

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 present with needs that are associated with behavioural and/or emotional difficulties and/or a learning disability.

The registered manager has been in post since February 2021 when the home opened.

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

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 January 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

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: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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Not previously inspected		
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Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children live in a caring and nurturing environment in which they receive care and support that bring stability to their lives. They receive the help that they need to recover from harmful experiences and to move forward in their lives. A parent said that they were proud of what their child had achieved and how they had turned their life around.

Staff build warm, consistent and positive relationships with children. They show children that they care about them and know what is important to them. Children told the inspector that they are happy here and have people around them that they trust.

One child spent a considerable amount of time talking with the inspector and staff about the pandemic and their views on the vaccination programme. Staff skilfully counteracted the child's opinions with views based on facts. This helped the child to consider all of the available information and make an informed decision.

Staff are strong advocates for children's education. Staff are proactive in helping children overcome barriers to their education. One child receives education at home, and it is clear that they have built a strong bond with their tutor. The manager is liaising with the school to ensure that this tutor remains with the child.

Staff focus on supporting children to build skills to allow them to be more independent in the future. One child is working full time and is saving money for when she moves into semi-independence. Staff are carrying out work with her to help her to develop her budgeting and independence skills. This means that children are well prepared with the skills they need for when they move on from the home.

Staff work tirelessly to ensure that the children remain in contact with their family and friends during the COVID-19 pandemic. Parents of the children said that they are happy with the progress that their children are making and relish the opportunities to spend more time with them.

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

The manager and staff have created a safe home environment that protects children from harm. Children feel safe and have a strong sense of belonging. They know that they can talk to staff about their worries and that the staff will help them to be safe.

Staff have a sound understanding of the risks for each child; however, this is not reflected within the child's risk assessments. Risk assessments are complex documents which are not specific. This means staff new to the role may not be fully informed of the action they need to take to keep children safe. This is evident in staff's response to an incident in November 2022 when they did not follow the

child's risk assessments or home's policies. This placed the child at the risk of harm. The manager swiftly identified the shortfalls and has taken action to prevent a reoccurrence.

Children are increasing in confidence and self-esteem. As a result, they are much more able to manage difficult situations and to consider their actions.

Children know and understand the house rules. For example, they know that they cannot use their games consoles before a set time, if they have not gone to school. Staff are consistent in their approach to supporting children and, as a result, the number of incidents in the home has declined.

The home is a warm, welcoming and nurturing environment. Staff work hard to make it as homely as possible and regularly talk to the children about what they would like to see in the home. The locks on the ground floor doors detract from the homely feel and are not necessary.

Staff recruitment is sound and means that children are cared for by suitable, vetted staff.

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

The home is led by an enthusiastic and qualified registered manager. She works in partnership with the staff to ensure that the children are supported, and their individual needs are met.

There have been several staffing changes since the home opened, with bank staff and the manager covering shifts to support the children. New staff have been recruited, but they do not hold a recognised qualification or come from a childcare background. Therefore, only the manager has a childcare qualification. Staff rotas are current; however, they do not show the actual hours that the staff are working, especially the manager.

Several staff are in the process of completing a qualification, but their progress has been hindered because their assessors have changed several times. The responsible individual is speaking to the training provider about this.

The manager's monitoring of the service is generally sound. She is aware that record-keeping is a key area of development, as is ensuring that all staff obtain a childcare qualification.

Reports by the independent person are informative, but do not sufficiently scrutinise staff's practice or record-keeping and very few actions are made following their visit. This means that many of the shortfalls identified at this inspection had not been identified.

The manager works in partnership with other professionals to ensure that children have the right support. She ensures that professionals are kept up to date on the children's progress and any emerging concerns. Professionals are complimentary about the manager and comment on her commitment to the children.

The organisation has recently received a whistle-blowing concern and is in the process of investigating the concerns. However, the responsible individual has not notified Ofsted of this concern. This was an oversight on their behalf.

Records and documentation are not consistently maintained to a good standard. Some records such as incident records, substance misuse forms and individual work records do not provide sufficient detail and miss key information. This does not help the child to reflect on their time here or the support that they were provided with.

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; and take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi))	28 February 2022
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— 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;	28 February 2022

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(d)(h))	
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (1)(2)(a)) In particular, that the staff rota identifies the actual hours worked by staff.	28 February 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	28 February 2022
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.	28 February 2022

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.

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))

Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure that, for children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of the children, they will in most cases be homely, domestic environments. In particular, that the locks are removed from the communal room doors on the ground floor. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person must ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policy on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information about the children in a non-stigmatising way and is recorded in a way that will be helpful to the children. In particular, that the records and documentation tell the story of the child's time in the home and document the help and support that they received. ('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: 2618541

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: Beverley Woods

Registered manager: Charlotte Leece

Inspector

Chris Scully, Social Care Inspector

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