

1159258

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a private organisation. It offers care and accommodation for up to three young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home has operated without a registered manager since June 2018. The current manager has applied to be registered for this home and is already registered for another of the company's homes.

Inspection date: 5 March 2019

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 10 July 2018

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 last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

The home has operated without a registered manager since June 2018. An application for registration from the current manager has been received by Ofsted. The current manager is also a registered manager of another of the organisation's children's homes. The new application proposes that the current manager takes responsibility for the management of both settings.

Young people's safety is compromised in this home. They are regularly involved in significant incidents connected with the misuse and suspected supply of illegal

substances. Frequent room searches uncover items such as bongs, foil, cannabis, cigarette papers and cash. On one occasion, when staff tried to retrieve a substance the young person swallowed the bag and required admission to hospital. The current systems in place to address this significant risk-taking behaviour are ineffective. Staff say, 'There is nothing we can do; nothing works.' Consequently, young people continue to be exposed to illegal substances, placing their safety, health and well-being at considerable risk.

Risk assessments are poor. These assessments fail to identify how the home will address risks, in order to reduce and minimise risk-taking behaviours that compromise the safety of young people. Discussions with external agencies, such as the police or drug and alcohol services, have no positive impact on the current behaviours exhibited by young people in the home. Although staff are aware of the escalation of risk-taking behaviours, there is a consensus in the staff team that they are powerless to manage and reduce these. Without a clear and robust strategy, young people's risk-taking behaviours continue to escalate.

Young people are frequently absent or missing from home and staff's efforts to prevent these occurrences are ineffective. During periods of absence, staff have located a young person and witnessed them receiving a package from an unknown passing car. In addition, young people have boasted about their activities on social media by posting an image of themselves with other youths wearing balaclavas and holding weapons. It is equally worrying that, during the interim inspection, the manager and staff failed to take any suitable action to stop young people leaving in a taxi with an unknown male. Therefore, although equipped with significant information, staff have failed to make a connection between young people's behaviour and potential exploitation. Staff say, 'They just deny anything we ask them about or say they were just messing around.' This risk-taking behaviour is compounded by the lack of a local authority response to young people being missing. The failure to provide regular return home interviews means that the potential for gleaning critical information for staff and social workers to learn from is lost. This lack of partnership working, coupled with the home's failure to implement robust and consistent boundaries, further compromises the safety of young people living in the home.

Young people are out in the community on a daily basis. However, friends and acquaintances are not always known by the staff working in the home. Consequently, young people are missing with groups of other young people and this has a serious negative impact on their progress in the home. Likewise, when staff are aware of the address a young person is visiting, they refuse to collect them due to concerns for their own safety. Agreed arrangements with the placing social worker are not consistently implemented, for example, that staff meet a young person at a designated area. Instead, the young person is getting public transport to and from an area known by staff to be dangerous. As a result, the safety and well-being of this individual is significantly compromised because the safety of the staff employed in the home is prioritised over the safety of the young person they are responsible for.

Significant incidents resulting in a danger to life have escalated in the home. There have

been two reported fire-setting episodes. One incident resulted in a staff member receiving facial burns because young people had placed aerosols in a fire and these exploded in his face. During this incident, staff were unaware which fire extinguisher to use, or indeed how to use it. The fire was extinguished using pans of water. Staff had received online fire safety training, but this did not equip them to manage effectively live incidents involving fire. Staff had not received professional face-to-face training on the care and management of young people during a fire incident. This training has now been completed, as a result of these incidents.

On a further occasion, a young person took the car keys for the home's car, which had been left out where they could find them. This resulted in the car being driven by the young person onto a busy main road before the vehicle crashed into a parked car. During these incidents, staff were complacent in their attitude to the safe management of young people. During the fire setting, one member of staff remained in the office and stated that he did not want to provide the young people with an audience. During the car theft incident, the staff member was not aware that the young person had taken the key until they looked for it. It is clear that the knowledge, skill and experience of staff working in the home, fall below the expected standard for the safe management of young people who have significant and complex behaviours.

Although all young people have educational placements identified, attendance is poor. Young people frequently refuse to attend school. The home employs a tutor for five hours each day to support young people who do not attend education. However, arrangements to cover the tutor's leave were not in place at the time of the inspection. Although one young person has made some progress while attending education, this is not consistent. Staff strategies to challenge education refusal are inconsistent. For example, young people do not earn their daily educational incentive should they not attend school. However, young people are still provided with pocket money during these times. Therefore, strategies are ineffective and compromise young people's life chances.

The home is currently managed by a manager who has registration responsibilities for another children's home. This means there is not a full-time manager in the home. The monitoring, review and development of care practice are poor. Staff do not receive clear directives in the effective management of young people. The lack of robust risk assessments results in staff responses being reactive, rather than a planned response to reduce and minimise risk. Although referrals to external agencies are made, young people's refusal to engage with these parties or to make any significant changes to their risk-taking behaviour are not raised as a placement concern until a situation becomes critical. Examples include a young person being found with a carrier bag of drugs in the home. The lack of management oversight, coupled with flawed decision-making, results in the deficient and ineffective care management of young people.

Staff try to develop trusting relationships with the young people resident in the home. However, due to poor matching of young people placed this has proved difficult. For example, although the home has discharged two young people who had critical drug-related concerns, two further young people have been admitted with drug- and gang-related issues. Young people disregard staff's attempts at managing their behaviours and

staff present as powerless in these situations.

The manager has provided Ofsted with notifications under regulation 40 which detail some of the serious incidents that have taken place in the home. However, the manager failed to notify Ofsted of the serious concerns regarding potential child exploitation, including a notification of a young person being missing for a two-week period. This means that the regulatory body cannot maintain an overview of the risks that young people present, and are faced with, while living in the home.

The care provided by managers and staff is not in keeping with the information as described in the home's statement of purpose. The young people's care, education, safety, health and well-being, and the home's management, all require significant improvement.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/07/2018	Full	Good
30/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/05/2017	Full	Good
21/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p>	15/04/2019

<p>help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(i)(iv))</p>	
<p>* The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))</p>	<p>14/04/2019</p>
<p>* The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that – (b) promotes their welfare.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—(b) ensure the staff work as a team as appropriate; (c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; (e) ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(b)(2)(c)(e))</p>	<p>30/04/2019</p>
<p>The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p>	<p>15/04/2019</p>

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) and (2)(a))</p>	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii) and (e))</p>	15/04/2019
<p>The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs; and understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) and (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))</p>	15/04/2019
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p>	15/04/2019

positive responses to other children and adults.

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—that staff—

meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;

help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;

encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;

help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone.

(Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- Staff should be skilled in understanding the range of influences that friendships can have and should encourage those with a positive impact and discourage those with a negative impact. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 38, paragraph 8.8)
- Expectations of standards of behaviour should be high for all staff and children in the home. These standards should be clear and unambiguous. Children should be supported to develop understanding and empathy towards each other. Positive behaviour and relationships should be reinforced, praised and encouraged; poor behaviour should be challenged and discussed. The development of safe, stable and secure relationships with staff in the home should be central to the ethos of the home and support the development of secure attachments that, where appropriate, persist over time. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are significant safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage and reduce risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph

9.30)

- The behaviour management policy should set out how staff are trained and supported to meet the child's needs as set out in regulation 13. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.37)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom 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.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1159258

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Registered provider address: 4th Floor, Waterfront Manbre Wharf, Manbre Road, Hammersmith, London, Middlesex W6 9RH

Responsible individual: Asjad Mahmood

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector

Maria McGranaghan, social care inspector

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