

Children's homes – interim inspection

Inspection date	31/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC359846
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Cambian Childcare Ltd
Registered provider address	4th Floor, Waterfront, Hammersmith Embankment, London, W6 9RU

Responsible individual	Alison Blyth-Bishop
Registered manager	Vacant
Inspector	Lisa Walsh

Inspection date	31/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
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 requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, the home was 'not judged'. At the time of this inspection, there were no young people living in the home. Since the last inspection in May 2016, nine young people have lived at the home. Young people's experiences at the home have been varied. Some improved significantly, whereas others have had their placements terminated on an emergency basis because of external influences, which have led to criminalisation. The home has had two managers in post since the last inspection. Both of these managers have left. A new manager has recently been appointed. The absence of a permanent long-term manager has created feelings of instability in the staff team, and staff morale has declined as a result. This has led to a decrease in confidence in some staff practice and abilities. For example, staff have become over-reliant on the manager's instructions and this has created some unnecessary delays in staff taking action. Since the last inspection, staff and young people have been through a challenging time. There have been incidents of substance misuse, young people going missing, and extremely challenging behaviours. The staff team has implemented safeguarding procedures in an attempt to address the risks. Managers have actively challenged other agencies when safeguarding concerns have been raised. The manager's action has ensured that young people have been better protected. Strong relationships with the police and local authorities were used to protect young people from further harm. Shortfalls in the referral process have meant that vital information was not being shared with the manager and staff by a local authority when placing a young person in the home. This compromised the protection of young people and staff. For example, insufficient information was shared with the manager around risk-taking behaviours. This resulted in the manager accepting the admission of a young person without being able to carry out a rigorous risk assessment that took into account historic risk-taking behaviour. This meant that staff were not sufficiently informed and were hindered in their capacity to meet the young person's needs. Managers have recognised this shortfall in practice and have taken effective action. They have developed an information-gathering tool to assist with	

decision making for future admissions. This means that future admissions will be subject to much more scrutiny and consideration.

Managers have successfully addressed all of the requirements and recommendations made at the full inspection. This has seen improvements in how staff help young people to express their views and wishes, with adaptations made to the format of house meetings. There have also been improvements in how staff engage with partner agencies, in particular the fire service. All staff have been trained in fire awareness. Young people engaged in a workshop led by the fire service, which supported them to recognise the significance of fire safety. This means that young people's safety and well-being were prioritised.

The quality of key work has improved since the last inspection. A refocusing of supervision and training now means that staff have the skills and knowledge to be able to discuss complex issues and help young people to recognise potential risks. Key working sessions had a clear focus on the young person's specific needs, including, when required, covering sensitive topics such as healthy relationships and sexual health. All young people have participated in house meetings. Young people have had the support to understand how decisions were made and the degree to which they were able to influence them. Complaints were rare, and when raised were swiftly examined with young people receiving a response.

Partnership working with other agencies has been key in helping some young people to make good levels of progress educationally, socially and emotionally. The staff were successful in reintegrating some of most resistant of young people back into education. This helped young people to start to see the importance of education for their future.

Young people's health needs were promoted and reviewed. For example, the staff ensured that young people had access to children and adolescent mental health services. Managers also ensured that the staff team received specialist training to meet each young person's needs; this is with specific reference to supporting young people who were at risk of sexual exploitation.

Incidents of restraint were low and only conducted when necessary. Records of such incidents were completed well, supporting the safety of young people and staff.

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 who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/05/2016	Full	Requires improvement
27/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/06/2015	Full	Requires improvement
06/01/2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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 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 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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