

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	19/07/2016
Unique reference number	SC476270
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	Alison Blyth-Bishop
Registered manager	Rebecca Hogben
Inspector	Paul Robinson

Inspection date	19/07/2016
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	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC476270

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- An enthusiastic and motivated registered manager leads a staff team that together provide high quality care for young people.
- Staff consult and listen to young people, valuing their views and opinions.
- Staff promote and adopt a therapeutic style of intervention to ensure that they are able to meet young people's emotional health needs.
- Staff put young people at the centre of everything they do, ensuring that young people receive a high level of support to make sustained improvements from their starting points.
- Staff actively promote positive behaviour, and are quick to respond to signs of conflict. As a result, physical intervention is rarely required.
- Staff respond swiftly to allegations or concerns about young people to ensure that they are protected from harm.
- Staff give high priority to keeping young people safe.
- Staff planning for admissions and discharges is effective and means that young people receive a high level of support at times of transitions.
- Partnership working is strong and means staff work collaborative with partners so that changes to a young person's needs are recognised and responded to quickly.
- There are some weaknesses in practice. Not all staff have the appropriate qualification for the work they perform. Young people's rights to privacy is not fully considered in the use of door alarms. Staff do not always evidence their response to young people's complaints. Case recordings do not always evidence the progress that young people make.

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 meets 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 person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that staff have the appropriate qualification for the work they perform by the date, which falls two years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 4)(a))	30/09/2016
13. Leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered manager must ensure that - (2)(g) practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received (2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	30/09/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff respect children's privacy and support the other children living in the home to do so. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.17)
- Ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child should always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private company and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children currently placed are aged from eight to 12 years.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/08/2015	Full	Good
27/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
01/05/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Of the five young people, four have lived at the home for a considerable period, are stable, and settled. The registered manager understands well the needs and behaviours of new admissions due to good planning and assessment. This includes a high level of communication between the placing local authority and the manager, visits by the placing social worker, and the manager ensuring that all required paperwork is received in advance of any decision made. This ensures that the manager is able to consider carefully the impact of new admissions on young people already living in the home. This results in good matching of young people. Staff are effective in supporting new admissions to settle quickly at the home. For example, when preparing for a recent admission staff created a welcome box for the young person, they decorated their bedroom and bought bedding in the young person's favourite colour. Young people organised a welcome party with a handmade 'welcome' sign. Because of this warm welcome, the new young person settled quickly. One young person said, 'when you start here, adults give you a warm welcome'. Staff ensure that young people have many opportunities to share their views and wishes about the care they receive. One staff member said, 'I want to empower the child and give them their voice'. All the young people said that they felt that staff listened to them. Children's meetings held twice a week give the opportunity to discuss practical items such as activities for the week, but also anything, that young people are unhappy about as well as what has gone well. Young people understand how to make a complaint. However, although the staff record the complaint, they sometimes forget to evidence the outcome of the young person's concerns. This means young people do not always have a formal log over how staff addressed their concerns. Staff engage young people and encourage them to be active. Staff support young people to engage in a range of activities including pamper nights, cinema, crazy golf, bmx club and trips to the Zoo. Staff understand and embrace young people's identity and personal interests. Young people grow in confidence because of this care. Staff ensure that all young people attend full-time education, ensuring that they are learning and making good progress. An independent reviewing officer said of one young person, 'the home have been proactive in getting her a school', and	

'she has joined the school council which is amazing progress'. Whether young people are educated at the organisation's own school, which is on-site, or at nearby mainstream education provision, staff liaise well with the school and know young people's individual progress. One headteacher commented, 'the manager is massively helpful. Communication is good. Regular "team around the child" meetings ensure we are kept up to date.'

Staff are ambitious for young people and proactive in offering them the support they require to achieve. Good communication by staff with the local authority's virtual headteacher and school has resulted in funding for staff to support one young person in school on a one-to-one basis when they start mainstream school.

Staff are good at meeting young people's basic health needs. Staff support young peoples to access universal healthcare services. Young people's health and development benefit because of this support.

Good partnership working between staff and the clinical therapy team means that young people receive a high level of therapeutic support, tailored to their individual emotional health needs. Clinical therapists attend staff team meetings and 'team around the child meetings', and are available daily for consultation. As a result, staff feel confident in responding to the emotional needs of a young person and young people experience consistency from the adults who are caring for them. A parent said, 'I have a really good relationship with staff, they always sort things out for me, therapy they offer [young person] is really helping, she has come on [in] leaps and bounds in the last twelve months; I couldn't have asked for a better place to look after my daughter.'

Staff are motivated to support young people where appropriate to either move into a foster placement or return to their family. A social worker said, 'Staff are very child-focused and her key carer is so committed to her it is remarkable given that [the young person] does not always make this relationship pleasant due to her attachment difficulties. Staff use the "team around the child meetings" effectively to give the right support to [young person] and have ensured she is at a place where we can look at moving her on to a family environment.' When a young person is moving to a foster placement staff plan well, working in partnership with the social worker and foster care. Staff take time to get to know the new placement themselves so that they are satisfied it will meet the needs of the young person. Staff support the young person to meet the foster carer several times before any move takes place. This ensures that the young person is well prepared to move and the foster carer understands how best to meet the young person's needs. As a result, staff are effective in supporting young people to move to sustainable new placements.

Staff are effective at promoting contact between a young person and their family. A social worker said, 'They have moved contact on well by developing relationships with the parents'. When a young person's family does not live nearby, staff

promote contact by the use of video calls and practical support in the form of collecting a parent from the train station. For young people who cannot have contact or whose contact is restricted, staff support them to cope with this. This includes young people undertaking well-planned and high-quality life story work, as well as completing separation and loss counselling. One creative staff member has used clothes, including items from a young person's parents with a sentimental value, to make a teddy bear, quilt and pillow. This helps the young person feel connected to their family, ensuring that they remain settled in placement and more able to self-regulate their emotions.

Staff indiscriminately use bedroom door alarms day and night. This means that young people are not always afforded the privacy that they require. The use of door alarms is not consistent with young people's pathway plans for moving on to foster care. As such, staff are unable to assess when a young person is ready to move on to a new placement in a safe way. The constant sound of alarms detracts from the otherwise homely and domestic environment for young people.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
The whole staff team have a very clear understanding of the importance of safeguarding and the need for vigilance. Excellent collaborative working with social workers, schools and other professionals means strong partnership working plays a key goal in keeping young people safe. Young people feel safe. One young person said, 'I feel one hundred percent safe, I don't ever feel unsafe; I have one hundred percent trust in the adults'. Staff are able to recognise the vulnerabilities of young people, and take appropriate steps to ensure that they manage the risk of exploitation effectively. Young people who have previously self-harmed have reduced the frequency with which this occurs. Staff support young people to develop strategies to self-regulate their emotions. Staff are receptive to young people's body language, actions and behaviours and can recognise when a young person is struggling and requires additional support. Staff are able to identify which member of staff can best support a young person in a given situation, and will seek input from the therapeutic team if required. Staff members' proactive response reduces the risk of harm that young people present to themselves. Young people do not go missing from care and staff appropriately protect them from sexual exploitation. Staff are quick to react when a young person is upset and leaves the home unplanned. Staff do not allow them out of the line of sight, ensuring that they manage the risk to the young person safely. Staff are good at recognising how best to respond to the situation using a sensitive and measured	

response. Staff members' relationships with young people mean they are quick to calm a young person down and ensure that they return within a short period. A police representative said, 'Children respect staff and are well behaved, staff do a really good job with them'.

Young people are able to identify multiple staff members who they have trusted relationships with and are able to talk to. Young people feel relaxed and comfortable with staff, enjoying appropriate affection in the form of regular hugs. Young people do not like to use the term 'staff', either using their first names or if needed referring to them as adults. This reflects the fondness that young people have for the staff. One young person said, 'the adults really care for us, we do lots of things with them; it doesn't feel like a care home, it feels like a family home'. Another young person said, 'it's good living here, they do fun things with you, take you out on activities, and help you when you are struggling'. Finally another young person said, '[staff member] is like my second mum – she is just lovely, we bicker at times but we get on really well'.

Staff ensure that there are detailed and robust risk assessments and behaviour management plans, which ensures that young people receive appropriate individualised care. When a young person is new to the home, staff learn quickly how best to keep them safe. Staff ensure that risk and behaviour assessments include regular input from all relevant parties including the social work, education and therapy team. As a result, the plans developed from these assessments are up to date, well informed and keep young people safe. A social worker said, 'Staff are very good at communicating and provide a wealth of information in a timely manner. They report any specific incidents immediately and always involve the designated officer when appropriate to do so. Working relationships are very good.'

The manager encourages staff to adopt a restorative justice approach to the management of behaviour. This means that young people are more likely to learn from their behaviours. Staff's management of conflict with young people is effective, with a strong emphasis on prevention and de-escalation. Young people experience consistent and predictable responses to their behaviour. As a result, physical interventions are rare. A social worker said, '[the young person] has gone from having daily interventions to none. The change in the young person is amazing. She feels loved; it's like a family, she trusts them.'

Staff support young people to come to terms with their complex and challenging childhood experiences. Staff are nurturing, sensitive and understanding in their approach. As a result, young people are making exceptional progress in all areas of their life, learning to enjoy life, developing positive relationships and preparing themselves for adulthood.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has been in post since July 2015. The manager is currently in the process of completing the level 5 diploma in leadership and management. This is due to be completed no later than July 2017. Four members of staff are currently completing their level 3 in residential childcare, which is due to be completed no later than July 2017. However, the registered manager has failed to ensure that all staff have completed their award within the required timescale. For example, one member of staff, who started in post in August 2015, had already worked in a similar role since September 2013. This means the staff member has gone over the required period and is not suitable qualified. The manager's performance exceeds her relatively limited management experience. The manager is easily able to recognise the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She is solution-focused and keen to take on board feedback and advice, and develop new ways of working. The manager ensures that only staff who are appropriately vetted get to work with young people. The manager utilises an electronic monitoring system to ensure that all staff receive the required training in conflict management, physical interventions and safeguarding. Staff also receive training to develop their therapeutic skills. A member of the clinical team said, 'The staff team are always willing to learn, staff are open to new ideas; staff want to be therapeutic'. This means that staff are well equipped and prepared to respond to the complex needs of young people in line with the home's statement of purpose. Staff are committed, highly motivated and care greatly for the young people. For example, one member of staff has delayed their planned migration to another country to ensure that a young person has staff continuity prior to their moving to their new placement. One member of staff said, 'I enjoy working here, we act as a family'. A school headteacher said, 'Young people are really at the heart of everything'. A member of the clinical team said, 'Staff at the home are so focused on the child'. This means that young people feel cared for and valued, helping to improve their sense of worth and identity. The manager ensures that all staff receive regular supervision. One member of staff said, 'supervision is really good, but to be honest we can get support all the time, and if the manager is not available there is always someone who is willing to help'. As a result, staff feel well supported and happy. The manager has ensured that case files are well organised. Staff are therefore able to locate key documentation easily, supporting their understanding of a young person's needs. Young person-friendly versions of care plans support young people to contribute to and understand the care that they are receiving. However, staff do	

not ensure that placement plans consistently evidence the considerable progress that young people make. This hinders staff from fully capturing the journey of progression made by young people.

The manager and staff are good at developing quality relationships with the full range of partner agencies. There is regular and meaningful dialogue via email and telephone, and fortnightly meetings with key professionals, during which the progress and needs of the young person are at the forefront of discussions. A school headteacher said, 'if the meeting is losing focus, [the manager] will stop the meeting and say "what does this all mean for the young person?"'. As a result, young people receive well-coordinated care in which the expertise and knowledge of all agencies is fully utilised.

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

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