

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC457132
Inspector	Norma Welsby
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	Sharon Michelle Edney
Registered manager	John Antony Minty
Date of last inspection	22/01/2014

Inspection date	08/10/2014
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	inadequate progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
-------------------	-------------

This single placement children's home provides a highly personalised service. Young people thrive in this setting. Those who have previously succumbed to negative peer pressure do especially well. Relationships between staff and young people are excellent. Young people benefit from having a small group of dedicated carers who know them well and who invest in their success.

Placing authorities are very positive about this setting. Comments received include; 'I am very impressed with this home. The young person has done so well'.

Young people make excellent progress in many areas of their lives. Their behaviour is positively managed through carefully considered strategies and boundaries. Risk taking behaviour is reduced. Staff advocate well for young people to ensure they are treated fairly and equally to their peers. They enjoy opportunities that broaden their insight and understanding of the wider world. For example young people are involved in meaningful community activities such as police cadets.

At the last inspection the home was judged to have made inadequate progress. This primarily related to the lack of a timely and thorough response to shortfalls identified during the previous inspection. These matters have now been addressed and the leadership team is fully aware of the importance of addressing matters robustly.

Since the last inspection there have been no compliance concerns.

Some shortfalls were identified during this inspection. These do not currently adversely impact on the good progress young people are making. However by addressing these matters, the service will ensure high standards are maintained throughout the service. Notably, the Registered Manager's quality review should be more detailed about how he intends to make further improvements to the quality of care provided.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is part of a private national provider and is situated on the outskirts of a small town. The home offers care and accommodation to one child with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/01/2014	Interim	inadequate progress
14/08/2013	Full	good

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
34 (2001)	Ensure the registered person establishes and maintains a system for (b) improved the quality of care provided in the children's home (Regulation 34 (1) (b))	30/10/2014

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that young people have prompt access to doctors and other health professionals, including specialist services, when they need these services. In particular, this refers to meeting young people's emotional and social development needs and helping young people reflect on and understand

their history (NMS 6.4).

- Ensure the home is well maintained. In particular, ensure the garden is well maintained, including paved areas.(NMS 10.3)
- Ensure that there is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take action when needed. In particular, ensure any recent changes in agreements reached with the placing authority are clearly recorded in all relevant records. (NMS 22.1).

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people enjoy the benefits of living in a single placement. They feel free from peer pressure and are able to engage positively with staff. They do not have to manage the impact of other young people's behaviour on them. This means that, with staff support, they can better sustain their own progress.

A strength of this service is that young people are able to form and sustain positive attachments to their small group of carers. This helps them to develop their emotional resilience, confidence and sense of security. Relationships between staff and young people are based on mutual respect. Interactions are positive and nurturing. Young person's comments include; 'I am happy here. The staff are really nice'.

Communication between staff and young people is excellent. Young people benefit from being able to talk openly to staff. They know what is expected of them and feel central to the functioning of the home. Young people are involved in planning for their future and attend meetings. This is significant progress for some young people. Young people have a child-friendly summary of their placement plan which outlines their targets and how they can be achieved. The placement is more successful for young people because they are involved in decision making. Sometimes too, contracts are drawn up between the placing authority, carers and young people. This clarifies expectations. It also empowers young people as it provides them with the opportunity to make informed choices and to succeed.

Young people benefit from personalised care. This is apparent in the way staff support healthy lifestyles. For example, good attention is given to ensuring young people learn about healthy eating and what decisions they need to make to reduce risk taking behaviour. While young people benefit from staff supporting their emotional and psychological health, specialist therapeutic support is not always available in a timely way. The manager is aware of the importance of escalating this shortfall. Young people are supported to attend school and attendance is good. Staff are also mindful of young people's enjoyment and achievement and so advocate on their behalf to identify bespoke learning opportunities. This means that young people will have better opportunities when they leave school to seek employment or further education.

Staff are effective in supporting young people to achieve personal targets. For example, staff are confident in their own professional insight and are able to support young people to take considered risks. For young people this means that they are able to enjoy many activities that their peers take for granted, such as free time, access to the internet and having friends visit for meals. Young people know that staff have trust in them and this knowledge supports them to improve their choices.

This is important as it effectively prepares young people for life when they leave the children's home. If setbacks do occur, staff support young people in a nurturing and positive way to learn from their experiences.

Quality of care

good

The quality of care provided by this home arises from the excellent relationships that exist between staff and young people. There is a highly personalised and holistic approach to care planning. Young people feel valued. They know that while they may not always agree with everything staff do to support them, they understand the reasons why and that staff act in their best interests. They also know that their behaviour can affect positive change.

Staff clearly demonstrate to young people that they are concerned about their welfare and future success. This knowledge engages young people well. By seeking their views and demonstrating impact, staff are able to work in partnership with young people. They show, by example, how targets can be reached by having a considered approach. For example, a recent positive development has been the agreement of unsupervised free time for young people. This achievement has taught young people that positive outcomes can be secured by having patience and by meeting expectations. Indeed, behaviour in this setting is effectively managed by staff setting clear expectations and reasonable boundaries. This setting has not had any physical interventions for more than four years, nor has a young person gone missing for nearly two years.

The environment is comfortable and homely. The house is an ordinary domestic dwelling in a pleasant residential area. Young people say they like the home and setting and feel safe living there. It provides good access to a range of local facilities and the location does not present any notable risks to young people. Some aspects of maintenance are not addressed promptly. For example, during this inspection the rear garden was a little overgrown and paving had been made unstable by tree roots.

Staff work positively and proactively with other agencies to secure positive outcomes for young people. They address challenges and barriers and seek opportunities for young people that are equal to their peers. A good example of this occurred recently. Staff identified that school had different expectations in respect of sanctions (reparations) for looked after children. This was challenged to ensure young people in this home are not unfairly treated.

Good attention is given to enabling young people to participate in a range of purposeful and enjoyable activities. This includes supporting known interests and hobbies and having opportunities to try new things. Staff also facilitate young people having opportunities to spend time with their friends and family.

Keeping children and young people safe **good**

Young people confirm they feel safe living in this home. They enjoy living in a single placement and feel it suits their needs. Young people confirm that they can talk openly to their carers and trust them to act in their best interests.

Safeguarding of young people is effective. Staff receive initial and ongoing refresher training. They also have regular team discussions. Staff know the correct procedures to follow and who are the designated safeguarding persons within the company. Young people benefit from staff having regular one to one discussions with them about risk taking behaviour. This helps them learn how they can better protect themselves.

Visitors to the home are appropriately vetted. Staff recruitment procedures are thorough. Appropriate checks are carried out prior to a new member of staff being appointed. These records are scanned through to the home for the manager's oversight. Young people also have the opportunity to meet with prospective staff and have opportunities to be involved in interviews.

Within the home, regular health and safety checks are in place to protect young people and staff. Servicing of utilities is regularly scheduled and risk assessments, including a fire risk assessment is in place. Staff and young people regularly practice fire drills.

Behaviour is particularly well managed. The home is rightly proud of its record that there have been no physical interventions with any young person for more than four years. Incentives and positive consequences are used effectively. Sanctions are rarely used. These practices reflect the positive relationships young people and staff enjoy. They promote young people's personal dignity and feelings of self worth. They also enable young people to develop trust and experience the benefits of having positive relationships with adults. The home has a missing from care protocol in place. They liaise with local police and involve them positively in the lives of young people. Young people have not gone missing from this setting for nearly two years. Again, this is further endorsement of the effectiveness of this service. Staff listen to young people, negotiate with them and advocate on their behalf to achieve reasonable and age appropriate targets.

Leadership and management **good**

An experienced and suitably qualified Registered Manager is in post. As well as this setting, the manager is also responsible for managing another single placement children's home located nearby. The Registered Manager has been responsible for both settings for several years and has consistently achieved good outcomes with young people.

A small staff team work at this home. All have a level 3 qualification in caring for children and young people. Staffing arrangements provide for one to one support and the Registered Manager works across both of the settings he is responsible for. Staff receive on going support through regular supervision and team meetings and through an extensive training programme. When the Registered Manager is not available there is an on call senior member of staff within the company who staff can contact if they need to. Lone working risk assessments are in place. Staff feel positive about working in this way. One member of staff describing it as 'an opportunity to devote time and attention entirely to the young person'.

This home has a good track record of admitting complex and needy young people and improving their life chances. Staff speak affectionately about current and past residents and feel proud of the difference living in this home has made to them.

Records, including young people's records, are generally of a good standard. There is evidence that records are regularly reviewed. However, not all records fully and accurately record all recent changes, such as revised agreements with the placing authority. While staff were fully aware of these, recording discrepancies could lead to inconsistent practices.

The home's Statement of Purpose has been updated and reviewed to reflect recent changes. It is understood that a more extensive review is planned and a copy will be sent to Ofsted. Young people have a child-friendly guide and access to important information such as how to make a complaint.

The home has a development plan. Regular monitoring of the home also takes place. These processes are thorough and contribute to on going improvements. However the Registered Manager's review of quality does not fully explore ways to make further improvements to the quality of care young people receive. Evidencing what further improvements the Registered Manager intends would compliment the development plan and provide a more robust improvement agenda.

The service demonstrates a clear commitment to improving the service to benefit young people. The Registered Manager has complied with the requirements and recommendations made at the previous inspection. The physical environment has been improved to provide consistent standards and comfort throughout for young people to enjoy. Where shortfalls were identified in important records, these have also been addressed. The Registered Manager also expressed his commitment to taking appropriate action to address the areas identified for improvement as a result of this inspection.

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.