

SC066821

Registered provider: Cambian Whinfell School Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides care, accommodation and education on site for a maximum of 14 young males who have a learning disability, including complex needs and autism spectrum disorders. Accommodation is split, with most young people living on the main site and facilities for some to experience semi-independent living a short distance away. The registered manager resigned in January 2020. A new manager has been appointed. He has not yet submitted his application to Ofsted for registration. The manager is working towards the relevant level 5 leadership and management qualification.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 February 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 29 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
15/05/2017	Full	Outstanding
12/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/05/2016	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Most young people make exceptional progress from their starting points. Young people are often anxious and limited by their autism spectrum disorder and other diagnosed conditions, prior to placement. Through their time at the home, they learn to reduce and control their anxieties. They become able to take part in education, activities and social events. They learn emotional regulation skills that are of significant importance to them. This allows them to improve their peer and familial relationships.

Two young people have had their placements break down. Staff went 'above and beyond' to support these young people to remain in the home and adapt to life there. Ultimately, the young people's impact on the other residents had to be considered, and their placements were ended.

Young people's life chances improve as a direct result of the time that they spend in this home. Some young people have made enormous progress in respect of their ability to function independently. Some have gone on to live, study and work completely independently. Young people who have left the home can reflect on what a positive experience it was for them and how much it improved their future potential.

Staff have positive relationships with young people. The feedback from parents and external agencies indicates that the relationships that some young people have with their key worker make a profound impact on their lives.

Staff and young people alike take pride in their achievements. For example, one young person passed their driving test, some are managing to attend college independently, some have managed holidays abroad despite their high anxiety about this, some have taken part in charity events and most have taken part in outdoor learning.

The individual needs of each young person are taken into account. They are encouraged to voice their views and opinions. Individual choices are supported to a high level. For example, one young person has very specific dietary preferences, and his personal food budget has been more than doubled to pay for his unusual diet.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Young people present with a variety of risks, which are well managed. Risks are understood and recorded. The strategies to manage, reduce and avoid risks are clear. Staff understand young people's individual behavioural and situational cues. They know how to de-escalate. The risk assessment for one young person whose placement has been ended (due to unmanageable risks) did not correctly carry

forward significant risks into his most recent risk assessment. A requirement is made to reflect this omission.

Risk assessments highlight both the known and the potential risks for young people. This is a proactive approach to risk management.

A relatively high number of restrictive physical interventions are used. Some young people whose emotional and behavioural regulation is poor have a high number of interventions. Managers monitor interventions to identify patterns and trends to better understand triggers and devise effective de-escalation. One young person's behaviour accounts for a very high number of interventions. The home has decided that it is not the best service to meet his needs, and he will therefore be moving to another provision.

Records of physical interventions are clear and detailed. They show that staff use the de-escalation techniques identified in young people's plans. They also evidence that young people are encouraged to use the strategies that they have identified to regulate themselves emotionally.

One young person is at risk of radicalisation and extremism. He has been appropriately referred to the Prevent team and is receiving specialist support to reduce this risk.

Incidents of inappropriate sexualised behaviours and inappropriate sexual contact are well managed. Young people have been educated with an in-depth programme of work designed to improve their awareness of sexual relationships. A risk assessment is in place for those young people who will be sharing a room on the forthcoming ski trip, to minimize any potential risks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

There is a new manager in post following the departure of the registered manager in January 2020. The new manager is in the process of applying for registration. Although he does not yet have his level 5 qualification, he is working towards it. The transition between managers seems to have had minimal impact on the running of the home. There is a strong wider management team in place to support the new manager. Additionally, a new responsible individual has been appointed who intends to have close oversight of the home.

Staff report that they feel well supported and supervised. Among the staff team there is a wide variety of skills, qualifications and experience. Staff feel committed to their role and offer young people genuine warmth and care.

There are good monitoring systems in place. This results in the manager having a very good understanding of the home. He understands the young people well and strives to enable them to achieve their potential. Aspirations for young people are high, and a commitment to achieving these aspirations is embedded in the ethos of

the home. Managers want young people to achieve and succeed. Staff make every effort to give them the opportunity to do so.

Managers make good decisions about who comes to live in the home. They match the young people carefully with the information available to them. Where young people are not settling, managers and staff make every effort to identify strategies to help them. They do not give up easily on young people. However, managers are able to make difficult decisions about ending placements after all staff's efforts have been unsuccessful.

Multi-agency working is embedded into practice. Managers make use of the multidisciplinary team employed by the service. This includes a speech and language therapist, an occupational therapist, an assistant psychologist, an educational psychologist and a consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist. Additionally, outside agencies, such as the child and adolescent mental health services, general practitioners and police, are regularly involved in ensuring that young people's holistic needs are met. Parents also are very much involved in their child's care. Family contact is promoted, regular communication takes place and families are invited to events such as open and sports days.

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 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–</p> <p>that staff–</p> <p>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.</p> <p>(Regulation 12(1), (2)(a))</p>	<p>20/03/2020</p>

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: SC066821

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Cambian Whinfell School Ltd

Registered provider address: Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Road, Potters Bar
EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Christopher Strong

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Charlie Bamber, social care inspector

William Drumm, social care inspector

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