

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	30/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC359818
Type of inspection	Interim
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	Alison Blythe-Bishop
Registered manager	Dimple Ghera
Inspector	Rachel Britten

Inspection date	30/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness. There are a number of new staff, but the manager, two senior staff and a number of long standing residential workers remain. Young people still rate the home highly and feel at home. Their feedback forms say things like: 'it's a proper home', 'they talk to me nicely'; 'I feel I'm more comfortable'; 'staff are sound as a pound.' The home's monthly independent visitors still comment regularly on the 'good systems and nice atmosphere.' Young people are relaxed and spend an adequate amount of time engaged with staff during the school holidays. Since the last inspection, four young people have moved on. Two of them are coping quite well in supported foster care or independent living and are continuing their education. Staff describe one of these as 'a real success story.' Two other young people have moved on to other residential placements. Reflective practice has been prioritised in response to the recommendation made at the last inspection. The manager completes impact risk assessments for new admissions. Behaviour risk management plans and care/placement plans are written and kept under review. However, many of these documents do not help staff know how to help young people or what targets they are focusing on. Many of young people's known difficulties are not clearly and helpfully stated in impact risk assessments, placement plans and behaviour management plans. Plans do not state clearly how staff should respond to young people's difficulties and what they are aiming to achieve. Plans do not show clearly what young people have already achieved or how staff helped them. Most staff demonstrate competence, skill and some insight into young people's needs but they do not refer to written plans and tools much because they do not find them helpful. Young people are not familiar with what is in their plans. As a result, staff's input and engagement with young people during daily living is sometimes vague and lacking in real purpose. Young people also cannot say what they are aiming for, what they need to do and what help staff are giving them.	

On isolated occasions young people have gone missing; smoked in their bedrooms; accessed the loft space; and damaged their bedrooms and the kitchen. Staff's response to incidents is generally proactive and reflective. However, staff do not always demonstrate good understanding of the factors that affect children's motivation to behave in a socially acceptable way. For example, staff reinstated the old rule about locking the kitchen at 9pm. They say young people are 'up and down all the time' and 'there's a lot to do in the evenings.'

On the day of inspection, staffing levels and the absence of the manager detracted from the quality of young people's experience. Staff's enthusiasm for engaging young people was adequate, but not good. Young people said they were bored. Staff did not have basic sewing equipment for a young person to mend an item of clothing and a young person who likes arts and crafts had no materials made available or staff help to pursue this interest.

Overall, the home has sustained its good quality since the last inspection. Placing social workers continue to be impressed with the quality of the home. One social worker said, 'I am impressed by the routines and the knowledge you have established to meet his needs and manage his behaviour. I am very pleased to hear that he was given opportunities to socialise with the other young people, demonstrate his abilities and interests and help him to boost his self-esteem...Thank you.' Another social worker is impressed at the home's success in helping her young person attend education. She described the home as an 'excellent service.' A relative said, 'he is a much better person – thank you.'

Information about this children's home

The home is one of a group of homes operated by a large independent organisation. This home provides care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/07/2015	CH - Full	Good
10/03/2015	CH - Interim	Declined in effectiveness
17/12/2014	CH - Full	Good
07/02/2014	CH - Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that the registered person plans staffing levels to ensure that they meet the needs of children and can respond flexibly to unexpected events or opportunities. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 54, paragraph 10.15)
- Ensure that staff understand factors that affect children's motivation to behave in a socially acceptable way. Staff should encourage an enthusiasm for positive behaviour through the use of positive behaviour strategies in line with the child's relevant plans. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 39, paragraph 8.13)
- Ensure that staff and managers continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day to day basis. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- Ensure that the registered person only accepts placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 56, paragraph 11.4)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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