

1236620

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties. At the time of this inspection, three children were living in the home.

There has been no registered manager since June 2023.

Inspection dates: 30 September and 1 October 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 10 August 2023

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
10/08/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/01/2023	Full	Good
21/09/2021	Full	Good
10/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There were three children present for this inspection. All three children were spoken with during the inspection. The children enjoy when staff dogs come to visit, they enjoy being able to eat together in the evening. One child talked about the different variety of food they have been prepared; they have a favourite member of staff who makes delicious curries. The children all like their rooms and can talk to staff about changes they would like and are supported ensure their room is a personalised space.

Children in the home have trusted and secure relationships with staff. The staff have created a calm home environment for the children to live in. Children talk to the staff about a variety of things happening in their lives, such as school, relationships, activities, social media and identity. Staff respond without judgement, which provides the children with a safe environment to talk about things that are important to them.

Children give their views on living in the home via monthly home–children consultation meetings and are also supported to attend meetings with external professionals about their care. This ensures that children feel listened to and that their views are conveyed.

Children have made progress in this home. One child is now attending education, having been out of school for some time. One child is now attending college, having experienced a breakdown of education at the end of last term. A child who has recently come into the care of the home has stayed at the same education provision to continue to support their educational progress. Some children do not attend education on a full-time basis and are not provided with structured activities to do on the days when not in education.

The staff have supported children to make progress in other areas of their lives. One child's diet has significantly improved; they make meals for themselves and enjoy taking part in the food shopping for the home. They have also made progress in relation to managing their emotions. One child has begun to explore their gender and sexual identity and feels able to talk to the staff about this. Alongside this, they have been supported to develop independence skills, doing their own laundry and making meals for the other children and staff.

Staff ensure that the children can participate in their interests and experience new things. One child attends cadets and had a weekend away at an air show. One child is supported to go trampolining, and all children are supported to spend time out of the home walking, cycling and taking staff's dogs for a walk, when they visit the home. The children's bedrooms reflect who they are as individuals and are filled with belongings, toys and decorations that are important to them. Staff arrange for those who are important to the children in their wider family to join them for some activities and experiences. This maintains meaningful relationships for the children.

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

There have been no missing-from-home episodes and no use of restraint. All children have appropriate risk assessments in place to ensure staff know how to respond to any missing-from-home incidents or know how to support the children when they are unable to manage difficult emotions.

Staff have responded appropriately to incidents of harm. During and after a significant incident, staff kept all the children in the home safe. The records were brought up to date and all relevant professionals were contacted. The home took immediate action to mitigate further risks. The manager reflected on the incident to ensure that any gaps in practice were identified and learned from.

The day-to-day life of each child is recorded in daily logs to assess and identify any areas of support. Recordings are inconsistent and lack clear insight into the children's specific behaviours and emotions.

Safer recruitment is in place; management ensure all staff members in the home go through a clear recruitment process. At times, language barriers have caused concern among the staff team. Staff do not trust in the management oversight of all staff. Staff think that management lack a clear understanding that all staff can adequately respond to, support and identify safeguarding concerns.

There is confusion among the team about how children should be supported to remain safe online and while using their mobile phones. Staff lack guidance and training on where harmful content can arise and have no clear boundaries in place to prevent the children accessing harmful content. There are no defined strategies in place to support them to learn to keep themselves safe.

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

The manager has positive relationships with professionals and children's family members. They advocate for the children and have aspirations for them to make progress and achieve in all areas of their lives. The manager uses written reports to regularly review and monitor care to ensure progress is identified and built on for all children.

Staff have access to plans to follow in relation to the day-to-day care of the children. However, they feel that the manager is not present enough in the home and therefore has not identified that there is inconsistent care provided to the children across the staff team. Some staff say that they do not feel supported and provided with adequate guidance and management oversight on all aspects of the children's care.

There is an ethos of mistrust between staff and management. Staff are reluctant to report concerns about practice or how the home operates as they feel continually ignored and do not have confidence in the procedures in place. Managers have said

they want to instil confidence in the staff team about the internal procedures. They aim to do so by convening team meetings, reiterating protocols in place and acting quickly to respond to any concerns raised.

Staff lack confidence in the supervision process, the frequency of supervision, who they are supervised by and the confidentiality of what they discuss. The way in which leaders and managers have responded to staff raising things in supervision has had a direct impact on staff morale and the wider team dynamic. There is a lack of focus on safeguarding for the children and a lack of clear, reflective practice to enhance the quality of care that is provided to them.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— 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; 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)(ii)(iii)(b)) In particular, the registered person should ensure there is a robust plan in place to assess and monitor the risk to each child from their phone and internet use. In addition, the registered person should ensure staff are provided with training to equip them with knowledge on how to identify online risks for the children and assist in educating the children on how to remain safe online.	5 November 2024
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—	1 January 2025

lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(e)) In particular, the registered person should ensure staff work as a team, provide consistent care and approach their roles in line with the statement of purpose. In addition, the registered person should lead a culture of professionalism with a focus on children's welfare, progress and futures.	
The registered person must— ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1) (4)(b)) In particular, the registered person should ensure supervision take place at regular intervals for all staff. That it is provided by someone with appropriate experience and training and that matters discussed in supervision are handled in confidence.	1 January 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children have clear routines, planned activities and structure on days they do not attend school or college. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should ensure that all members of staff can identify, support, respond to and report safeguarding concerns to reduce the risk of harm to children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraphs 9.10 and 9.12)
- The registered person should ensure that the language used to record the children's day-to-day life has clear behavioural detail and with language the child can understand. ('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: 1236620

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Nikki McClements (proposed)

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector

Hannah Spencer-Townesend, Social Care Inspector

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