

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	5 July 2016
Unique reference number	SC471153
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Cambian Childcare Ltd
Registered provider address	4th Floor, Waterfront, Hammersmith Embankment, London W6 9RU

Responsible individual	Michael Coleman
Registered manager	Sara Stoker
	Katherine Baker
Inspector	Joanna Heller

Inspection date	5 July 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved Effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC471153

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people benefit from a stable, committed, well-trained and supported staff team. They experience care from a knowledgeable staff team that has particular regard for their past experiences and their presenting behaviours.
- Young people benefit from establishing trusting relationships with adults who care about their welfare. As a result, they feel able to open up about any worries or concerns that they may have.
- Young people enjoy living at the home and feel safe and well supported. There is a variety of positive role models with whom they establish strong relationships. The young people say that there is always someone whom they can talk to about their worries.
- While risk-taking behaviours are not eradicated, they significantly reduce.
- Young people are making good progress in health, education, behaviour and social relationships.
- Equality and diversity are threaded through the service. Staff provide sensitive, non-judgmental support helping young people to explore their prejudices, sexuality and identity in a safe environment.
- Close partnership working with other agencies ensures that appropriate measures are in place to protect young people.
- This inspection identifies some shortfalls and areas for improvement, such as medication management, staff training and maintenance of records. However, they are not currently having an impact on the safety and well-being of young people.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered persons meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must keep in relation to the children's home the records specified in Schedule 4. In particular, this refers to a copy of the staff duty roster of persons working at the home, and a record of the actual rosters worked. (Regulation 37(2)(a))	29/08/2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Medicines must be administered in line with a medically approved protocol. Records must be kept of the administration of all medication, which includes occasions when prescribed medication is refused. Regulation 23 requires the registered person to ensure that they make suitable arrangements to manage, administer and dispose of any medication. In particular, they should ensure that staff only administer medication when their competency to do so has been assessed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15.)
- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny, to ensure that their use is fair. In particular, they should ensure suitable overview of any restraint by a person independent of the incident. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. In particular, it should establish a system to prompt the arrangement of a return interview after each missing from care event. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. In particular, they should ensure

that all staff receive suitable training in child sexual exploitation. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

- The registered person should ensure staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording, ensuring that information regarding the child is recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. In particular, they should ensure that the quality of record-keeping is such that records of sanctions are clear about the reason for the sanction and that copies of all local authority documentation are held. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. Providers should refer to the non-statutory advice about the location assessment process. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is one of a large number of privately owned and run children's home operated nationally by the organisation. The home is registered for up to two children/young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
9 March 2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
2 November 2015	Full	Requires improvement
25 February 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
8 July 2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
These emotionally fragile young people, who have sometimes experienced multiple placement breakdowns, benefit from a stable and secure environment where they are able to grow in confidence, independence and maturity. As a result, they make good progress from their starting points in most areas of their lives. Some young people have complex needs and, prior to placement, were often considered to be placing themselves at risk of missing from care, self-harm, offending and significant drug misuse. As a result of the positive guidance of staff and consistent boundaries, their ability to keep themselves safe, behave in a positive manner and manage their health needs has increased. The improved emotional stability and positive engagement in education that one young person has made, with the support of staff, has been really strong. Their placing social worker commented, 'Overall, an excellent placement which has helped him to get to the point where he is able to move to foster care.' The staff provide individualised care that meets each of the young people's particular needs, and equality and diversity are threaded through the service. For example, all information has been translated into another language to support a young person whose first language is not English, and another was offered the opportunity to learn their native Welsh. Staff have helped both young people to develop a greater understanding of cultural differences, gender roles and sexuality, promoting respect and tolerance. The young people develop positive relationships with staff whom they come to trust. They say that staff are 'good people' and 'all the staff are nice'. Young people's emotional well-being is met primarily in the home from the relationships that they have with staff. This helps them to feel confident to disclose aspects of their well-being that are central to their sense of self. One young person said, 'I have been able to open up to staff.' This means that young people experiencing identity crises feel very well supported by staff who are responsive to their needs and help them to understand their personal histories, and how these affect them. They feel fully accepted for who they are and well supported to become who they wish to be. One placing social worker commented, 'She has a really good relationship with staff. They are truly great with her.' The young people are involved in all day-to-day decisions about their daily lives and have confidence that staff listen to them and will respond to any issues of concern that they may raise. They are supported to maintain friendships and family relationships that are important to them, making arrangements for contact when they are placed a long way away from their families.	

Medication arrangements in the home require some improvement in order to comply with the statutory guidance and to ensure that all staff have fully understood the medication training that they have completed. For example, medication e-learning is not supplemented with an assessment of individual staff members' competencies to administer medication. Young people are healthy and are supported to access local primary health services. Staff receive suitable training in crucial issues that affect young people's well-being, such as, self-harm and attachment. This means that staff are equipped to deliver informed and targeted support when needed.

The staff team is supported through the home's clinical team, which reviews any significant changes to a young person's mental well-being. This is in addition to the involvement of local child and adolescent mental health services. Regular key-work sessions address particular concerns, such as cannabis use and sexual health, providing young people with encouragement and the knowledge to engage in healthier choices. The good level of support and information provided by staff and partner agencies has enabled some young people to reduce their cannabis use significantly.

The atmosphere in the home is warm and calm. This has helped young people to feel safe and communicate their anxieties, allowing them to develop improved self-regulation. Consequently, the levels of antisocial behaviour are relatively low. The home is a spacious, detached house, which provides a homely and welcoming environment for young people. One placing authority commented that it had been a 'very stable placement where he continues to progress. It's like home.'

The young people have had varying success in education. Not all of them, despite the guidance given by staff, are continuing in education, training or employment after completing school. These young people are assisted to construct a curriculum vitae, to apply for employment and to consider educational alternatives. In the meantime, they are encouraged to engage in educational and learning opportunities in the home, as part of their life-skills programme. Other young people are fully committed to their education, have a good understanding of the life-enhancing opportunities that education can afford and are progressing well. Individual, well-planned preparation for independence arrangements means that young people are suitably equipped with practical life skills.

The young people rate the home as OK to excellent and one said, 'It's a good home. They're a good team.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The young people feel safe, secure and well cared for. Partner professionals describe collaborative working and say that young people making strong progress. While individual risk, such as missing from care, alcohol use or self-harm behaviours have not been eradicated, the frequency and severity of these issues has substantially reduced. One social worker said, 'Staff have been really good. They've made her feel safe and, although they haven't stopped behaviours, they have really reduced them.' This reflects young people's greater awareness of the significant improvement in managing their personal safety. Staff provide consistently clear boundaries while maintaining a calm and relaxed atmosphere. They help young people to express their feelings in an appropriate way, and young people feel listened to. As a result, within a relatively short time, there has been significant reduction in restraint. For example, one young person has seen a 75% reduction in physical restraint in the past four months, compared with the first four months of their placement, less than one year ago. One social worker commented, 'The home and staff have been brilliant. I think if these behaviours had happened somewhere else they would have not been able to hold them.' Another partner professional said that staff 'stick with' the young person 'and offer support, despite a lot of hostility and difficulty.' Incidents of physical restraint occur only when there is clear risk of harm identified, and these are clearly recorded. However, there is not a robust system in place to provide appropriate independent review of incidents of physical restraint in which the registered manager is involved. Furthermore, the recording of sanctions applied for negative behaviour is, on occasion, not sufficiently clear. This potentially undermines the ability for reflection to contribute to meeting the ongoing and changing needs of children. Positive partnerships with the local police missing person liaison officer and clear guidance for staff ensure a good understanding of and response to occasions when young people go missing. Partner professionals commented, 'I can't see anything more that they could do' and referred to the home as providing, 'impressive levels of support'. Staff undertake key-work sessions with young people to explore their reasons for going missing and any additional risk that they may have been facing. However, there is not an effective system to ensure that the young person has an independent return home interview after each missing from care incident. The local authority arrangement for conducting the return interview, due to the significant distance of the placing authority, is for the young person to contact their independent visitor, should they wish to talk to them following a missing from care episode. As a result, the young person does not experience a timely return home interview that includes exploration of actions that can be taken to safeguard more	

effectively in the future.

The home provides support to young people who may be at risk of child sexual exploitation. However, not all staff have undertaken training in this area. The impact for young people is reduced, as staff are aware of the home's guidance and procedures to be followed. However, without safeguarding training that is regularly updated does not demonstrate that staff are supported to understand and manage risk effectively.

There has been one safeguarding allegation, which was appropriately managed. Staff have received suitable safeguarding training and are clear about the processes and procedures in relation to investigations into allegations of abuse and child protection.

Effective and regularly reviewed risk assessments and management plans guide staff on how to manage risk. The manager responds to any increased risk appropriately, for example, by temporarily implementing waking night staff when a young person returned to the home under the influence of cannabis.

Robust vetting procedures ensure that young people are fully safeguarded from unsuitable people gaining employment in the home.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The suitably experienced registered manager is currently undertaking an appropriate management qualification. They are managing the home in a temporary position to cover maternity leave. However, as the previous deputy manager of this home, they provide continuity of leadership. All who are required to, have the NVQ level 3 qualification. This means that the team are appropriately qualified. Staff feel well supported by the manager who leads by example, ensuring child-focused care, which meets young people's individual needs effectively. They benefit from regular team meetings and effective supervision arrangements. The organisation offers a comprehensive induction programme and ongoing training, which means that staff have the skills to support young people effectively in almost all aspect of their lives. However, not all staff have undertaken training in the area of child sexual exploitation. The staff team has stabilised since the last inspection, and the home is now providing consistency of care and a sense of stability, which allows positive relationships to develop. Staffing levels are appropriate and flexibly arranged to meet the individually assessed needs of each young person. Young people like the	

staff and say that they help them to feel safe. The staff duty rota and signing-in book are not always accurate in recording who was on duty at a given time. While this has no impact on young people it means that records are not accurate and potentially has an impact on the ability to conduct any future investigation into staffing or safeguarding matters.

The staff work effectively in partnership with young people and partner agencies. Partner agencies refer to 'an excellent service' and to staff who are not afraid to advocate for the young people and to make a positive difference.

Recording systems in the home are generally sound. However, on specific occasions suitably detailed records of care are not maintained. For example, records of sanctions do not always detail the reason for the sanction, and a copy of each young person's most recent statutory health review is not always available. Such shortfalls do not have a direct impact on young people, but they potentially undermine clarity of information and the ability of the manager to have robust oversight of particular aspects of health and behaviour management.

The manager has undertaken a review of the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home, which identifies low risks in relation to criminal activity in the community. However, there is insufficient information and evaluation of any risks and opportunities regarding health and education presented by the home's location, particularly for young people placed from out of area, and of the strategies that the organisation has for addressing these. The young people are provided with clear information about the home in the children's guide. The home is suitably resourced to ensure that the service meets the aims and objectives and individual needs of the young people placed.

Suitable monitoring systems are in place to provide the manager with a clear sense of strength and areas for development in the service, and these are responsive to feedback. For example, arrangements are now in place to ensure that the independent visitor is able to access crucial records during their visit. The manager has ensured that the recommendations set at the previous inspection have been met. While one requirement and six recommendations have been made at this inspection, these do not have a significant impact on the overwhelmingly positive experiences of the young people.

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

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