

2594539

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

The home registered in November 2020. The manager has been registered at the home since it opened.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2022

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: 6 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/07/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are able to make significant changes to their lives as a result of living in this home. They are attending full-time education, which improves their future opportunities. Staff help children to understand and manage their health needs, including chronic health conditions.

Children's culture, heritage and diversity are valued and respected. One child is taking Hungarian lessons to help them to develop their native language. Staff encourage children to honour cultural diversity and respect each other's differences.

Admissions to the home are now carefully considered. Previously, the manager was not fully aware of children's individual needs prior to their admission to the home and was unable to adequately assess their suitability. Debriefs and information-sharing with staff did not equip them to support these children effectively. Since the last inspection, the manager has made significant improvements to this area of practice. This means that the progress of children already living in the home is not affected by new admissions.

Children's discharges from the home are not always planned. Some children have experienced an abrupt and unplanned move directly from police custody. Children have experienced an unsettled period in their home, where there has been excessive damage and assaults on staff. Lessons have been learned to ensure that children are able to live in a settled and supportive home.

Children are helped to maintain and rebuild their relationships with their families. The staff implement plans devised by children's social workers to help to facilitate these arrangements. Friendships are also important to children. Children's time spent in the community with their friends is assessed alongside each child's needs and ability. Staff make welfare telephone calls to the children during their time out of the home; however, the recording of these calls is inconsistent.

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

The staff know and understand the children and help them to manage and reduce risks to their safety. They routinely talk to the children about pertinent topics, and these discussions provide them with information and support. Staff help children to find alternative ways to manage their anxieties, emotions and frustrations, which helps them to become increasingly safe.

Children access specialist support to help them to understand and address their drug misuse. Staff quickly respond to any suspicions that illegal drugs are in the home, and this response includes carrying out room searches to maintain a safe environment for all children. One child's drug misuse has significantly reduced, which has a positive impact on their health and well-being.

Children feel able to talk to staff about their concerns, and some children have made disclosures. Children are listened to, and proportionate action is taken by the manager to investigate concerns and implement plans to maintain the safety of children. Although safety plans are effective in the home, the manager has not created practice guidance or assessments to mitigate the specific risk when the children are together outside of the home.

Children have free movement around the home; however, their movement is monitored through the active use of door alarms. The current use of bedroom door alarms is not to substitute staff care and presence. This is an additional measure which forms a multi-agency safety plan in response to a recent safeguarding incident. The manager continues to review and assess the suitability of this monitoring device.

Children can access all communal areas of the home, including the staff office. The children use this space to talk to staff and access stored items. However, when children enter this area, it needs to be to a safe space where children cannot access inappropriate or restricted items. This has been a shortfall previously and the manager must ensure that staff complacency does not impact on the safety and welfare of children or others.

The staff follow the children's care plans to mitigate the potential risk of harm. Staff manage children's access to items that could impact on their well-being and safety, such as razors and inappropriate social media content. The manager has endorsed the decision for one child to access a specific computer game; however, other children have played this game without parental permission.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is skilled and experienced in their role and leads the staff team to provide a good standard of care for children. The manager has a variety of tools to support with his oversight of the home, and external monitoring provides further assurance that the home is providing good-quality care to children.

Staff are confident to whistle-blow and raise any shortfalls in practice that could impact on children. Shortfalls in staff practice are recognised and responded to by the manager. However, the language recorded in children's case records is not always appropriate. Terms like 'kicking off' are not helpful to children.

Staff recruitment and retention have been a struggle for this home, and there are staffing vacancies. A recruitment plan has been implemented to bring stability to this home. The manager is supporting early enrolment on to the required accredited qualification for staff. This helps to develop the staff's knowledge and understanding of their care role.

Professional feedback is positive. Professionals report that communication is a strength of this service and that the staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the children and their care plans.

Staff receive regular supervision, including spot supervision, to address any practice developments. Children are not routinely discussed in staff's supervision sessions, which is a missed opportunity for further practice reflection. Staff routinely discuss the children during team meetings to explore practice improvements.

The home is a welcoming space for children, and the manager has plans to further develop the home and grounds. There is some minor damage to some of the fixtures and fittings and these need to be repaired to maintain the high standard. The safe storage for the children's records is inconsistent as archived files have not been kept in lockable storage.

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 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))	25 November 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's environment is welcoming, and furniture and fixings are free from damage. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that children's reasonable preferences in relation to day-to-day arrangements are met with consideration given to safeguarding, particularly in relation to the use of video games. Where a child's preferences are unreasonable or cannot be met for safeguarding reasons, staff should discuss this with the child to help them understand why. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.21)
- The registered person should ensure that reflective conversations about the needs of children are an established part of staff supervision. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that all children's case records are stored securely while they remain in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording, specifically about the undertaking of welfare telephone calls. Staff should record information about individual children in a non-stigmatising 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: 2594539

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

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

Responsible individual: Mark Ullah

Registered manager: Michael Wren

Inspector

Jennifer Fenlon, Social Care Inspector

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