

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	21/03/2017
Unique reference number	1227060
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school
Registered provider	Cambian Autism Services Ltd
Registered provider address	4th Floor, Waterfront Building, Chancellors Road, Hammersmith Embankment, London W6 9RU

Responsible individual	Bethan Davies
Registered manager	Rikke McIntosh
Inspector	Tina Ruffles

Inspection date	21/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
<p>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</p> <p>This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.</p> <p>The registered manager has implemented the two requirements and one recommendation made at the last inspection. A pen picture of each child and young person is now kept at each house. This provides easily accessible, comprehensive information, and identifies their needs, vulnerabilities and progress. The introduction of a 'shift planner' means that changes to children's and young people's behaviour management plans and risk assessments are highlighted. Staff know that at the beginning of each shift it is their responsibility to check the shift planner and update themselves on any changes. Consequently, staff have up-to-date information about children and young people. This provides a consistent approach to behaviour management and contributes to keeping children and young people safe and protected.</p> <p>The existing sanction system has been reviewed and is being replaced with a new process which looks at the event, consequence and outcome. This new approach links in with social stories to help educate children and young people about their behaviour. The manager said, 'We have worked quite hard with staff re their perceptions about sanctions. The number of sanctions that we have are minimal.'</p> <p>Further improvements to the service include autism training for staff. Staff report that the quality of this training is excellent and that it is providing them with a thorough understanding of autism. One staff member said, 'It is a good place to work. I have had safeguarding training and autism awareness training. It has been really useful to relate it to the traits of the young people living at the home.'</p> <p>Since the last inspection, no young people have left and one young person has been admitted. Children and young people continue to make progress in different areas and achieve their identified goals. They attend the on-site school, have excellent attendance and benefit from individualised education programmes. Some young people have work placements in the community, with one young person also undertaking voluntary work. These placements give them new experiences and help to improve their confidence. One child has made so much progress that discussions are taking place about a move to a different school. A parent said, '[Name of young person] has come on leaps and bounds. She has a plan of what</p>	

she wants to do. Staff have been brilliant at finding her placements.'

There is improved partnership working with the multi-disciplinary clinical team. Staff more readily seek advice. The behavioural support worker audits risk assessments and behaviour support plans. This monitoring, together with reflective team meetings, provides opportunities to highlight any practice issues or training needs of staff. Children and young people are managing their emotions and behaviour better. There is a reduction in negative behaviour because of this joined-up approach. As a result, children and young people spend more contact time at home, as parents are able to manage their behaviour.

Children and young people participate in many social and leisure activities at the home and in the community. This includes a bike workshop for young people to work on maintaining their cycles. Friendships develop at the home. Children and young people enjoy physical activities to help keep them fit and this results in them gaining skills and confidence in social situations.

Children and young people are kept safe by staff who have a good understanding of them and a wealth of knowledge about their vulnerabilities. There have been a couple of missing-from-home episodes, but staff follow agreed protocols and work well with police. Consequently, children and young people are located quickly. Staff introduce new protective measures to avoid a reoccurrence.

Good, well-established partnership working with social workers, health professionals, the education team and the in-house clinical team continues. This makes sure that children and young people receive the best care and are given support to improve their experiences and outcomes. Parents said that they know their children are well cared for and safe and that staff regularly update them about their children's progress. One parent said, 'Staff let me know what's going on. They will discuss issues with me rather than just doing things.'

The forward-thinking manager has a clear vision for the home. This includes a recruitment, induction and training action plan with a revised appraisal format for staff. The manager is seeking a more reflective approach, with individualised targets to monitor the progress of staff and raise standards. This will bring further improvement to the quality of care provided to children and young people. One recommendation from the last inspection is carried forward in respect of devising an escalation policy and formulating a procedure to make it clear when the practice of external agencies should be challenged. However, there has been no need to escalate matters since the last inspection.

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to 23 children who have learning disabilities and/or emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/11/2016	Full	Good

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:

- Where the placing authority or another relevant person does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs during their time in the home or in preparation for leaving the home, the home must challenge them to meet the child's needs. Staff should act as champions for their children, expecting nothing less than a good parent would ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8). In particular, devise an escalation policy and formulate a procedure that makes clear how any concerns about lack of pathway plans; moving on to alternative accommodation; disputes about safeguarding responsibilities are to be brought to the attention of the director of children's services within the child's placing authority and within what timescales.

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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