

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	28/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC066393
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	Balbir Bains
Inspector	Lisa Walsh

Inspection date	28/11/2016
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	Requires improvement
The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate

SC066393

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- Staff do not ensure that risk assessments are sufficiently detailed to reduce young people's risk-taking behaviours.
- There is a lack of professional curiosity from the registered manager and staff surrounding adolescent behaviour, in particular gang affiliation.
- Staff do not have sufficient training in the needs of young people in their care.
- The registered manager has not ensured that staff have the skills to be able to safeguard all current young people.
- Staff do not ensure that young people's files hold all the required documentation about their care.
- The manager does not monitor care planning sufficiently to ensure that staff are able to provide consistent care.
- Staff do not always share information with professionals in a timely manner.
- The registered manager does not work in effective partnership with all relevant external agencies.
- Internal monitoring systems do not enable managers to evaluate effectively the quality of care provided by the service.
- Staff do not ensure that incident records always provide sufficient evidence to enable understanding of the risk and needs of each young person.
- Staff do not always follow safeguarding procedures that are in place to help keep young people safe.
- The registered manager failed to notify Ofsted of a serious event in relation to one young person.
- The registered manager does not ensure that safe recruitment practice is consistently applied to the whole workforce.

The children's home strengths

- Staff promote young people's physical health, including supporting them to access health services.
- Staff respect the feelings and views of young people and encourage them to make day-to-day decisions about the running of the home.
- Staff help young people to pursue individual interests and hobbies. This includes taking part in a range of activities which extends to leisure activities and trips.
- Staff support and encourage young people to maintain and develop family contact and friendships.
- Young people make good educational progress.

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, the 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
5: Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met In order to meet the engaging the wider system standard the registered person must ensure that staff – (b) seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs.	14/02/2017
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure – 1(a) that staff – (i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; (ii) help each child to understand how to keep safe; (iii) have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; (v) understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and (vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; (b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.	14/02/2017
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must ensure –	14/02/2017

(1) that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that – (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to – (a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and that delivers the outcomes set out in the home's statement of purpose; (c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; (i) keep up to date with research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continual improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may employ an individual to work at the children's home only if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph 3. The requirements are that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2 (Regulation 32(2)(3)).	14/02/2017
The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c)).	14/02/2017

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that the registered person has a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. The system should cover the action that should be followed if the event arises at the weekend or on a public holiday. Notification must include details of the action taken by the home's staff in response to the event ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13).
- Where a child returns to the home, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of 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 42, paragraph 9.26).

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and complex needs. The home is owned by a private provider.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/09/2015	Full	Good
26/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/12/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
Staff ensure that all young people have internal care plans which include important information about their care. Nevertheless, there are parts, especially risk assessments, that fail to capture key information. This results in young people not having all aspects of their risk assessed and managed in ways that enhance their well-being and safeguard them from harm. Young people enjoy good physical health through ongoing access to health services that they know and trust. There are also good links with specialised clinical services to meet the emotional needs of young people. Staff help young people to use reflective journal sessions to explore their feelings and backgrounds and to learn alternative ways of managing their frustrations. These diverse support systems promote young people's physical, emotional and mental health. Staff work with young people to help them make progress in a range of areas including social development, life skills, personal hygiene and managing emotions. Staff notice the different aspects of a young person's development and enthusiastically celebrate all achievements. For example, the staff have developed a three-monthly newsletter to celebrate individual successes. The newsletter is proudly displayed on a noticeboard and provides young people and staff with a visual reminder of progress. Young people respond positively to praise, and their confidence and self-esteem are increased because of this practice. All young people are engaged in education, although educational attainment is variable. Staff work in partnership with schools and placing authorities to make sure that tailor-made education packages are completed. This gives young people the best opportunity to progress in their education. Young people are consistently listened to through different forums. Key-working meetings are used well to discuss ongoing issues which young people are experiencing. Young people feel confident to identify issues and make suggestions about issues that are important to them. The manager has a good overview of these meetings and responds to each request. Staff ensure that opportunities exist for young people to participate in community activities. Staff recognise the importance of encouraging a range of activities to help develop young people's emotional well-being and self-esteem. For example, some young people enjoy community-based activities such as ice skating and going to the cinema. These daily experiences help young people to develop a sense of self-worth and to have a positive connection with their community.	

Staff speak highly of the young people and want the very best for them. Staff provide warm and nurturing relationships to young people. It is these relationships which help and support young people to invest in the placement. However, the absence of children looked after review minutes and updated care plans leaves staff inadequately informed about the needs of young people. Consequently, the opportunity to provide individualised care and support to young people is hampered.

Staff support and value young people's contact with their families and others that are important to them. This helps to ensure that young people sustain meaningful relationships with people who are important in their lives.

When it is appropriate, young people are encouraged to develop their levels of responsibility in preparation for the transition to adulthood. For example, young people are supported to manage a budget, to shop for food and to prepare their own meals. Individualised plans are put in place, and staff are enthusiastic in encouraging the young people's independence plans to ensure that they are fully prepared with the skills necessary to live independently in the future. One young person has recently successfully moved on to semi-independence. The support he received meant that he had the required life skills for this transition.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
Risks surrounding gang culture and adolescent behaviour are not sufficiently understood by the registered manager or the staff team. There is a lack of professional curiosity from the manager and staff, resulting in missed opportunities to ensure that young people receive the help and support that they need. The staff team's limited awareness of young people's vulnerabilities means that additional resources to maximise support are not secured. Specialised training is absent and leaves staff without the knowledge needed to safeguard young people in this area. The staff do not notify all appropriate authorities of significant events that have occurred. This includes the notification of the host local authority and Ofsted when a significant safeguarding matter arises. This omission leaves other professionals without key information. For example, during an isolated situation of heightened risk the police were not immediately informed. Some young people's behaviour is viewed in isolation, with no recognition of how this can manifest in increased risk-taking behaviours. Senior staff fail to analyse incidents in sufficient detail to help everyone understand the presenting risk or to communicate their concerns with other key professionals. This has caused	

confusion about events that have taken place and about who has taken actions to ensure that all young people and staff are safeguarded.

Staff do not sufficiently review and update risk assessments following serious incidents. This leaves staff without clear, consistent guidance, and consequently leaves young people at risk.

Some of the young people's risk-taking behaviours have decreased since admission. Young people who were previously at risk of child sexual exploitation are no longer, nor do they self-harm. When young people go missing from care, staff implement the missing from care protocol and are aware of how to safeguard young people from going missing. However, when a young person returns to the home, the placing local authority has not provided an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. This missed opportunity has meant that staff have been ill prepared in putting arrangements in place to protect each young person.

There is a lack of consistency in relation to partnership working with the police. Consequently, there are delays in information being shared, and the necessary support or service is not being secured. This leaves young people without access to early intervention and preventive work.

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 since the last inspection.

The registered manager ensures that staff undertake regular health and safety checks and follow a range of safety procedures to protect young people from potential hazards. These include fire drills to ensure that young people know what to do in case of an emergency.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate
The registered manager has been in post since November 2015. She is currently working towards the level 5 diploma in leadership and management. Four staff members hold the necessary level 3 diploma in residential childcare. A further four staff members are currently enrolled on this course. Staff report that they receive good support and guidance from the manager. They	

receive regular supervision that supports their performance and challenges them to improve. Staff feel valued and supported by the manager and each other. They feel that they are listened to and that their views are valued. This helps the staff to remain motivated in their care of young people.

The home has experienced a stable period since the interim inspection. For the majority of this period it has not been necessary for staff to implement any safeguarding procedure. However, a new admission in October has created some challenges for staff. Staff have lost confidence in their application of safeguarding processes and therefore have not consistently ensured that all young people have been adequately protected from harm. During this period, there has been a lack of appropriate managerial oversight and review in respect of managing incidents. This has meant that risks have not been effectively managed, leaving some young people vulnerable and at immediate and ongoing risk of harm.

The manager makes sure that the statement of purpose provides clear information about the level of service provided. The children's guide is in an accessible format. This means that young people are clear about the services that the home provides.

Young people's files do not hold all the required documentation. The weakness of leaders in monitoring and implementing informed care planning has had a detrimental impact on the quality of care that young people receive. For example, key information is missing, including updated risk assessments and statutory care plans. This means that managers and staff are unable to track the progress that young people make. This limits the opportunity for staff to identify patterns or trends that negatively influence young people's development.

The registered manager ensures that an independent person visits the home every month to monitor and report on the quality of care provided. Monitoring reports provide a review of the home's practice relating to the quality of young people's care and identify areas for improvement. Regular consultations with young people, parents and other professionals also help to influence the progress of the home.

The registered manager does not follow safe recruitment practice. For example, some references have not been appropriately verified for some established members of staff. This gap in practice has the potential to compromise young people's safety.

The registered manager is aware of the strengths of the home and the areas for development, inclusive of the shortfalls identified during inspection. Staff remain enthusiastic and committed to ensuring that the service continues to evolve and develop for the benefit of the young people in their care.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors 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, 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 ensure that their welfare is 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 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 the help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors 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'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017