

2594007

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home. The home provides care and accommodation for up to two children who are not able to live at home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since June 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020. A monitoring visit was completed in March 2021. This is the home's first full inspection since its registration in June 2020.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 August 2021

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: none

Overall judgement at last inspection: not previously inspected

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected.

Inspection judgements

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

Four children have lived in this home since the home's registration in June 2020. One child currently lives here, and another child is due to move in to the home soon. Both children spoke with the inspector.

Children said that they had good transitions into the home. This included staff visiting them in their current home, children coming to view the home, having lunch and going out on an activity with their new staff. However, the manager did not formulate a transition plan to show how the move was planned. Other children have left the home without a transition plan. Therefore, the manager was not able to take any learning from this, such as what went well and what she would need to consider next time.

The manager has identified in the safer area location assessment, risks that are associated with the home's proximity to a motorway and bridges. However, this information was not used to fully inform the placement decision of the children and whether this proximity would be an issue. Currently, this has not had an adverse impact on the children's safety but, if not addressed, it has the potential to do so. Further to this, the manager has not formally completed an impact risk assessment for a child who was due to move in to the home the next day.

Children's relevant plans from their placing authority are missing, such as a child's personal education plan and pathway plan. There is no evidence that the manager has challenged or escalated this to ensure that current plans are in place. Further to this, the current care plan is from the child's last placement. In addition to this, information in the home's contact plan has not been updated, such as changes in medication. The manager and staff cannot demonstrate how they deliver care in accordance with the local authority's expectations. However, the outstanding documents were received on the day of the inspection.

Children get support and encouragement from staff to engage in education. One child has improved her attendance and gained good grades in her exams. This meant that she was able to secure a place at college. In her first year at college, she received several distinctions for her work. The child said, 'I am working hard and I want to go to university.'

Staff have been inventive when helping children with their emotional well-being. A child said, 'Staff have shown me a red, amber and green system for when I am feeling low. This has helped enormously because I don't have to give a long explanation of how I am feeling.' As a result, the child, staff and the social worker have seen a marked reduction in the child's negative behaviour. The social worker said 'it is amazing'.

Staff have developed positive relationships with children. They help children to have fun and take part in things that the children enjoy, such as hair and beauty, completing art designs and spending time with their friends. Staff listen to children's views, wishes and feelings, and respond to them appropriately. A child said, 'Staff are fantastic and they do everything they can for me. I am doing well with their support.'

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

Children's individual risk assessments are poor. The manager and the responsible individual agreed that the risk assessments were inconsistent because some had been completed in different formats and some of the information had been lost or missed. For example, some risk assessments do not have the triggers, strategies and actions for staff to take if an incident was to occur. Further to this, risk assessments do not identify emerging risks, such as recent assaults on a child. Some risk assessments cover a multitude of risks, within one document, such as substance misuse. These shortfalls mean that there is no clear information for staff to follow, understand and take quick action when necessary. It also reduces the staff's ability to be consistent when dealing with a situation.

In contrast to this, staff recognise the signs of abuse and exploitation. They take decisive action when they have concerns about a child's safety, such as when a child goes missing from the home or when noticing changes in a child's mood or behaviour. Concerns are quickly reported to the appropriate safeguarding agencies. Staff work effectively as part of a well-established safeguarding network, which includes the children's families.

Staff work positively with children to help them manage their feelings and control their behaviour when they are upset. This includes using incentives to improve behaviour, rewarding achievements and giving children tools, such as the red, amber, green system, to help them regulate their emotions. As a result, restraint is rarely used in the home.

Regular health and safety checks mean that the home environment is physically safe and secure.

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

The manager has been in post since the home opened last year. She is working towards her management qualification. The manager has been managing another home within the company. She has not been in day-to-day charge of this home. The manager has not identified herself on the home's rota and the home's logbook indicates that she has been present in the home for 10 days out of a possible 60 days. This has led to poor oversight of this home.

Staff regularly review the children's records. However, numerous records have not been signed by all staff, particularly the manager. This does not ensure that staff and the manager are aware of any changes to the plans. In addition, the children's files are not in a good order because old records have not been archived. This means that children and staff may access old information that is no longer relevant to the child's care.

There is a stable staff team at the home. Five staff members have a suitable childcare qualification and two staff are completing their qualification. Staff said that they received good support from the manager. However, records show that staff supervisions have not always been completed within timescales, as outlined in the home's workforce plan. One member of staff, who returned to work in June 2021 after a long illness, has not received a supervision. This means that staff have not had an opportunity to discuss their practice or knowledge regularly.

Team meetings are held regularly. There is a set agenda covering all matters related to the home, including the children and their progress. However, the staff do not routinely discuss research and developments in relation to the ways in which children's needs are best met. Therefore, the manager does not show that practice in the home is informed and improved through these avenues.

Staff have been completing online training throughout the COVID-19 restrictions. Some face-to-face training is now scheduled for the coming year. However, records show that only one member of staff has completed self-injurious behaviour training in 2018, despite it being identified that some children living in the home display self-harmful behaviour. Consequently, children are being placed at potential risk of harm.

External and internal monitoring of the home requires improvement because they have failed to identify the issues raised in this report. This does not ensure that the manager is able to alter her practice when necessary to make improvements that are in the best interests of the children. The manager did not send her monitoring report to Ofsted within timescales. This reduces the regulator's oversight of the home.

In contrast to this, a social worker said that communication from the home was excellent and that she received weekly summaries about the child. She continued to discuss the excellent progress that the child had made with her education, health and self-esteem. She said that the excellent relationships between staff and the child had made this possible.

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
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— 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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vii))	25 October 2021
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 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)(b)) Specifically, the registered manager should ensure that the impact risk assessment is completed prior to a child coming to live in the home. Also, that the safer area report is considered within the impact risk assessment.	25 October 2021
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—	25 October 2021

helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) Specifically, that the registered manager has good oversight of the home and that she identifies herself on the home’s rota.	
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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) Specifically, the registered manager should ensure that all staff receive training in self-injurious behaviour.	25 October 2021
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— demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met.	25 October 2021

(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(g)(i))	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s 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) (2)(c)) Specifically, the registered manager should ensure that information is correct in the child’s plans and that all documents are requested from the local authority.	25 October 2021
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	25 October 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should help each child to move into the home and prepare the child for any moves from the home. In particular, ensure that the home has a transition plan that supports children to move in or out of the home. ('Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)
- The registered person should ensure that children are encouraged by staff to see the home’s records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. This is specifically in relation to the structure of the child’s files. ('Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)
- The registered person should ensure that records kept in the children’s home are signed and dated by the author. ('Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that the regulation 45 report is sent to Ofsted every six months. ('Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.3)

- The registered person should ensure that the independent person makes a rigorous assessment of the home's arrangements and records. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 2594007

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Registered provider address: Cambian Childcare Limited, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Leanne Woodings

Registered manager: Kymberley Grantham

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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