

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	01/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC476289
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Cambian Childcare Limited
Registered provider address	4th Floor, Waterfront, Hammersmith Embankment, London W6 9RU

Responsible individual	Alison Blyth-Bishop
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Corrinne Barker

Inspection date	01/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection. This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness. The home has experienced a period of instability since the full inspection. This instability has had a negative impact on the overall experiences and progress of children living in the home. Changes in management arrangements over the period have impaired the effectiveness of the staff team to deliver consistently high-quality care. Children's progress and experiences have been variable. Most children have maintained their school attendance, but their progress in school differs. One child has made good progress since living in the home, with staff supporting him into full-time school after a long period out of education. His social worker said, 'The staff work tirelessly in the home to meet his needs. A huge positive is school, and to get a child into school and in a routine quickly – it's a boost to his self-confidence.' Other children in the home have struggled and have seen setbacks in their progress. Anxieties have stemmed from changes in the home, such as changes in staff and the admission of new children and discharge of others. Staff have endeavoured to provide high-quality, therapeutic care to children. Changes in staffing have made it more difficult at times for children to respond positively to this care. Peer relationships have been difficult. Some children have said that they are fearful of other children in the home and have found it difficult to cope. There has been an increase in the use of restraint since the last inspection. Staff record incidents of restraint thoroughly, and only use restraint as a last resort when de-escalation strategies have been unsuccessful. The increase in restraints coincides with a difficult period for staff and a difficult time for children. A requirement has been made to address the recent staff instability and support	

the home to provide a nurturing environment.

Children continue to have lots of opportunities to take part in activities and sports outside the home. Achievements, however small, are celebrated.

Partnership working has been good. Staff have escalated concerns about shortfalls in services when necessary on behalf of children.

The process of transition for one child leaving the home since the full inspection has been generally good. His social worker commented on the commitment of staff, but also commented on there being lots of changes in the home over the last few months, in particular regarding staffing. Another concern voiced was the child's lack of progress in developing age-appropriate independence skills, which increased his vulnerability as he moved on from the home. This is acknowledged as an area of development for the home, balancing the need for protection against the need for children to take age-appropriate risks and to be prepared for living away from a very protective environment in the future.

Children receive excellent support from the in-house clinical team. This has continued through this period with assessments of children's emotional health and well-being and direct work with children, as well as clinical supervision for staff. Staff have appreciated having a reflective space to discuss how to meet children's needs.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers in monitoring the quality of care and the capacity to prioritise areas for development has been impaired due to the instability of managers and staff.

The home has been without a registered manager for a number of weeks, with subsequent interim management arrangements changing unexpectedly. In the process of changing managers, staff appraisals have not been recorded, although reportedly have taken place. Additionally, managers have struggled to maintain monthly staff supervision.

A newly appointed manager is now in post and she has a clear vision for the home. Both the newly appointed manager and the current acting manager have a good grasp of the shortfalls and the improvements needed. A requirement has been made regarding staff supervision and appraisal and the need for robust systems to be in place to ensure that staff remain fit to fulfil their roles.

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides long-term care and therapy for up to five children and young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The registered provider is a private company, operating a range of children's homes across the country.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/08/2016	Full	Good
15/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/10/2015	Full	Good

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(s) 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(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person is required to: (2)(a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; (e) ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; and (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	03/03/2017
33: Employment of staff (4) The registered person must ensure that all employees— (a) undertake appropriate continuing professional development; (b) receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and (c) have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c)).	03/03/2017

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection 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

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 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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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