

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC476326
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	Nina Cheryl Ballard
Registered manager	Karl Lee Knight
Date of last inspection	30/09/2014

Inspection date	05/03/2015
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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 **sustained effectiveness**.

In the five months since the full inspection, the home has continued to make a positive difference to the group of five children and young people who continue to live there. They are all making good progress. For example, some children are ready to cope with moves into mainstream school and are taking part unsupported in local clubs and activities. Most are able to manage their emotions and are behaving well and having their voice heard in the running of the home. The manager has been in post for approximately six months and is now registered. However, allegations, sickness and departures have created stresses in the staffing of the home. As a result, managers have not been able to prioritise some improvements recommended at the last Ofsted inspection. In addition, the manager has not prioritised the home's contribution to care and placement planning. The impact of this on the daily care of children is minimal and the quality of care remains good.

Children and young people are well protected by good staff supervision, consistent routines and clear boundaries. There is a culture where staff reflect to them about the positive and negative impact of their behaviours on themselves and others. Physical interventions are kept to a minimum and used only as an absolute last resort. For many children, the number of physical interventions they have experienced in recent months has significantly reduced. They are responding positively to opportunities to gain rewards for good behaviour.

There have been a number of allegations against staff in this period. These have been dealt with according to child protection procedures, and the home's relationships with the local safeguarding authority and LADO are appropriate. However, the allegations have taken too long to investigate and resolve. There have been delays both at local authority level and within the organisation. This has caused stress amongst the staff group and delayed resolution for children and adults alike. In addition, the summaries provided to staff members concerned do not

contain required information and detail. The registered person does not ensure that copies are placed on staff's individual confidential record as required. Consequently, they cannot properly take past allegations into account in future.

The quality of care practice in the home is good overall. Staff and the manager have undertaken extra shifts to cover shortfalls and a few regular cover staff have been used over the period to assist. Staff have ensured that children's routines of therapy, school, hobbies and regular group meetings have continued. The manager writes to children and young people to answer the matters they raise in their twice weekly house meeting. Staff spend quality time with children and young people, rewarding their progress with activities they enjoy. For example, children have changed their bedroom decoration and bought new accessories. They have gone out for drinks and ice-creams with staff and have enjoyed cycle rides and fishing trips. However, staff are not using practice tools, such as weekly reward charts, risk assessments, rewards and consequences records, and 'life space interviews' well enough to really help children and young people progress. Some records do not state clearly what has been said to children and young people; how they have responded; or staff's opinion about what the response means for future practice. This reduces the usefulness of these tools and records because adults and children cannot look back and see what works well and what works less well.

The Registered Manager is a confident leader and demonstrates good care practice with children and young people. He works well with the home's monthly visitor and ensures that incidents and reviews of care are sent to the regulator, Ofsted. He has a good understanding of each child's care plan and consults with children and social workers to inform his monitoring of the effectiveness of the home in helping them progress. However, he is not consulting effectively with independent reviewing officers and placing authorities when there are concerns about the appropriateness and timing of children's placement moves, for example, to foster or other care. Reports and updates to placing authorities contain little analysis and opinion about children's current needs or what is working well for them. This impairs the home's contribution to care planning and reduces the effectiveness of partnership working to promote best outcomes for children.

The leadership and management of the home is adequate. Staff say they find the Registered Manager supportive. The home's monthly visitor said recently: 'The manager is having a positive impact - the home is well run.' The manager acknowledges that the systems which aim to support high quality location risk review, staff appraisal, and reviews of care have not been well utilised since the last inspection. This means that the manager cannot effectively consider new referrals against an up-to-date knowledge of the home's location risks for any future children who may go missing. In addition, some staff are unclear about how well they are performing and what their agreed development objectives are. Furthermore, the manager has not used monitoring activity to prompt effective action on some of the recommendations for good practice made at the last inspection. There are plans for re-development through the internal appointment of a new deputy manager in March 2015. The manager expects to have more time available to improve the

quality of his monitoring and analysis once the home is fully staffed.

Information about this children's home

This private company children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/09/2014	Full	good

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home contributes effectively to reviews of each child's care plan (NMS 25.3)
- ensure that the views of the independent reviewing officer are sought regularly on the child's care (NMS 1.4)
- ensure that all staff understand and fully implement the culture and tools that support positive behaviour (NMS 3.2)
- ensure that a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made against a particular member of staff, including details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, a record of any action taken and the decisions reached, is kept on the person's confidential file and a copy provided to the person as soon as the investigation is concluded. The information is retained on the confidential file, even after someone leaves the organisation, until the person reaches normal retirement age, or for ten years if this is longer (NMS 20.7)
- ensure that investigations into allegations or suspicions of harm are handled fairly, quickly and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation (NMS 20.8)
- ensure that all staff's annual appraisal is individual and formal. Consider its effectiveness in supporting staff to fulfil their roles and provide a high

quality service to children. (NMS 19.6)

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.