

1236026

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 and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2024. She had been working as the interim manager prior to this.

There were three children living at the home at the time of the inspection. The inspector spoke to one child during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 31 July and 1 August 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 1 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/08/2023	Full	Good
20/04/2022	Full	Good
29/06/2021	Full	Good
15/10/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children have lived at the home since the last inspection. One child moved in more recently. Relationships have developed with staff; however, for those who have not been in the home as long, these will continue to deepen over time.

Moves into and out of the home are usually planned. However, there has been an unplanned move out of the home for one child due to external factors. This was sudden and emotionally difficult for the child concerned. The staff team supported them as best as they could. When children struggle to settle into the home, the manager considers how to help them. For example, one child wanted more time with their family and friends, and arrangements were made. The child felt listened to, helping to build trust and relationships with staff.

Children all have arrangements for going to school and have mixed experiences. One child is doing much better, preferring the place that they now attend. This means that they are going to school more regularly. Another child is back in school after a gap in their education. Staff support children when they experience challenges in attending school by providing learning opportunities on the days that they are reluctant to go.

Children are in good health and go to their medical appointments. Staff access external support when children need help with their emotional health.

Children have carefully assessed time with their family and friends. Staff take the time to get to know people who are important to the children. Staff develop positive relationships with children's family members, which helps the children to see everyone working together to support their best interests.

Staff keep information about the children up to date; however, sometimes the language used is not helpful to the children. Some expressions used, such as 'dysregulated', 'heightened' and 'baseline', are institutional and can mean different things for different children. This is an area for development so that children can read their records and understand exactly what is written about them.

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

There has been a mixture of challenges with children's well-being and their missing-from-home episodes. Staff have a good understanding of the issues that the children are dealing with currently, such as cannabis use, exploitation and anti-social behaviour. Staff know what behaviours they should look for and what action to take if they have concerns about the children. This knowledge helps to keep children safer.

Staff support children to express how they are feeling, exploring how they feel when things happen and what staff can do to help in a better way. Staff also have difficult conversations with children about their worries for their safety, for example explaining why people are worried and discussing issues around safety and the possible outcomes. This helps children to think about their behaviour and encourages them to make the right choices in the future.

When serious issues arise for children, the manager and leadership team consider whether the approach by staff is good enough. When leaders and managers identify that staff are not following practice expectations, this is addressed through discussions at team meetings, attendance at training and further monitoring from the management team. This ensures that lessons are learned so that the same errors are not made again.

When a child complains about a member of staff's behaviour, this is thoroughly investigated. The local authority designated officer is contacted so that information is shared, helping to safeguard the children further. This includes staff being subject to disciplinary action with internal investigations being undertaken. This ensures that people working at the home are safe and suitable to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager and staff work well with other agencies and professionals. The manager has built effective working relationships with social workers from placing authorities to secure positive outcomes for children. She challenges decision-making and advocates on behalf of the children. For example, she challenged a local authority about their decision not to have a safeguarding meeting when concerns increased for a child.

The manager has been more involved in the day-to-day running of the home, which means that her managerial oversight is not consistent. This means that there are gaps in the staff's recording. For example, a chronology of staff's actions when a child went missing from home was not detailed. Some records have not had management oversight, and the manager has missed opportunities to address gaps in information with the team. Furthermore, the children's bedroom door alarms are currently in use. There are clear reasons why this level of monitoring is needed; however, there are no plans for reviewing whether these restrictions need to remain in place.

The staff team has changed since the last inspection as the whole staff team left in December 2023. This had a significant impact on the children, who felt rejected, although support was provided at the time to help them deal with their loss. The home is now fully staffed, but it took time for the team to work together. The negative culture at the home was dealt with through a team meeting where issues were discussed and shared. Airing these concerns has helped the team to move on and work more cohesively.

The staff team is new and still learning. Staff receive support through the induction process, which makes sure that all staff have the same mandatory training and skill base. There are team meetings and supervision sessions, which support the staff with their ongoing training. Once through the probation period, those who need it will be enrolled on the appropriate qualification courses.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))	4 October 2024
The registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises — is kept under review and, if necessary, revised. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(iii))	4 October 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 1236026

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

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

Responsible individual: Ian Raine

Registered manager: Elizabeth Forster

Inspector

Miriam Dolman, Social Care Inspector

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