

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	3 May 2016
Unique reference number	SC359846
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Cambian Childcare Ltd
Registered person address	4th Floor Waterfront Building, Hammersmith Embankment, London W6 9RU

Responsible individual	Alison Blyth-Bishop
Registered manager	Paul Gouldingay
Inspector	Lisa Walsh

Inspection date	3 May 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	Requires improvement

SC359846

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- Risk assessments are not sufficiently robust. They fail to take account of all of the available information and to assess accurately the level of risk to young people. This leaves staff without clear guidance around how to respond to risk taking behaviours.
- Young people do not receive planned and purposeful input into learning about their risk-taking behaviours.
- Key-working sessions do not cover core areas such as sexual exploitation.
- Not all young people are attending education and making good educational progress.
- Young people smoke in their bedrooms. They are not continually discouraged from smoking or purchasing cigarettes. Staff do not effectively ensure that young people are aware of the health risks. Young people are not appropriately supported to access smoking cessation services.
- Young people are not supported to express their views and opinions regarding the quality of care that they receive. They are not effectively encouraged to contribute to their care plans or to review the content of their case files. This hinders young people's opportunity to be involved in the development of their placement.
- Staff do not ensure that young people's case files are kept up to date. Case files do not include all necessary information and documentation and, therefore, do not provide young people with a true reflection of their placement.
- Management monitoring systems are not fully effective.

The children's home strengths

- Young people are no longer involved in some risk-taking behaviours such as drug taking and being missing from care.
- Young people feel safe.
- Staff work well with parents and provide support promptly and effectively to sustain and improve relationships between children, young people and their parents to support contact arrangements.
- All young people have positive relationships with members of staff, and like living at the home.
- Young people receive care from a consistent and stable staff team.
- Staff effectively communicate with placing social workers and others involved in the care and support of young people.
- Clear expectations about behaviour are in place. Physical interventions are rare. Young people are learning socially acceptable behaviours and how to manage their emotions.
- Young people learn skills to prepare them for their future, when they move into adulthood and independence.
- A new manager has recently come into post and recognises areas for development.
- Staff work in partnership with safeguarding agencies.

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 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
7: The children's views, wishes and feelings standard In order to meet the children's views, wishes and feelings standard the registered person must ensure that children receive care from staff who, with particular reference to key working and care planning (2) (ii) help each child to express views, wishes and feelings.	31 May 2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure – with specific reference to risk assessments (2)(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; (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.	31 May 2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure – with specific reference to	6 May 2016

bedroom conditions and smoking in bedrooms (d) that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health.	
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person is required to 2 (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	31 May 2016
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home; this is with particular reference to young people smoking in their bedrooms (Regulation 25(1)).	31 May 2016
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)).	28 June 2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is one of a group of homes operated by the same organisation. The home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27 January 2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10 June 2015	Full	Requires improvement
6 January 2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
5 August 2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
Young people are not sufficiently engaged in education. Staff try hard to encourage engagement with the use of incentive programmes. However, staff are hampered by the absence of personal education plans on young people's files. This limits opportunity for staff to develop understanding around the barrier to learning and individual ability. When young people do not have suitable school placements, staff work in partnership with their specialist education co-ordinator in an attempt to reduce disruption to young people's learning, where possible. Young people no longer use drugs and are no longer missing from care. They also benefit from consistent care, as the staff team working in the home is stable. Young people feel safe and secure, as they receive predictable and reliable care. Warm and respectful relationships are evident between staff and young people, and between the young people themselves. Staff celebrate their achievements and special occasions. Staff recognise the importance of healthy activities to their emotional well-being and self-esteem. They engage with them and encourage them to be active. There is a lack of consistently planned and purposeful key working sessions to meet the individual needs of young people. Current key work does not fully draw on the information contained in local authority care plans. Key work does not consistently allow young people to develop insight into risk taking behaviour. Young people are not supported to understand issues of sexual exploitation. They are not provided with the support to increase their safety and understanding skills to engage in safer behaviours, make safer choices and deal with the consequences of sexual exploitation effectively. Independence work is individualised and is a strength of the home. One young person is currently fully engaged with the programme. He stated: 'I do most of my own cooking now on independence, I love it'. This young person is enjoying developing essential life skills in budgeting, cooking and self-care. Staff work with social workers and the placing authorities to ensure that young people are able to maintain relationships with their families. One social worker said that staff have	

'excellent communication skills'. When contact restrictions are in place, staff clearly explain these, and young people receive practical and emotional support to attend contact visits. This means that, despite living long distances from family, young people are not unnecessarily isolated from them.

Consultation with young people is not embedded in routines in the home. Young people say that they participate in regular meetings with staff to decide upon meal choices and activities, but do not discuss the development of the home. Young people's views, wishes and opinions are not sufficiently included in internal care plans, risk assessments or support plans. Young people are not directly involved in decisions about their care or plans for their future. This means that young people are not central to their own care planning process.

Health professionals work with staff to ensure that young people have access to the specialist services they need. When required, referrals are made to mental health agencies. This means that health assessments are not delayed and that young people are quickly provided with the support they need. Nevertheless, staff do not continually encourage young people to maintain a healthy lifestyle. For example, when young people smoke, they are not provided with up-to-date information regarding the risks associated with this. Staff are aware that young people use their pocket money to purchase cigarettes, but do not challenge this. This is detrimental to young people's development.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
Some of young people's risk taking behaviours have significantly decreased, since admission. Young people who were previously dependent upon cannabis are no longer, nor do they self-harm. There has been a significant reduction in the number of episodes of young people going missing from the home since the last inspection. Staff understand the 'missing from care' protocols and are aware of how to safeguard young people from going missing. Staff utilise the established positive relationships with the police. The registered manager works in effective partnership with local police, and local authorities to protect young people from harm, in these circumstances. This solid partnership ensures that local intelligence is shared. The home's designated point of contact in the police has been	

particularly impressed with this relationship. She said the following: 'The staff are a pleasure to work with and the level of professionalism within the home has made me feel proud to be a part of it.'

The absence of written robust risk assessments does however leave staff without clarity and guidance on occasions when the registered manager is not available. This practice also limits opportunity for risks being appropriately monitored and the tracking of progress.

Staff provide warm and nurturing relationships to young people. It is these relationships which help and support them to invest in the placement. They build trusting relationships with key staff members, and this enables staff to help to keep them safe. However, The absence of looked after review minutes, care plans and personal education plans leaves staff inadequately informed of the needs of young people and the basis of their individual care. As a consequence, the opportunity to provide individualised care and support to young people is hampered.

There have been no complaints from young people for some time. Staff ensure that young people receive information about how to make a complaint on their admission to the home. Young people spoken to said that they would be happy to talk to a staff member if they had any problems. They are also confident that staff will take their problems seriously.

There is a calm and homely atmosphere in the home. All staff receive training in behaviour management, including the safe use of restraint. Staff are patient with young people and help them to develop their own coping mechanisms. Young people benefit from clear and consistent boundaries. 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. Young people are able to make positive decisions about their behaviour. This is demonstrated by the fact that there has been no incidents of physical restraint since the last inspection.

The home is physically safe and secure, with the exception of the young people's bedrooms. Young people have recently been covering the smoke detectors in their bedrooms to enable them to smoke without setting off the smoke alarms. There is a 'no smoking' policy within the home, which is not adhered to due to this practice. Young people are not consistently encouraged and supported to engage with professionals in respect of smoking cessation. Staff do not always fully implement their responsibility for maintaining all young people's health and well-being by monitoring smoking sufficiently, therefore creating health risks through direct and

passive smoking. This practice compromises the safety of young people and staff.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
The registered manager has been in post since 2013. He has considerable experience and is qualified to level 5 Diploma in leadership and management. He is suitably qualified and experienced. He has addressed the shortfalls highlighted at the last inspection. This manager is due to leave the home in May 2016. A new manager has been recruited. She has received a full induction to the company and the home. This will support a smooth transition process. The new manager has extensive experience of working with children and young people as a registered manager, and is enthusiastic about the development of the home. She is aware of the need to improve services within the home and is currently exploring a programme of change to support this. In addition, the home have eleven members of staff and of these, nine are qualified to level 3 diploma in child care. The remaining two members of staff are currently working towards this qualification. Staff are committed and child-focused in their practice. Staff are carefully selected and are appropriately vetted to care for young people. Staff complete a full induction, including all mandatory training, prior to working with young people. Staff receive supervision on a regular basis and staff undertake this task have had the necessary training to enable them to conduct it effectively. The home has a staff rota that provides consistency for young people. Staff are suitably qualified and trained in areas such as first aid, physical intervention and safeguarding. There is a clear statement of purpose in place that details the aims and objectives of the home. The document is specific in respect the approach to consulting children about the quality of their care. Unfortunately the home is not providing young people with sufficient opportunity to be involved in this process meaning their voice is not heard. Young people's files do not hold all the required documentation. The weakness of leaders to monitor and implement informed care planning has had a detrimental impact on the quality of care that young people receive. For example, key	

information is missing, including statutory care plans, risk assessments and personal education plans. Documents are not appropriately signed and dated. 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 impact on young people's development and change practice in the best interest of young people.

Despite the absence of key records, the registered manager has developed strong links with professionals from a wide range of agencies including the police, youth offending teams, education, social workers and mental health professionals. The majority of feedback from other professionals is excellent and highlights effective joint working. For example, a social worker stated, 'We have worked well in partnership', despite meetings taking place out of the city. The designated officer commented, 'I do not have any current or ongoing concerns around their practice'. Finally, a police officer stated, 'We share intelligence and information vital to the safeguarding of the children. This integrated approach to protecting young people means that some aspects of young people life are increasingly safer.

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 looked after children 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 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 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 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 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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