

2617923

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is part of a large national organisation. It is registered to care for up to two children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties or learning disabilities. At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2022.

Inspection dates: 14 June 2023

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: 27 July 2022

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
27/07/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
26/10/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Most of the time, children who live in this home receive nurturing and consistent care. However, steps taken to try and reduce one child's risks around going missing have resulted in an approach that restricts their liberty. Risk assessments devised are not used effectively. Therefore, this restrictive practice is not in line with children's needs. In addition, the emotional impact on the child has not been considered. A reliance on electronic measures implemented by managers to reduce risk means that parenting strategies have not been effectively considered.

Children have strong and trusting relationships with the core staff team who look after them. These staff take time to listen to children and understand their views. Meaningful open and honest conversations underpin these relationships. Children have struggled when new members of staff have started to work in the home. This resulted in one child taking themselves to their room and becoming isolated due to feeling uncomfortable. Some of these staff were there as part of their training. The manager has taken steps to change these arrangements.

Children are making tangible progress from their starting points. For example, one child who had not engaged in formal education for several years has successfully started at a mainstream school. They are rightly proud of their achievements, as are the home's staff and their social worker.

Children are supported to become more independent and spend time with peers. Staff advocated strongly for one child to have more time in the community, and this is now successfully happening.

Children are encouraged and supported to keep in touch with their family members. One child had a friend to stay at the home for a sleepover for the first time. This was a very positive experience for the child, which also allowed them to negotiate and understand expectations and keep to them.

Children are encouraged by staff to take part in activities and spend time exploring new adventures such as paddle boarding. Staff immerse themselves in these activities with the children and the children appreciate and enjoy this time.

Staff make sure that children's experiences are captured in a story-book diary. This means that children will have a keepsake and a reminder of their time living at this home. It will help them make sense of their childhood experiences as they move into adulthood.

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

Children told the inspector that they feel safe living in their home. They look to and trust the staff to protect them. Staff act when they have any worries or concerns, to ensure that potential risks for children are reduced. Recently, children have started to tell staff if they have any worries or concerns, including arising from their time online or on social media. For some children, this is a significant step forward from their starting point.

Incidents when children have gone missing from home have reduced since they came to live at this home. Children are given independent return home interviews, which allow the staff to gather information about where they might have been and with whom.

There have been incidents when children have gone missing during the night without staff being aware. Responses to these incidents have focused on electronic measures being put in place, rather than on what changes should be made to staff practice to reduce risk. This has resulted in children being deprived of their liberty, with the use of CCTV, door and window alarms and window restrictors becoming a consistent approach to care. There has been no consideration of the legalities or emotional impact of this approach to risk management.

The risk assessment and plan in respect of fire safety has recently been updated. There have been three fire drills this year to make sure that children and staff know what to do in the event of a fire. However, managers have failed to hold a fire drill since window restrictors were fitted. Therefore, they have not tested the potential issues or delays these may cause in an emergency.

Regular checks and oversight by staff and the manager ensure that the arrangements for the safe storage and administration of medication are effective.

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

Senior leaders have not given the registered manager the level of support required at this point in their career. At times, additional responsibilities, such as supporting and developing new staff in this and other homes, are taking the manager away from carrying out their day-to-day tasks. As a result, not all areas of regulation are being met and poor practice has not been identified. A requirement from the previous two inspections in respect of leadership and management has again not been met.

The registered manager is child-focused and dedicated. She has the best interests of the children front and centre of her practice. However, children's records do not reflect this approach. A generic approach to completing children's records means that some behaviours outlined in documents do not relate to the individual child.

The registered manager is committed to continuous learning and development. They are aware of their strengths and weaknesses. The registered manager feels supported by senior leaders. However, some discussions have taken place between the manager and senior leaders in respect of areas of weaknesses, however, senior leaders have not acted quickly enough to support the registered manager in addressing these.

Not all staff are receiving regular and meaningful supervision. This includes the registered manager. Some staff have significant gaps between supervisions. At times, this is due to capacity and conflicting demands. As a result, discussions about practice have not always taken place and approaches to care that should have been reviewed quickly and regularly have not been.

Two new members of staff have been recruited to this home from overseas as part of an organisational wide recruitment drive. Established staff and managers have raised concerns that cultural differences are limiting the capability of some of the newer staff. As a result, children have said they sometimes feel uncomfortable in the presence of new staff and so have isolated themselves in their rooms. Although new staff from overseas have been provided with training and support in safeguarding practices and procedures, this had not, at the time of the inspection, ensured a consistently strong understanding by all staff.

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 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; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in 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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(f)(h))	31 August 2023
No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. (Regulation 19 (1))	31 August 2023
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— make arrangements for persons working at the home to receive suitable training in fire prevention; and ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire.	31 August 2023

In particular, ensure that all staff working at the provision have taken part in a fire drill and ensure that any new restrictions to potential escape routes have been tested. (Regulation 25 (1)(c)(d))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))	31 August 2023

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: 2617923

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: Nicola McClements

Registered manager: Charlotte Dennis

Inspector

Tracey Ledder, His Majesty's Inspector

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