

2626047

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned home that provides care for up to five children. The home specialises in providing therapeutic support for children.

The home registered on 4 March 2021. There is a qualified registered manager in post.

Two children live at the home.

Inspection dates: 31 October and 1 November 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

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

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

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: 8 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/03/2023	Full	Good
01/09/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Children's experiences of moving into and from the home are mixed. Effective planning with one child's local authority and family helped them to have a good experience of moving into the home. However, for two children, it is unclear whether their needs were appropriately considered before they moved in. Subsequently, these two children did not have positive experiences of living in the home, and their placements ended quickly. When children's placements have ended quickly, they have not had the benefit of a planned move from the home.

The children make mixed progress. One child is developing their independence skills and has stopped vaping in the home. Another child is finding it hard to settle into the home. The children who have moved from the home made varying progress. For example, one child fully engaged in transition work until their plans changed. However, other children made limited progress.

One child has made positive progress with their education and has recently been nominated for an award. The other child is due to start school following half term but has indicated some resistance to engaging. It is not clear what action staff take to support children to engage in learning when they are refusing to go to school.

Children have individual placement plans. However, these plans do not always contain the most relevant and current information about the child's care needs. Furthermore, children are not involved in reviewing their plans. This means they cannot easily understand the plans for their care or the progress that they are making.

Staff support children to spend time with their family and friends. One child has progressed to having unsupervised time with their parent. This arrangement is being kept under review.

The children are provided with a warm and welcoming home that is maintained to a high standard. The children have their own bedrooms, which are personalised to reflect their individual taste. The children have the benefit of two lounge areas and a summer house.

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

Children have individualised behaviour and risk management plans that are updated on a regular basis. This means that the staff have a good understanding of the risks posed to children. However, generic risk assessments relating to missing from care and activities are out of date and contain information about children who have left the home.

The staff have a good understanding of child exploitation. However, some staff do not have current training in this area. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the work undertaken with children to raise their awareness of exploitation is unclear.

Changes in the staff team have impacted the confidence of staff in responding to children's complex behaviour, and this has created some instability for children. In addition, one child's behaviour impacted the safety and experiences of other children living at the home. Consequently, the number of incidents has increased, as has the use of physical restraint. When a child has been held, the record relating to the incident is clear and demonstrates that the use of restraint was appropriate. However, staff do not have the opportunity for a timely debrief. This reduces the chance for staff to reflect on their practice and to develop their confidence.

There has been an increase in children going missing from the home. When a child goes missing, staff respond quickly and in accordance with the child's plans. However, it is not clear that effective personal safety work is completed with children who have been involved in significant incidents when missing. This is a missed opportunity to raise children's awareness of risk and increase their safety.

Staff say they are confused about rules and boundaries. Consequently, children do not receive clear and consistent messages from staff about the expectations for behaviour. On some occasions, consequences have not been used appropriately. For example, during one incident, a child's phone was removed without warning or explanation. Inconsistent staff practice does not support children's understanding of appropriate behaviour.

The children are encouraged to express their wishes and feelings. This is done through regular house meetings and key-worker sessions. However, the quality of this work varies.

Ofsted did not receive notification when an allegation was made about a member of staff. This reduces the external oversight of children's welfare.

Weekly health and safety checks of the premises are not consistently completed.

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

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced. However, she remains relatively new to the post and is still learning and developing her skills as a manager. She knows the children well and is enthusiastic about achieving positive outcomes for children.

The registered manager described that it had been a 'challenging' time due to staffing issues and an increase in incidents. She accepted the shortfalls identified at this inspection and is committed to making improvements.

Managers have systems in place to monitor the operation of the service, and the recommendations of the independent visitor are always acted on. However, a lack of management oversight with respect to children's records means that children's files are not always up to date.

Staff are recruited safely. However, there have been continued changes to the staff team. The deputy manager has left, and further staff are due to leave. Staff from other homes in the organisation are being used to cover staffing gaps. This means that staffing is adequate. However, cover staff do not always have the skills and understanding necessary to consistently meet the children's needs.

Staff receive professional supervision. However, staff do not always have supervision at the frequency required by the organisation. All staff require annual appraisals and updates to their personal development plans. Furthermore, the registered manager has not had an appraisal of her performance. In addition, the regularity of team meetings has decreased. This reduces opportunities for staff to think about their work and discuss research to inform their practice.

Professionals say that communication with the staff is good and that they are provided with regular updates about the children and their care.

During the inspection, managers were unable to produce certificates to demonstrate that annual fire equipment checks had been undertaken as required.

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful;	1 December 2023

help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same; and de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(xi)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the children are able to build trusted relationships with staff who consistently work in the home and provide good care. It also relates to ensuring that children receive effective key working and the opportunity to express their wishes.	
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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; and manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;	1 December 2023

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)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(b)) This specifically relates to ensuring that children are supported to understand risk and how they can keep themselves safe. It also relates to ensuring that children are safe in the home and staff have the skills to achieve this.	
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. 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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a) (2)(a)(b)(c)(f)(g)(i)(h)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the manager leads by example and creates a positive working culture with a team that has the skills to provide good care to children. It also relates to using monitoring effectively and ensuring that there is management oversight of all aspects of the home.	1 December 2023

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 children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; 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)(a)(b)(ii)(f)) This specifically relates to ensuring that careful consideration is given when placing children in the home and ensuring that all of the children's needs can be met. It also related to ensuring that children contribute to the plans for their care.	1 December 2023
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, 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. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(b)(i))	1 December 2023

This specifically relates to ensuring that there is clear and consistent practice in relation to behaviour management, including the use of consequences, and that staff involved in incidents receive a timely debrief.	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the children's files are kept up to date, signed and dated, and where needed, have management oversight. Ensure that statutory records are up to date and held on file for each child.	1 December 2023
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)) This specifically relates to ensuring that all serious incidents, including allegations against staff, are reported to HMCI as directed.	1 December 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, e.g., teachers or social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person must ensure that all staff have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. As part of the performance management process,

poor performance should be addressed by a timely plan to bring about improvement. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 13.5, paragraph 13.5)

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: 2626047

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: Kira Arlett

Registered manager: Ruth Pearson

Inspector

Stacie Sharpe, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023