

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC457272
Inspector	Clive Lucas
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	Victor Takadiwa
Registered manager	Charles Shuwa Tosan / POST VACANT
Date of last inspection	08/01/2014

Inspection date	17/09/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	adequate
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Since the previous inspection there has been a compliance case, which involved Ofsted asking the provider to look into some areas and provide a report into them. The inspection was brought forwards to follow this up. We found that the matters had been dealt with appropriately and the case has been closed.

Staff at the home provide individualised care for young people. They have a good awareness of young people's needs and how to work with them, but the plans do not reflect this in all areas. Some are not as comprehensive as they should be. Risk management plans are better and do provide clear information on how to reduce risks that young people may be vulnerable to.

Young people are helped to prepare for independence including how to look after their own health. This work is done at each young person's own pace. The educational attainment of young people varies. All young people receive support from staff to find appropriate further education and employment opportunities. For some young people this is very successful. Other young people have not done as well in education as they have the potential to. There has been a period of more unsettled behaviour, but this is decreasing as a result of changes in staff practice. Young people have good relationships with staff.

There is currently not a registered manager at the home. A manager has been appointed and has submitted an application to register. The short-term interim management arrangements are working satisfactorily. There are shortfalls in some management areas despite the suitability of the current arrangements. There is active monitoring of the quality of care, and improvements are being made in some areas. However, the specific plans to improve the care of young people are not sufficiently focused to be effective.

The Statement of Purpose and Children's Guide require attention to meet the requirements of The Children's Homes Regulations 2001. Staff are supervised regularly and say that they are supported and inspired by managers. However, the formal supervisions do not regularly include discussions on staff performance. This limits their effectiveness in monitoring staff practice.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This service provides three placements for children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. A private organisation owns and operates this setting.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/01/2014	Interim	good progress
10/09/2013	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
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there, this relates to having comprehensive and up to date plans for young people (Regulation 11(1)(a))	31/10/2014
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for improving the quality of care provided in the children's home (Regulation 34(1)(b))	28/11/2014
4 (2001)	compile in relation to the children's home a written Statement of Purpose which shall consist of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1 of The Children's Homes Regulations 2001 (Regulation 4(1))	31/10/2014
5 (2001)	notify HMCI of any revision of the Statement of	28/11/2014

	Purpose within 28 days (Regulation 5(b))	
4 (2001)	ensure that the children's guide is produced in a form appropriate to the age, understanding and communication needs of the children to be accommodated in the home (Regulation 4(4))	31/10/2014
27 (2001)	ensure that all persons employed at the home receive appropriate supervision. This relates to supervision being effective at monitoring and improving staff practice. (Regulation 27(4)(a))	31/10/2014

Recommendations

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

- have a written development plan, reviewed annually, for the future of the home, either identifying any planned changes in the operation or resources of the service. This relates to having a plan that is useable and effective. (NMS 15.2)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **adequate**

The outcomes for young people in the home vary and some are more positive than others, but overall they are adequate. Young people are able to find out about how they can look after their health. Some young people who are preparing for independence learn how to make their own appointments and health arrangements, but still get help from staff when they need it. This helps them to learn about these matters in a supportive environment, with the safety net of staff guidance if they are uncertain about anything. Some, but not all young people, improve their health by giving up smoking. Young people can share their views through regular residents meetings and by speaking directly to staff. In this way they can learn about appropriate communication and negotiation.

Young people's attendance at school and their educational attainment are variable. They do not all fulfil their potential in achieving educational outcomes and exam success. However, they receive help to look for suitable further education courses and some are enthusiastically looking forwards to their future career and employment options. The educational outcomes for some young people at school will limit their future opportunities.

Young people are able to learn skills they will need for independence and adult life. These include shopping, budgeting and cooking. Social workers comment on the work towards independence being done at a pace that is appropriate for individual young people. This will help to make the work effective. Young people have opportunities to experience and enjoy holidays that will give them positive memories of their childhood and help to build their self-esteem. They are helped to budget and plan for holidays which helps them to appreciate the importance of saving and the value of special experiences. Young people are supported by staff to maintain contact with friends and families as appropriate. This allows them to maintain important relationships and develop a sense of their background.

Quality of care **adequate**

Young people have good relationships with staff who work in the home. This helps young people to feel valued and know what good, appropriate relationships are like. There have been times when young people's behaviour has been a cause for concern, involving damage to property and being missing from the home. This has decreased recently as a result of new approaches and practices by staff. There is a reluctance to involve the police due to damage that young people cause. This helps to prevent criminalising them. The rota has been changed so that staff are available at crucial times for young people, including into the night. The effectiveness of

behaviour management techniques, including sanctions, has been reviewed and changes made as a result. The reduction in concerning behaviour is recent and the behaviour has not stopped completely, but at the time of the inspection the situation was improving.

There are sound relationships with other agencies. In some cases these are very positive and in others they have improved recently. Positive relationships with other agencies help to provide effective and consistent care for young people, limiting the potential for issues to be missed. Written plans are not as clear and consistent as they could be. However, staff have good awareness of the needs of young people, the way they need to work with them and the plans for them. This helps to minimise the potential impact of the plans not being up to date and comprehensive in some areas, but not to remove it completely.

Young people know how to make a complaint should they need to. Staff work with other agencies to help meet young people's needs and help them to keep safe. Referrals are made to external professionals to help address health needs of young people. There is a psychologist within the company who visits the home and speaks with staff about how they can best work with young people. However, this is not reflected in young people's plans, so the positive impact on young people is limited.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people have risk management plans that include clear information on the risks that they may be subject to and the action needed to be taken by staff to reduce these risks. These plans are regularly reviewed so that the information is up to date. A placing social worker commented that the home has very robust safety policies relating specifically to the young person they work with. There is low use of restraint in the home and this is monitored by managers to ensure it is used appropriately. Youth offending workers say that staff at the home are very good at working with them so that they can have a consistent approach in helping young people to address any inappropriate behaviours.

Staff take strong action in response to young people being missing from the home. This includes attempts to dissuade them from leaving, following them or looking for them and attempting to keep contact with them through their mobile telephones. The police and placing social workers comment on the positive action that staff take in response to young people being missing. This helps to reduce the instances and length of time that young people are missing and consequently reduce the risk to them while they are missing. Relationships with the police have been through a period when they were not as positive as they had previously been. The acting manager has arranged meetings with the police and the relationships have recently improved. Police officers spoken with during the inspection were positive about the home and the work they do. They say there is good communication with the home.

Staff use individual key working sessions with young people to discuss issues such as appropriate behaviour and any risk taking behaviours that the young people are involved in. These sessions can be planned, or ad-hoc to make the most of times when the young people are more responsive, such as when they are in the car with staff. The recognition by staff of when young people are more likely to listen and engage helps to ensure that the work is successful.

Leadership and management

adequate

There is currently not a Registered Manager in post at this home. They moved to manage another home within the organisation on 7 August 2014. A new manager has been appointed and is due to take up his post on 6 October 2014. He has already submitted an application for registration. There are interim management arrangements that involve the regional manager covering the post for three days a week and the two seniors filling in around this. This is working satisfactorily. Staff commented upon the positive impact that the regional manager is having. They also spoke about the visits to the home by the Responsible Individual and discussions he had with staff over the interim management arrangements. The acting manager is effectively leading and supporting staff, so that they can work effectively with young people.

There were not any shortfalls identified in the last Ofsted report. Managers regularly monitor records such as restraints and sanctions. They write monitoring reports within the timescales set out in The Children's Homes Regulations 2001. However, despite providing a thorough picture of what the home is doing well, the reports do not clearly address shortfalls and identify how the care provided to young people can be improved. There is a development plan for the home, but it is very long and does not set clear time related objectives. It does not show any review or update. These issues limit the potential for improvement in the quality of care provided by the home. However, recent changes to practice, as set out elsewhere in this report, have resulted in improvements in how young people are being looked after.

There is a Statement of Purpose for the home and this has been revised following the changes in Registered Manager and Responsible Individual. However, it does not fully cover all the areas set out in The Children's Homes Regulations 2001. The most recent version of the Statement of Purpose was not sent to Ofsted. There is a Children's Guide that provides information for young people in the home. While it covers the required areas, it is not in a suitable child-friendly format. This means that young people are less likely to find it informative and helpful.

Staff are supervised regularly and there are records of the supervisions. Staff are routinely asked if they have any concerns about any practices within the home, which helps to ensure that any poor practice would be identified. However, supervisions do not include discussions about staff performance. Consequently, staff practice is not as effectively monitored as it could be.

Young people say the home is probably as close as it could be to being a real home for them. A number of improvements have been made and more are planned. Overall the home is well maintained and furnished. An external professional said that when they visit the home is always clean and tidy.

Complaints are dealt with in line with the home's policy and within appropriate timescales. Lessons are learned from complaints and changes are made as a result. This helps to improve the quality of care and provides a safeguard for young people.

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.