

2618541

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is one of several owned and managed by a limited company. The home can care for up to two children who may be experiencing social and emotional difficulties and/or have a learning disability.

The registered manager has been in post since February 2021.

Inspection date: 2 February 2023

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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Date of last inspection: 12 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/01/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are two children living in this home. They experience kind and nurturing care from a team that makes an effort to get to know the children well. Children can identify adults who they feel safe to talk to about their worries. As a result, children form trusting relationships with the adults supporting them.

Staff have made efforts to create a cosy and pleasant environment for children. The communal areas of the home are comfortable and inviting. The children have also been supported to personalise their bedrooms. However, one child's room needs redecorating due to damage to the walls.

Staff understand children's health needs. Children are quickly registered with local health services, and staff ensure that they attend all necessary health appointments. If any appointments are missed, staff ensure that they are quickly rearranged and that children receive the support and encouragement they need to engage with healthcare. Children's physical health needs are consistently promoted.

When children are out of education, they are not all provided with a clear daily structure. One of the children has a range of extra-curricular interests and hobbies, while staff have not found creative ways to encourage both children to have the same positive experiences.

Children's care plans reflect the goals of the placing authority. This ensures that the whole multidisciplinary team is working towards the same objectives for children. However, plans are not always kept up to date to reflect children's current needs. Additionally, although very detailed, plans are not always written in a way that is accessible to the child.

Staff work closely with specialist services to support children's mental health. Due to observations and information shared by staff, one child is now managing their mental health needs with a more suitable package of support.

Children's achievements are celebrated. Staff make thorough records of children's achievements every day. Daily records always highlight positive aspects of the children's behaviour, however small. Children receive regular praise and rewards. Consequences are rarely used and are always proportionate. Children's emotional well-being and self-esteem are supported.

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

Children feel safe and supported. One child said, 'They [staff] care about me. They want me to be safe and OK.' Staff understand how to keep children safe and work closely with partner agencies regarding risks. As a result, there has been a significant reduction in safeguarding incidents for both children.

Staff complete detailed individual risk management plans for the children. This helps staff to understand children's risks and vulnerabilities. The manager reviews risk management plans regularly to identify patterns of behaviour or support needs for staff. She shares relevant research and training with staff in team meetings to keep their practice up to date, although this disseminated information is not always successfully embedded into staff practice. This approach helps staff to provide children with consistency in how they are kept safe.

Staff are not always sufficiently curious about children's internet activities. For instance, they do not thoroughly investigate who children are speaking to online. Although there is no evidence to suggest the children have experienced harm as a result, this lack of professional curiosity could limit how well children are being safeguarded in the virtual world.

Staff carry out regular, useful key-work sessions with children. These include sessions focused on specific risks to each child. This helps children to understand their own vulnerabilities and promotes their safety in the longer term.

Children rarely go missing from this home. Each child has a personalised missing-from-home risk assessment, which staff understand and follow. This ensures that staff act quickly to keep children safe.

Physical interventions have not been used in this inspection period. Staff use effective de-escalation techniques and focus on positive, nurturing care to avoid the necessity of restraint. This means that children maintain positive relationships with staff.

Managers recruit staff safely. Robust processes and checks are completed before staff are employed to ensure that children are only cared for by safe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a suitably qualified and experienced manager leading this home. She has a thorough knowledge of the children's individual needs. The manager listens to the children's views and takes their wishes and feelings into account in all care planning. This promotes an ethos of child-centred practice.

Staff receive regular supervision and appraisal. This helps the manager retain good oversight of staff practice and development. Staff say they feel supported and enjoy working at the home. This helps with maintaining a stable team and ensuring that children receive care from motivated staff.

Although managers have raised concerns with the placing authority regarding one child's educational placement, they have not effectively escalated their concerns to the point where this is resolved. This means that one child has had a significant delay in securing an educational placement.

The manager reviews records relating to significant incidents. Analysis of and feedback to staff help to identify gaps in staff training and improve the care being provided to children.

Regular team meetings help leaders and managers share useful information with the team. The manager has used this forum to provide staff with useful, child-focused training. This ensures that staff are equipped with the skills that they need to meet the children's individual needs.

Staff attend a wide range of training. This includes modules specific to the needs of the children that they are looking after. This helps to develop their skills and knowledge and allows them to provide better care for children.

The manager actively welcomes external audits of the home from an independent visitor. However, the quality of reporting from the independent visitor has been poor. Children's bedrooms have not been seen, stakeholders have not always been consulted and useful actions have not been provided. This limits the effectiveness of this external oversight.

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and that staff help each child to access and contribute to the records kept by the registered person in relation to the child. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii) (f)) In particular, children's plans should clearly identify their current needs and how the staff are to meet them. They should be written in a way that is accessible to the child.	26 March 2023
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c)) Specifically, children should be helped to maintain positive routines that promote their physical and emotional well-being.	26 March 2023

In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child’s placing authority effectively in the child’s care, in accordance with the child’s relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child’s needs; and if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority’s or a relevant person’s performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child’s needs are met in accordance with the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)) In particular, the registered person should continue to escalate any delays by external partner agencies, including identifying suitable educational provisions, to ensure children’s needs are met.	26 March 2023
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children’s home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home’s records (except for a child’s case records, unless the child and the child’s placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person’s report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person’s opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children’s well-being.	26 March 2023

The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions.
(Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))

This requirement is repeated.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is maintained to provide a welcoming and nurturing environment, including children's bedrooms. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that training for staff to support their skills and knowledge is embedded into their practice so they can be alert to any risks of harm. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 43, paragraph 9.2)
- The registered person should ensure that staff show professional curiosity about children's internet activities, as any good parent would, to protect them from potential harm. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 43, paragraph 9.9)

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: 2618541

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: Louise Winward

Registered manager: Charlotte Leece

Inspectors

Karen Willson, Social Care Regulatory Inspector
Nicola Shaw, Social Care Regulator Inspector

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