

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	06/09/2016
Unique reference number	1229417
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Cambian Childcare Ltd
Registered provider address	4th floor, Waterfront, Hammersmith Embankment, London W6 9RU

Responsible individual	Ian Raine
Registered manager	David Lambert
Inspector	Tina Ruffles

Inspection date	06/09/2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

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Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- High-quality, individualised care is provided to young people by the experienced staff team.
- Staff recognise young people's potential and have high expectations and aspirations for them.
- Young people re-engage education. They have increased opportunities for further training or employment, due to obtaining qualifications.
- Young people are spending significantly more time at the home, due to the excellent relationships developed with staff.
- Young people are making significant progress in relation to their health and emotional well-being, due to their attendance at health appointments.
- Staff develop an excellent understanding of the risks associated with young people and strategies to keep them safe.
- Young people are empowered to keep themselves safe and protected in the community.
- Restorative justice is promoted with young people, and task-based reparation is used. Young people are not unnecessarily criminalised.
- 'Missing' episodes have reduced drastically and young people are no longer away from home for significant periods.
- There is a rigorous recruitment process in place to ensure that staff have the right values and abilities to work and engage with young people.
- Staff undertake reflective practice from the time that they start work at the home.

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- The home's record of the event must include a description of the action taken and the outcome of any resulting investigation. Specifically, either to include the action taken on the original notification or to provide a notification update to Ofsted. (The Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 63, paragraph 14.14)

- The registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. Specifically, to look at the areas in close proximity to the children's home and the risks that these present to young people, to make the existing locality risk assessment more localised. (The Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 64, paragraph 15.1)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for one child or young person with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

The children's home was registered in April 2016. This is the first full inspection.

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Young people receive high-quality, individualised care from the experienced staff team. Staff speak positively about young people and are committed to getting to know them extremely well. Young people benefit from the small but stable staff team. The diverse mix of staff, provide a range of positive role models as well as challenging young people’s stereotypes and prejudices in a safe environment.</p> <p>All the objectives set by the placing authority are met, such as trying to get a young person back in to education. For one young person, after many years of non-school attendance and dis-engagement from learning, he has re-engaged and successfully completed a 12-week college course.</p> <p>The staff team recognise young people’s potential and have high expectations and aspirations for them. Staff empower young people to help them to achieve more than is expected of them. They are highly supportive and motivational and, with the added use of effective incentives, young people make significant improvements in education and training. Although outcomes for the current young person and staff practices are outstanding, these have not been sustained over a considerable period as the home is newly registered.</p> <p>Relationships between staff and young people are exceptionally good, which results in young people spending significantly more time at the home in comparison to their previous placements. A Young person, who has previously had numerous placement breakdowns has settled and wishes to remain at the home until independence. This provides the opportunity of experiencing trusting, stable and nurturing relationships. One young person admitted that if the home was situated in his home town it would be perfect. He enthusiastically said, ‘Staff are all right actually, yeah.’</p> <p>There is an open and relaxed dialogue between staff and young people which results in a multitude of opportunities for informal key-working sessions. The resourceful staff capitalise on the excellent relationships that they have with young people to have frank discussions about a whole range of topics. Up-to-date research and resources are available to young people. They become more open when talking to staff. This offers young people ongoing learning experiences and the opportunity to obtain accurate information.</p> <p>Young people make significant progress in relation to their health and emotional well-being. They follow staff’s advice and attend medical appointments. This is enhanced through constant motivation by staff to eat a healthy and balanced diet.</p>	

After expressing an interest, one young person is growing vegetables in the garden at the home. Opportunities to undertake physical activities are provided to young people. Their friends are able also attend these pursuits offering further encouragement to young people to be fit and active. Consequently, health needs are met and young people keep physically and emotionally well.

There is a variety of efficient established ways for young people to express their wishes. However, the most effective is through staff empowering young people to verbalise their views. Staff know which approach to take and have a real understanding of young people. They are not dismissive, but flexible, realistic and fully aware of issues affecting young people. Young people are confident to express themselves. They know how to complain and who to complain to. One young person said, 'I have rung my IRO [Independent Reviewing Officer] before, to complain. There are also leaflets in the kitchen.'

Staff make considerable efforts to ensure that young people feel at home. Family photographs in the lounge and a well-furnished and comfortable home environment contribute towards achieving this. Young people's friends are regular visitors at the home. Staff develop good communication links with family members, which is significant progress for one young person. Young people have access to funding and physical assistance from staff to personalise their bedroom in the way that they choose. This helps young people to take ownership of their home.

The comprehensive and detailed independence programme provides positive incentives to encourage participation. Young people are supported to demonstrate their ability and emotional maturity to live independently. Where this is evident, staff ensure that young people have a carefully planned induction and transition plan to independence. Outreach support helps young people to maintain their tenancy and provides them with emotional support when they leave.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Comprehensive risk assessments provide a thorough outline of the actual and potential risks to young people in all areas of their lives. Staff update these regularly to reflect young people's changing needs as they settle into the home. Additional safeguards are adopted alongside those required by the local authority, such as visual 'safe and well' checks. The tight boundaries and strategies utilised are initially challenging for those young people who experienced greater levels of freedom in previous placements. Subsequently, young people recognise the need for the interventions from staff and recognise their commitment to keep them safe.</p> <p>Staff develop an excellent understanding of the risks associated with young people's substance misuse, missing episodes and offending behaviour. They are</p>	

extremely knowledgeable and robust in respect of safeguarding issues. A family member said, '(Young person) is doing great and sorting himself out.'

Currently there are no young people subject to child sexual exploitation. Staff are trained and fully aware of the risk factors and signs should such concerns arise. They have an excellent understanding of young people's history and recognise how this may expose them to greater risk. They understand young people's resilience and vulnerability factors, recognising that they need some exposure to risk to aid their development. Young people are provided with accurate information and strategies which empower them to keep themselves safe and protected in the community.

The staff team prioritise the safety and wellbeing of young people. Young people recognise the staff team members' tenacity and commitment. One young person was surprised that staff would come to collect him whatever time during the day or night if he was away from home. This is in contrast to his previous placements. Family members also say that young people are 'safest when they are at the home'.

Staff work closely with young people who contribute to their safeguarding plans. This increased cooperation from young people has helped them to understand the need to remain in contact with staff when they are away from the home. Strengthened partnership working enables staff to undertake 'safe and well' checks to ascertain young people's whereabouts. This reinforces the strong message to young people that staff care about their safety. As a result, a young person's missing episodes have reduced and they are no longer away from home for significant periods. Return home interviews are offered on every occasion when the young person is missing. This helps young people's immediate and long-term physical and emotional well-being, reducing their exposure to high-risk activities.

The levels of substance misuse and offending behaviour have dramatically improved. This has impacted on a young person taking more care of their personal hygiene including their eating and sleeping behaviours. Good links with drug agencies provide staff with information about how best to support young people given their individual needs. One young person has also been engaging regularly with a drug agency. This has resulted in them beginning to take responsibility for addressing their substance misuse.

The effective use of consequences helps young people to improve their negative behaviour. There have been no physical interventions since the home was registered. This is a result of staff being highly efficient in de-escalating situations. Young people's excellent relationships with staff also obviate any physical or verbal outbursts towards them. Young people develop self-regulation skills, which help them to manage their emotions effectively. This is particularly important when young people are nearing the transition to independent living.

Staff are committed to ensuring that the police are not unnecessarily involved in managing young people's behaviour. A cooperative approach is taken with the police to ensure that young people are not criminalised. Restorative justice is promoted with young people and task-based reparation is used, such as young people undertaking tasks in and around the home to repair any damage that they have caused. Their relationship with staff is not affected and young people begin to take responsibility for their actions and develop empathy.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
<p>The manager has extensive experience working within residential care and has been a registered manager for eight years. He has held registered manager status at the home since its opening and manages another children's home within the organisation. The homes are only a short distance apart and the manager shares his time equally between both, responding to emergencies as necessary. He is supported by a knowledgeable senior staff team at both homes who successfully deputise in his absence.</p> <p>The manager has the necessary experience, qualifications and skills to undertake the role. He is fully committed to continuing his own personal professional development through training and establishing links with others. He remains up-to-date with research and relevant changes within social care and education. The manager is keen to impart his knowledge to staff through practice discussions within team meetings and supervision. He has the necessary qualifications and experience to also train staff himself. Relevant and up-to-date topics such as research relating to young people in the care system is incorporated and discussed within team meetings. This provides ongoing training and development for staff.</p> <p>The manager is involved with the employment and induction of staff and the recruitment process is rigorous. Applicants' values and beliefs are tested through the use of innovative and creative exercises. Practical exercises allow staff to demonstrate their ability to work and engage with young people. Staff are actively encouraged to look reflectively at their practice throughout the induction period. This ensures that the staff recruited have the necessary skills and aptitudes, and are fully prepared to undertake the role. Young people benefit from the stability of the staff team with no agency workers used, so strangers do not come regularly into their home.</p> <p>The approachable and personable manager has a visual presence in the home. Young people enjoy spending time with him, and he has an extensive knowledge and understanding of their needs. The manager's meticulous and thorough monitoring and review of documents ensures staff's care and support to young</p>	

people is exemplary. Policies and procedures are regularly checked and updated.

The use of graphs and charts accurately and effectively depict young people's progress. Trends or patterns or changes in behaviour can easily be identified and measures put in place if needed. Staff are extremely proud of young people's achievements and progress. Young people can visually see the progress they are making which provides encouragement and improved confidence and self-esteem. The manager has established links with a number of agencies and organisations in the area, such as the virtual head, training providers and youth offending workers. This offers a coordinated and multi-agency approach for young people. The manager is highly effective at challenging the local authority on behalf of young people due to his knowledge of their service.

His attendance at a regional safeguarding forum provides valuable links with the police and other safeguarding agencies. This ensures that the manager's information is up-to-date. This intelligence offers a proactive approach and helps keep the young people safe from any potential risks in the area.

As a new children's home, the manager is realistic and recognises the strengths and weaknesses of the home. He said that he 'wanted to have a year of stability. We wanted to become solid, as a team.' One of the home's strengths is the commitment of the team members, who will vocalise when changes are needed. Staff are consistent and have a realistic approach with young people that is firm but fair, with staff 'going the extra mile'.

The manager is keen for the home to have robust independent monitoring. The organisation did not feel this process was effective and as a result have commissioned an alternative organisation to undertake this role. It is envisaged the new visitor will be more challenging and help stimulate positive changes. Further to the managers internal monitoring there is additional scrutiny provided by regular internal auditing visits from other registered managers within the same company. This leads to unannounced visits and a 'mini inspection through fresh eyes.'

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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