

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC476270
Inspector	Rachel Ruth Britten
Type of inspection	Interim
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	Samantha Millward
Registered manager	Elisabeth Rose Brownlees
Date of last inspection	01/05/2014

Inspection date	27/02/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

The five children in placement here have all made considerable progress since the full inspection in May 2014. They have experienced stability and a high standard of care throughout the last ten months. They enjoy a wide range of activities in the community and say they feel it is like a family here, with few changes in staff. Considerable concerns about the organisation's on site school have been skilfully minimised by the interventions of the Registered Manager and the well planned response of all the home's staff. As a result, children's educational progress has been at least satisfactory. Children enjoyed holidays and a happy Christmas in the home. The Registered Manager is an exemplar of good leadership and practice. The impact of her imminent departure is being minimised by careful explanation to children and the current introduction of the new manager on a shadowing basis until 5 March 2015. Ofsted has not been informed in writing about the change of manager, but the succession plan was outlined in the manager's latest review of care and is being adhered to.

Children are very well engaged with their individual plans and with group living in the home. Staff provide numerous good ways for this to happen. There is a daily group chat around the dining table after school. A display board entitled: 'What makes this home special to me?' has been put together by everyone. Children's drawings, photos and comments show them doing various activities together and all living together in a big house. Similarly, each child has a 'child-friendly placement plan'. Simple pictures and words set out for each child what they are aiming for and what things they need to do. Every child also has progress certificates proudly displayed on the stairway. For example, certificates show achievements in horse-riding; swimming; reading; and developing self-control. Treats and rewards are numerous. For example, cakes; a pretty night light; pumpkin carving; ice-creams; magazines; trips to the hairdresser and the funfair have all been recent rewards. Above all, staff make clear to each child that they are loved and cared for. Staff

reassure, offer unconditional affection and demonstrate their commitment through individualised and constantly reviewed care practices. As a result, children trust staff and are making good emotional and behavioural progress. One child said, 'They listen to me and are lovely.'

Children's behaviour is well-managed in the home. Challenging and risky behaviour, including running away from home and school; behaving in sexually inappropriate ways and showing aggression to staff and peers have all occurred at various times during the last ten months. Throughout, managers and staff have worked closely and effectively alongside schools, police, therapists and voluntary organisations. This has minimised incidents and helped children manage their behaviour and understand the impact of it upon others. For example, staff from Barnardos came in to help children talk about feeling unsafe and how to tell an adult by using the slips by a special box. At the same time, home staff provided children with code words they could say if they felt scared by another child. Staff also found that it worked well to remove the potential audience from a child who only ran off if others could be persuaded to join in. A period of regular absconding was brought to a close at the end of May 2014 and has not re-occurred. Equally, children are better able to disclose aggressive and/or sexualised behaviours. They use strategies to help them manage frustrations and feelings in safer and more appropriate ways. For example, they take time in their bedroom; talk to an adult or use the 'think, speak, leave' mantra. All children feel safe here. One child said, 'What's good is all the activities - we get to go out lots. They keep me safe, so safe.'

Children feel confident with staff and are able to express their wishes and feelings. Staff and managers are alert to each child's needs and carefully listen to them and consider them. As a result, responses which are not working are changed and children get the support they need. For example, children's complaints about behaviour management in the organisation's school were addressed on a case by case basis over a period of months. However, concerns re-occurred and escalated, so the manager took serious action by withdrawing the children from school and making a formal complaint. Frequent physical interventions to prevent harm to self and others were not working for one child. A 'no hold' policy was put in place and the child went on a camping holiday with staff to bond more with them. The child knew that any more serious attacks on others would now result in the police being called. There have been no further incidents since then.

All children's behaviours are regularly discussed in meetings of home staff and the clinicians providing weekly therapy and life story work. These meetings review the progress of each child and the care being given. For example, various strategies to help children feel safe enough to sleep are discussed and tried. However, the meetings records do not show the advice and analysis of staff and clinicians clearly. This makes the record harder to use as a practice reference tool

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 twelve years.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/05/2014	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
38 (2001)	ensure that the registered person shall give notice in writing to HMCI as it is practicable to do so if there is any change of manager proposed to take place. (Regulation 38)	15/03/2015

Recommendations

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

- improve the use of in-service training to enhance staff skills and equip them to meet the individual needs of children. In particular, improve the records of team around the child meetings so that they clearly show the analysis, ideas and advice of clinical advisers. (NMS 18.1)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

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.