

1225136

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a large national provider. It provides care for four children who experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2025.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 May 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 4 December 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/12/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/07/2021	Full	Good
02/01/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/05/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

During the inspection, all three children spoke to the inspector.

This has been an unsettled period for the children. They have not always been provided with a calm and responsive staff team. There have been management and staff changes in an attempt by the organisation to promote a more child-centred and structured environment.

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out and one child has moved in. The move into the home was well planned and managed. The child is beginning to settle in and is forming positive relationships with staff. The child who has moved out did so after notice was served to the manager by the local authority. The manager had agreed to extend the notice period three times to support the child and to ensure that they felt supported by staff.

Two children have lived at the home for almost one year. At the time of moving in, both children were malnourished. Staff have continued to work alongside appropriate medical professionals, such as the dietician, to help the children gain weight and increase their confidence in trying new foods. All of the children in the home have required treatment for a condition which had initially been misdiagnosed. However, with the persistence of staff and the previous manager the correct diagnosis and treatment has now been able to be given.

Staff and the manager promote education in the home, providing creative opportunities for learning. None of the children are accessing education provision full time. The manager is working alongside education professionals to progress education plans. However, there remains a lack of consistent structure and boundaries, which impacts on children's attendance and engagement with education.

Independence skills are encouraged for children in an age-appropriate way. Children are supported to carry out a variety of tasks, such as cooking, shopping and budgeting. Children are able to take part in leisure activities. However, they often require a great deal of encouragement from staff to take part.

The home is a safe and welcoming environment. Children have been able to personalise their rooms. When children have caused damage, repairs have been completed in a timely manner and broken items replaced.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff understand the children's needs and vulnerabilities. There are comprehensive plans in place that guide staff how to manage and de-escalate situations. There has been a reduction in the number of incidents between children. However, there has been one incident in which a non-permanent member of staff did not intervene in a timely manner to prevent or manage conflict between children. This allowed the situation to escalate into a physical altercation between children, which resulted in them causing physical harm to each other.

Since the last inspection, there has been an increase in missing-from-home episodes for one child alongside contextual safeguarding concerns. When the child has been missing from home, staff have followed protocols. They ensure that they search for the child and collect them when they are ready to return home. There has been a multi-agency response and the manager has worked alongside safeguarding agencies in an attempt to manage and reduce the risks to the child.

There have been several incidences of substance misuse. When staff have suspected substance misuse, they have looked in children's bedrooms and removed any harmful items. They have sought immediate medical advice for children and referrals have been made to specialist services. Staff have spoken with children about the dangers of using substances and have used additional resources to provide education on the risks.

There has been some use of physical intervention to keep children safe. When this has happened, it has been proportionate and necessary. There is clear recording and the manager ensures that he reviews the incident records and reflects on them with the children and staff. However, negative consequences have not always been fully documented by staff. This has reduced the manager's oversight and his ability to ensure that the measures were fair and effective.

There have been two allegations made against staff since the last inspection. One allegation pertains to a child being subjected to name-calling by a member of staff. In both cases, the manager has taken action swiftly to ensure that children are safe and that the matters are investigated. However, these incidents have impacted on the child's emotional well-being.

Staff received training in safeguarding matters. They know how to escalate safeguarding concerns, including to external agencies. There have been several new members of staff recruited and safer recruitment protocols have been followed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified and his practice is child centred. The manager has been steadily working to improve staff practice in the home and increase

their confidence. The manager is supported by a committed deputy manager and an experienced responsible individual.

The staff team has begun to stabilise. There has been a reduction in the amount of non-permanent staff and staff from other homes used to cover the staff rota. This ensures consistency for children. However, there have been some occasions when the staff roster has not accurately reflected who has been working in the home.

The staff team has a range of experience. Some staff are experienced and qualified in childcare. New members of staff complete an induction and probation period before being enrolled to complete a recognised childcare qualification. The manager has placed a strong emphasis on training and upskilling the staff team. Staff have access to a broad range of training and additional training has been provided when needs have emerged for children.

Staff say that they feel supported by the management team. They have regular supervision sessions, which allows them to reflect on their practice. Team meetings are held regularly and are used as a forum for discussion and to embed learning. Managers constructively challenge staff to improve how they care for children.

The manager has formed good working relationships with other professionals. He shares information in a timely manner and ensures that safeguarding matters are referred to appropriate partner agencies. However, some local authority documents have not been received for some children and the manager has not challenged or escalated this sufficiently.

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, The 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
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 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; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children; and that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(viii)(xi)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff take steps to prevent conflict between children. If this should happen, staff must intervene to prevent children harming each other. Additionally, the registered person must ensure that staff treat children with respect and respond to them in an appropriate manner.	29 June 2025

The registered person must also ensure that positive routines and boundaries are in place in the home for children.	
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that any negative consequences put in place for children are recorded by staff. Additionally, these must be reviewed by the manager to ensure that they are proportionate, fair and effective.	29 June 2025

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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child’s relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they receive the most recent care plan for children from the local authority.	29 June 2025
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children’s home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date; and retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the staff duty roster contains all staff members working in the home, including agency staff.	29 June 2025

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: 1225136

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Registered provider address: 5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Louise Winward

Registered manager: Christopher Rimmer

Inspector

Eve Ostridge, Social Care Inspector

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