

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC457318
Inspector	Janice Hawtin
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	Sharon Michelle Edney
Registered manager	Mark David Brazier / POST VACANT
Date of last inspection	04/06/2014

Inspection date	20/01/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

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

Since the last inspection a number of issues have given cause for concern; most significantly recording undertaken by the home has deteriorated. The use of and recording of restraints and sanctions remains poor and the Statement of Purpose lacks clarity; as such, the home has declined in effectiveness.

Physical restraint is used to prevent serious injury to young people and/or staff. Records of these incidents are inadequate. Many do not contain sufficient information to be clear about what happened, what holds were used and for how long. Some holds are not recognised as those approved by training providers to avoid injury to young people. Some parts of records are illegible; others contain subjective language which is open to several interpretations. There is reflection with staff about what happened, and evidence of some monitoring and oversight of these records by the Registered Manager. However, records have not been amended to provide accurate detail and the same mistakes are repeated. Use of unaccredited or unclear holds places young people and staff at risk of injury. Poor recording limits proper quality assurance and opportunities to learn from incidents and ensure physical restraint is only used as a last resort.

Similar concerns including illegible handwriting and the use of subjective language apply to the records of sanctions. While the manager has improved oversight of these records and tackled some of the difficulties about linking sanctions/consequences to behaviour, ambiguities remain. There are some links between behaviour management and food rewards, such as high fat takeaway. This contributes to poor eating habits and unhealthy associations with food. A recommendation about the recording of and use of sanctions is repeated.

A previous recommendation about the Statement of Purpose has not been dealt with and a requirement has now been made. This document lacks clarity about the

therapeutic services offered. It implies that a team consisting of a 'range of clinically trained staff including Psychologists, Assistant psychologists, counsellors and therapist work in the home'. This is inaccurate as these practitioners are only available within the wider organisation. A social worker commented that 'access to a 28 day assessment was a factor in choosing this placement and that this assessment took nearly twice as long'. It was felt this delayed the professional's ability to consider access to therapeutic interventions. The Registered Manager amended some of the detail in the Statement of Purpose during the inspection and forwarded this to the organisations main office for approval, to try to avoid any further misunderstanding.

Ofsted has not been notified of an incident which involved staff calling the police to assist with an incident. This reduces effective independent scrutiny of serious incidents and compromises information and understanding of the involvement of the police in the lives of 'looked after children'.

The frequency of quality assurance monitoring by the Registered Manager has improved. This monitoring is now being done, monthly and is summarised into a three monthly report and provided to Ofsted as required. There is some analysis of patterns and trends in these documents which demonstrate, overtime, a reduction in the number of negative behaviours and the need to use physical intervention. This monitoring leads to identification of some development needs and so is contributing to improving the home.

Following the last inspection the manager addressed most of the recommendations that were made. Changes to make the environment more homely include the fitting of a new modern bathroom suite, new furniture in the lounge and the walls of the home being re-painted. Work is ongoing and this large spacious farmhouse lacks soft furnishings in some areas such as rugs, ornaments and pictures, which lead to it appearing bare. Some decorating and repairs are not done in a timely way. Repair of damage to the homes vehicle has been ongoing for many months and the need to paint the woodwork throughout the home has been an issue for more than three months. This delay in putting things right does not add to young people feeling important and valued.

Previously young people's access to some areas of the home was limited and the kitchen/lounge door was locked at night without good reason. All physical restrictions on normal movement within or from the home have now been removed. This avoids unnecessary institutionalised care and allows young people to take age appropriate risks and learn from mistakes rather than facing barriers.

Young people now have an ongoing history of their time in care which allows them to think about and understand their history. The home has two cameras' which are in frequent use. Photos of young people and their family are in picture frames around the home. They will be able to take these with them when they leave, along with a scrap book containing photos of activities and outings and a memory box with

other important memorabilia.

Staff have put together a programme of educational activities to support young people who have been excluded from school or who do not have access to a full-time school. They work in partnership with education providers and the virtual school team who provide some tutorial time. This avoids young people getting further behind peers and provides opportunities to build their self-esteem and confidence to support reintegration.

There have been a number of changes to the staff team since the last inspection and annual appraisals for most of the current team are not yet due making this previous recommendation no longer applicable.

A number of young people have been accommodated since the last inspection. One young person has successfully moved on to more independent accommodation. They are doing well and continue to benefit from the ongoing support provided by the home. Another young person was moved following a number of serious incidents which put their health and safety at risk. A suitable placement has been identified. Recently the staff team have been successful in being able to build meaningful relationships with young people that have allowed them to feel safe, trust the staff and consider their behaviour. Progress since the last inspection is evident for some, but not all young people.

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private organisation. It is registered for the accommodation and care of two young people, of either gender, with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/06/2014	Full	adequate
23/10/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
18/04/2013	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
4 (2001)	ensure that the Statement of Purpose is clear in describing the therapeutic services available to young people (Regulation 4(1))	28/02/2015
17B (2001)	ensure records of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in the children's homes a record is made in a volume kept for the purpose of which shall include the matters listed from (3)(a)-(i) and (4)(a) &(b) (Regulation 17B(3)(a)-(i) and (4)(a) &(b))	28/02/2015
30 (2001)	notify Ofsted if any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in schedule 5 take place. (Regulation 30(1))	28/02/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take

account of the following recommendation(s):

- provide a comfortable and homely environment which is well maintained and decorated (NMS 10.3)
- review incidents of behaviour management to enable staff to reflect and learn to inform future practice; this applies particularly to the use and recording of sanctions/consequences. (NMS 3.21)

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.