

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	22/03/2017
Unique reference number	1159272
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Cambian Childcare Ltd
Registered provider address	4th Floor, Waterfront, Hammersmith Embankment, London W6 9RU

Responsible individual	Lorna Fearon
Registered manager	Paul O'Neill
Inspector	Ann-Marie Born

Inspection date	22/03/2017
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**.

A recommendation raised at the last inspection regarding staffing levels has not been met. Further staffing issues have meant that there have not always been enough suitably trained and/or experienced staff on duty to meet the assessed needs of all of the young people in the home. A small core of staff members have remained consistent and are good role models for young people. This bolsters young people's sense of security and belonging and enables them to learn acceptable ways of behaving.

The registered manager has an additional role to support other children's homes' operated by the same provider. As a result, he is not always at the home on a day-to-day basis to oversee the care of the young people robustly. This, combined with an inconsistent and inexperienced staff team, has led to concerns around some of the young people engaging in unsafe behaviours. For example, staff did not adequately supervise the young people when the staff took a group of young people out to a restaurant for a birthday celebration. As a result, the young people were able to commit an offence of underage drinking to the point of intoxication, which went unnoticed.

The manager applied appropriate investigation and disciplinary processes in relation to one of the members of staff involved in this incident. This led to their dismissal. However, several weeks later, a planned debrief session to address the situation with the other staff member has still not taken place.

There have been gaps in staff supervision. Not all staff have been fully supported to fulfil their roles and address any practice issues. A newly appointed deputy manager is now sharing the responsibility for supervising staff, which should improve support and consistency to the staff team.

Staff update young people's risk assessments appropriately, together with their social workers, following any incidents. In theory this ensures that all staff working at the home are updated with any actions and strategies needed to keep young people safe. However, not all the staff are familiar with the young people's background, their history or their risk assessments; particularly in relation to young

people who are vulnerable to going missing. Although missing incidents are extremely rare, a recent incident of missing could have been avoided if the staff involved had read the young person's risk assessments helping them to understand the young person's behaviours.

The home specialises in supporting young people who have been exposed to child sexual exploitation. However, there have been occasions when the staff on duty have not had the necessary skills or experience to meet the young people's complex needs. Not all the staff working at the home have accessed the relevant training related to the prevention of child sexual exploitation, which they need to safeguard young people effectively. There are failings in the home's induction programme, which does not provide new staff with any training or information about child sexual exploitation or how this potentially affects young people's safety and wellbeing. This lack of focus on vital, specialised training compromises the young people's safety and their welfare.

The majority of the recommendations raised at the last inspection have been met. This demonstrates the manager's capacity to make improvements particularly in relation to the promotion of young people's health. Young people's health plans contain clear information about their health needs, including their sexual and psychological health. Careful planning allows young people to address past unhealthy lifestyles and get involved in exercise and walking, as well as working on emotional and psychological issues. When necessary, a written health protocol is in place, which advises staff how to manage any medical devices that young people are reliant on for their ongoing health needs. Young people's physical health and emotional well-being improve as a result.

The manager works hard to avoid creating an institutional feel to the home. Young people sign their records if they wish and are encouraged to contribute towards written information kept about them. For example, one young person has contributed to her own risk assessments. Young people are also aware of how to access their records.

The manager is strengthening accountability and practice in the home through the improvements to young people's case records and staff meeting records. Staff members' feel more confident stating morale is boosted by the management team's acknowledgement of their strengths. The deputy manager said, 'You can tell how much emotional and physical investment [Staff Name] gives to this role and she is a very strong member of staff that can be relied upon.'

Improved recruitment processes mean that the committed and experienced manager is now actively involved in verifying references for new staff in the home. He is also planning to be a part of all future interviews to work towards building a stronger team. The provider is committed to meeting the focused workforce development plan, which sets out clearly the resources and training required to address the shortfalls identified at this inspection. The provider is committed to meeting this need.

The manager has maintained effective relationships with partner agencies, including attending local vulnerable, exploited, missing and trafficked meetings, to promote young people's safety. Effective multi-agency working between the home and partner agencies has resulted in a young person returning successfully to live with family members since the last inspection. Carefully planned support and contact arrangements have enabled her to rebuild familial and community relationships.

Young people continue to benefit from well-planned care to make sense of past life experiences. This builds self-esteem and feelings of self-worth effectively. The in-house psychologist supports staff and young people through 'team around the child' meetings and direct intervention. The resultant growth in maturity enables young people to prepare effectively for adulthood.

The young people all attend education in the company's on-site school. They are preparing for national examinations as well as studying specialist subjects of their choice, including a language. Young people, many of whom had no interest in education prior to moving to the home, are regaining an enthusiasm for learning. This enhances their future life and job opportunities.

Young people report that they feel safe in this home and that there are staff who they like and can trust. Physical interventions are rare and only take place when necessary to protect young people from harm. Comprehensive recording and the opportunity to participate in reflective mediation sessions with the in-house psychologist, allow young people to learn from the experience and prevent recurrence.

Information about this children's home

The home may accommodate up to four children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. This is a home that specialised in caring for young people who have been subject to or are at risk of child sexual exploitation. A private provider operates the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/10/2016	Full	Good
24/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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
<p>13. In order to meet the leadership and management standard, with particular reference to staff training, the registered person must ensure that;</p> <p>(2)(c) that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child</p> <p>(d) the home has sufficient staff to care for each child</p> <p>(e) the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child.</p>	31/05/2017
<p>The registered person must ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction that includes training on child sexual exploitation. (Regulation 33 (1)(a))</p>	31/05/2017
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	31/03/2017

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 that 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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