escalation and prevention. The home completes robust risk management plans individually tailored to young people's presenting behaviours. Staff monitor changes to behaviours which feeds into their assessment of the young people. The home updates risk management plans regularly and uses them as a tool to safely care for young people. A member of staff said: 'Young people have wall charts so they can see the progress they have made. Even if there have been slips in their behaviour we let them know that we believe they can do better. Progress makes them feel better and they feel confident knowing that staff know what the risks in their behaviour are and that it is being monitored'.

There is an effective missing from care procedure in place which is individualised for each young person. Staff follow young people when they run away and will use their relationships to try to prevent young people from putting themselves at risk. The home ensures that young people have the opportunity to talk about any incidents after the event. The home encourages young people to participate in these sessions. Key working sessions look in more detail with young people at what has happened, the reasons for their behaviour and what they can all do to prevent a further incident. Young people are encouraged to learn from their experiences and modify their behaviours for the future. The home consistently monitors young people's responses to situations in order to complete safe assessments with strong recommendations for future care planning.

For some young people, their risk taking behaviour decreases. There is clarity and consistency of firm boundaries within the home. Young people know what is expected of them which in turn encourages risk taking behaviour to reduce. One young person said: 'They've changed me here. Before I came here I was off the rails and now I'm changed. They kept me in; I had to work towards free time. I hated it at the time but now see that it was the best thing they could have done. I feel safe here.'

The home has good relationships with the local community, the Police, CAMHs and other safeguarding agencies. They liaise closely with them. When there are concerns about behaviours which may impact on the young people, the community or the home they work together to reduce the impact. Effective partnership working ensures that young people get the services they need and that the outcomes are

child focused. Young people's safety is prioritised which promotes their safety both in the home and community.

The home refers any allegations about staff to the LADO and the local safeguarding children board. Safeguarding procedures are followed and both young people and staff are safeguarded while allegations are being investigated. Young people feel listened to and therefore empowered. Young people know how to make a complaint. Complaints are usually resolved in a child focused way with the wishes and feelings of young people at the forefront of any decision making. When young people tell staff about an issue of concern within the home without making it a complaint, they do not always receive information on the outcome of action taken.

Staff are safely recruited and receive good training in safeguarding young people. Safeguarding is consistently on the agenda within team meetings and staff are committed to keeping young people safe. There is a focus on preventative work rather than reactive work with young people. Staff say: 'Our strength is that we are good at behaviour management. We talk to the young people, we put positive incentives and reinforcements in, rather than letting them do whatever they want and then putting in a negative'. As a result, young people's risk taking behaviour reduces.

Leadership and management

good

The Manager has been in post since August 2014 and is currently waiting for the registration process to be completed. While there have been some delays with this process, this has not had a direct detrimental impact on the young people or staff team. The Manager is qualified up to Level 3 NVQ in Leadership and Management. She has a BA Honours Degree in Social Care and Social Policy, and considerable residential experience. She worked at the home prior to her recruitment into the Manager's post and so is familiar with the young people and the staff team. This has enabled consistency of care.

There is a robust Statement of Purpose in place. The home provides care to young people in line with the Statement of Purpose. The development plan describes the Manager's vision for the service. It is a workable document. The location risk assessment highlights that the home is situated within a safe area but with close links to the city centre. Clear plans are in place if young people do engage in risk taking behaviour within the community.

The Manager has control of admissions of young people and completes matching assessments prior to a placement being agreed. This ensures that the Manager is confident that the home can meet the young people's needs and means that young people are more likely to have successful outcomes. The home works closely with placing authorities and is able to identify quickly when it is not working for young people. The Manager has an awareness of the skills of staff and which young people

they are able to work with most effectively. This reduces the risk of placement break down for young people which impacts on their emotional wellbeing and their future life chances. The Manager says: 'We are child centred and push the young people to achieve. If we invest in them they will want to reduce their behaviours and risks and this will produce better outcomes for them'. This ultimately improves the outcomes for young people.

There is strong management oversight of care planning and monitoring of young people's outcomes. The Manager analyses the effectiveness of the behaviour management strategies in place, such as the incentives for the individual reward charts. If it is not working, the Manager is able to identify this early and discuss a change in approach with the staff. There is a commitment to wanting to get the best out of young people which filters down to young people. They are empowered to want to change risk taking behaviours.

Monthly independent monitoring visits are completed and there is swift implementation of any recommendations. The home is committed to consistently developing and improving practice for the young people. Training is provided which is specific to the needs of the young people within the home. This enables staff to offer a consistent and informed way of working with some young people which in turn reduces the amount of risk taking behaviour. This promotes young people's emotional wellbeing.

Turnover of staff has been mitigated by the use of consistent bank staff within the home. The young people know the workers and the workers know how to look after and care for the young people safely. Using consistent workers reduces the risk of unsafe people working within the home and therefore safeguards young people. The Manager is committed to training and retaining staff. All staff except for those in their probationary period have been enrolled on the relevant NVQ course. The Manager says; 'If staff feel they are invested in and appreciated, then they will stay'.

Reflective practice is encouraged. A member of staff said: 'If there has been an incident then the Manager will explore ways of how we could have gone about it differently. We always reflect on practice as there may be a better way of doing things'. Supervision is regular and of good quality. While the primary focus is on the young people, there are regular discussions about new legislation that staff need to be aware of. The Manager uses team meetings as a forum to reflect on practice and learn about new theories and ways of working. This commitment to reflecting on practice means the staff are conscientious in their approach to working with young people. A social worker said: 'The young person has blossomed since being at the home'.

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.