

1257796

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It provides care for up to 12 children with ongoing mental health needs and who may not be able to live in the community without continued support. There is a separately registered school on site. At the time of the inspection, there were nine children living in the home.

The inspector only inspected the social care provision.

The registered manager left the home in October 2024.

Inspection date: 7 November 2024

This monitoring visit

This visit was undertaken to address specific concerns or allegations received by Ofsted.

Three of the nine children contributed to the inspection. Some children have expressed that they feel unsettled and frightened.

In the last month, the home has been extremely unsettled. There has been a high number of concerning safeguarding notifications and an even higher number of police call outs. The police have raised concerns about the staff's ability to manage these incidents. Children witness volatile and unpredictable incidents that include injuries to staff and damage to the home. This fails to provide a safe and stable place for children who have poor mental health. Some children have identified that the noise and level of incidents have increased their self-harming behaviours.

Staff are not all able to de-escalate or calm children successfully. The current group dynamics are not workable. Despite this, new children continue to be moved into the home. Younger children are negatively influenced by older children.

There has been another delay in seeking medical assistance for a child when a child was at risk of harm. This shortfall in staff practice has been raised at the last two inspections. This demonstrates that some systems are not effective and that staff communication is poor.

Two children have raised significant safeguarding concerns; one by email to a manager and one using social media during a missing-from-home incident. The child felt unable to return to the home, citing noise, incidents and disturbed nights as factors that prevent sleep. The second concern raises serious safeguarding concerns and fears from a child. Neither of these have been treated as concerns, responded to or referred to children's social workers. This leaves vulnerable children feeling desperate and unheard.

One child's plan fails to clearly guide staff after increasing incidents of self-harm for the child in the last month. The plan does not correlate with the child's health plan or alert staff to increased risk of self-injury. Another behaviour management plan has rated risks as medium risk for self-harm and going missing from care, despite an increase in incidents. These have not been updated and fail to clearly guide staff or make the team aware of children's increased current risks.

Bullying incidents have increased significantly. There have been four serious incidents during which a child was targeted and threatened by groups of two and three other children. During two of these incidents, staff requested immediate assistance from team leaders. This was not provided due to other competing demands. The failure of systems and on-call support has been clearly identified in the reports. Despite this, it has not been identified by managers as a concern.

A child has raised concerns about some staff in terms of their approach and practice. Children said that some staff antagonise children, making situations worse. The managers have failed to review patterns and concerns about staff practice, or provide effective support to staff. This means that during turbulent and difficult periods staff may struggle. This affects morale and conduct and, at times, has ended in children feeling intimidated and unsupported.

The registered manager left in October 2024. The interim management arrangements fail to ensure that there is effective management oversight of the home. The responsible individual is actively recruiting for a new manager, although this is proving difficult.

There are two recommendations that have not been reviewed as part of this visit and will be reviewed at the next inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/04/2024	Full	Good
16/01/2024	Full	Good
13/12/2022	Full	Good
20/04/2021	Full	Good

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 with 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 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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vii)) In particular, ensure that staff are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and that risk assessments are reviewed and revised when necessary to reflect the current risks to children and to provide clear guidance to staff. Ensure that staff seek medical attention promptly when this is required for children. Ensure that staff understand the impact of the group dynamics. Monitor incidents to ensure that staff provide care and support so that children feel safe and are protected.	13 December 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	13 December 2024

promotes their welfare.

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

lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;

ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;

understand the impact that the quality of care provided the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home.

(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(f)(h))

Leaders and managers must ensure that staff have the skills and resources to manage incidents in a way that is supportive to children.

Leaders and managers must ensure that they review and investigate staff practice errors and general practice concerns to reduce risks and future occurrences.

Leaders and managers must ensure that there is effective managerial oversight to identify when team support systems have failed and left children at risk, taking necessary action to address this.

Leaders and managers must ensure that the home's environment is safe and stable for children with complex mental health needs.

Leaders and managers must ensure that when children raise safeguarding concerns, these are recorded and shared with the relevant authorities without delay. Ensure that any necessary action is taken in accordance with the safeguarding policy and procedures.

*These requirements are subject of a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should sustain effective working relationships with each child's placing authority and with other relevant persons. In particular, the registered person should ensure that good levels of communication with the wider network of support for children are consistently maintained. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.3)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. In particular, they should ensure that all staff attend training in the 'Prevent' duty and child criminal exploitation. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1257796

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: Michael Coleman

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Deirdra Keating, Social Care Inspector

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