

2596421

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 by a national private provider. The home cares for up to two children between the ages of 10 and 18 with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted when the home opened in October 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 9 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. This report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 November 2021

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: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There were two children living at the home at the time of the inspection. One child has been at the home since it opened just over a year ago, in October 2020. Staff marked the home's first anniversary with a celebration. One child has moved on from the home since the monitoring visit in March 2021. This was not a planned move and occurred due to a relationship breakdown between the two children. The move took place quickly. However, staff supported this move by advocating for a home in an area that the child wanted and by staying with the child overnight at their new home to help them settle.

Staff care for children well. They provide children with a relaxed, nurturing environment in which children feel comfortable and enjoy a sense of stability. Professionals describe staff as 'proactive' and 'resilient'.

Staff provide good support to children to help them maintain and improve relationships with their families. One child is now regularly seeing their parent after a long period of refusing to. This child requested that staff from the home supervise these visits. This is testament to the relationship that staff have built with the child.

Staff have a good knowledge of children's emotional needs and are sensitive to how children express their feelings. The manager has helped progress referrals for mental health services. He has encouraged a child to attend other health appointments to explore physical needs that may be affecting their emotional well-being.

Both children have education provisions that have been identified to meet their individual needs. Children's engagement is variable, with a recent deterioration in both children's attendance. The manager is proactive in addressing issues with the schools and is effective at reviewing plans with professionals to improve children's learning experiences. Education professionals said that staff are knowledgeable about the children and helpful.

Children receive incentives for attending education and there are expectations of children engaging in some learning at the home when they are not in school. Staff display learning material on a culture and diversity wall in the education room, covering issues such as bullying, identity and historical events, for example Bonfire Night. However, expectations of how children spend their time when not in education are not clear enough. Consequently, staff are not consistently offering children structured learning activities at these times and children are increasingly having free time during education hours.

Children enjoy spending time with friends in the local community. Staff encourage children to take part in a wide range of activities based on their individual likes, such as horse riding and go-karting. Staff have helped one child to organise food for a homeless charity. This included creating advertising posters and collecting donations.

These experiences help children to learn new skills, have fun and gain a sense of achievement.

The house is decorated and furnished to a high standard, providing a homely, welcoming environment. Children's rooms are personalised well. One child has chosen to have pets in her room. This offers children the opportunity to be responsible for the welfare of others.

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

Staff implement consistent behavioural boundaries with children. This includes regularly talking about bullying. As a result, children enjoy a settled environment and are clear about what is expected of them and others.

Staff offer children incentives and rewards to encourage positive behaviour. There are minimal incidents at the home. Physical intervention is rarely used. When it is used, it is proportionate and used to keep children and adults safe. The manager undertakes debrief conversations with children and staff. However, on one occasion, a debrief with staff did not take place within the required timescale.

Staff work hard to build trusting relationships with children. They have regular key-work conversations with children, giving children the opportunity to share their feelings and reflect on incidents. This enables staff to identify and act on any safety concerns quickly.

Risk assessments and behaviour plans are individualised and updated regularly. These are supplemented with additional safety plans. However, plans contain contradictory information. This is confusing and could result in staff following the wrong guidance.

Staff have worked with placing social workers to implement plans for children to have free time. This includes staff carrying out regular telephone and face-to-face welfare checks on the children. This has been successful, with incidents of children going missing from the home reducing. However, one child's plan does not provide staff with clear enough guidance about all actions that staff should take if the child does not respond to the welfare check. In addition, staff recording of welfare checks does not contain sufficient detail. This could lead to delays in staff responding to an incident of children going missing.

The manager has established a location risk assessment. This identifies risks in the immediate locality and actions that can be taken to minimise them. However, this assessment does not include the information that staff have gathered about the safety of the neighbouring areas where children regularly travel to see their friends.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has provided the home with a strong foundation for further development. He models child-centred practice and has established a core staff

team that enjoys working at the home. The manager is well supported by senior managers and peers, who have helped him to develop his confidence in the role.

The manager has established good working relationships with other professionals, who are complimentary about communication and his involvement in planning. He has a good knowledge of the local services available to meet children's needs and he has been proactive in making referrals to other services when needed.

The manager provides staff with regular supervision and support. Staff undertake relevant training to help them to feel confident in their roles. The manager identifies and organises additional training to meet children's individual needs.

Management systems are in place and the manager has good oversight of incidents involving children. However, the overview of plans and assessments is less effective. Some plans contain errors and not all records are fully completed, making it unclear what action needed to be taken next and by whom. This could lead to delays in appointments or planning for children.

The manager uses the independent person's reports and internal quality assurance processes to good effect to continually develop the home. The manager is reflective and has implemented lessons learned from matching decisions that he made when the home first opened.

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)) In particular, ensure that the missing-from-care protocols provide clear guidance on each of the actions that staff should take if children do not return home from free time. In addition, ensure that staff record adequate detail about the welfare checks that they undertake when children are on free time.	10 December 2021
The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)) This relates to the actions that must be taken following an incident of a child being restrained.	10 December 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when children who live at the home are not participating in full-time education because they have been excluded, they can sustain and regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. In particular, ensure that staff are clear and confident about

what activities they should support children with when children are refusing or not attending school. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)

- 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. In particular, staff should ensure that information is accurate and updated across all plans and that records are fully completed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home once a year. In particular, ensure that the most up-to-date information about the locations that children access regularly that are local to the home, is used to inform this review. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

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: 2596421

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

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

Responsible individual: Sarah Love

Registered manager: Daryl Hollands

Inspector

Paula Edwards, Social Care Inspector

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