

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC457553
Inspector	Norma Welsby
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	Cindy Anne Drew
Date of last inspection	09/01/2015

Inspection date	18/03/2015
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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**.

During the past six months a number of placement decisions have been made that have given cause for concern. These concerns were identified at the full inspection in January 2015 and were fully discussed at the time with the Registered Manager and a Regional Manager. Requirements and good practice recommendations were made to improve practice in order to achieve better outcomes for young people.

Since then, two further admissions have taken place. Both of these have been of young people who already resided in another of the company's children's homes in the region. The placement of one young person is proving successful and although it is still very early days, there are several indicators that this placement has a likelihood of success. This young person was involved in the decision to move to this home and has enthusiastically engaged with staff. Risk taking behaviour has reduced significantly and attendance at school has improved. Observations of interactions with staff demonstrate that positive attachments are already being established.

The other young person's placement at the home failed within five days. While some initial planning had taken place to introduce the young person to the home, this had never happened because of a series of events. The young person was admitted to the home as an emergency, in the middle of the night and direct from the police station. The young person was not consulted prior to his transfer, nor did he have the opportunity to collect his belongings from his previous home. The young person was unhappy about what had happened to him and almost immediately became challenging in his attitude and behaviour towards staff. Following a series of significant incidents the young person was arrested and his placement was terminated with immediate effect.

The impact of the decision to admit young people to the home in this way was not thoroughly considered. While an impact assessment had been carried out, this

document is too brief and does not identify strategies that had been put in place to manage known risks and keep all young people safe. The safety and wellbeing of young people already residing at the home was severely compromised. Their placement is in its early stages and relationships and trust are still being established. Furthermore, young people were threatened with violence and subjected to verbal abuse. Attendance at school, having just been re-established, was affected due to the upset in their home and their lack of sleep. Young people witnessed staff being threatened and assaulted and a young person being physically restrained. Staff too were also put at risk, by not thoroughly identifying potential serious risk to them, for example by only providing one to one support while driving young people.

For the young person admitted, he has now had three failed placements within the company in the last five months. His already fragile attachments have been further disrupted. He has been further criminalised, due to his assaults on staff. His education, at a key stage in his school life, has also been disrupted. The decision to admit a young person to the home in this manner does not promote and protect their physical, emotional and mental health.

Since the full inspection the home has made some progress in responding to two requirements and six good practice recommendations. Shortfalls raised in respect of placement decisions still need to be improved to provide greater consistency and better outcomes for young people. The Regional Manager has made a commitment that the Registered Manager will not agree to any further internal or external emergency placements. At the full inspection a requirement was made in respect of ensuring independent visits to the home meet the requirements of the Regulation. Namely that they are independent and not conducted by senior staff with line management responsibilities and that they are robust and evaluative, thereby contributing to the improvement agenda. Monthly visits have continued to take place and have been satisfactory. The company is in the process of appointing independent visitors who will join the quality team and who will take responsibility for such visits in the future. The recommendation that aspects of the physical environment are improved, have been satisfactory addressed. Other recommendations made at the full inspection related specifically to the young people occupying the home at the time and these were pursued following the inspection. However the young person's placement ended soon after the inspection took place. While not all areas were fully addressed because of this, the Registered Manager is more mindful of the need to ensure that young people's educational and therapeutic needs are fully addressed and that requests for up to date documents are escalated to the placing authority in a timely way.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is part of a large national provider and is located in a rural setting. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/01/2015	Full	adequate
12/03/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
09/05/2013	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
11 (2001)	promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of young accommodated there. In particular, in consideration of new placements to the home (Regulation 11 (1) (a))	31/03/2015
11 (2001)	ensure suitable arrangements are in place so that the home is conducted in a manner which respects the privacy and dignity of young people accommodated there. In particular, in consideration of new placements to the home and how their admission is planned and executed (Regulation 11 (2) (a))	31/03/2015
16 (2001)	prepare and implement a written policy which is intended to safeguard young people accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect. In particular, give proper consideration to the potential impact that a new young person may have on	31/03/2015

	existing young people and what specific strategies are in place to manage known risks (Regulation 16 (1) (a))	
20 (2001)	promote and protect the physical, emotional and mental health of the young people accommodated. In particular, in consideration of new placements to the home (Regulation 20 (1))	31/03/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure the home only provides admission to young people whose assessed needs they can reasonably expect to meet. In particular, careful consideration should be given to admitting young people in an emergency, both in consideration of how effectively their needs will be met and their potential assessed impact on young people already living in the home (11.2)
- ensure the overall number, competence and deployment of staff, both as a staff group and on individual shifts, can fulfil the home's Statement of Purpose and meet the individual needs of all young people resident in the home (NMS 17.1)

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.