

2693741

Registered provider: Cambian Autism Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private company and provides care for up to three children with learning disabilities. The company also provides education on site at a registered school. The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this setting. There were two children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager has submitted an application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 April 2025

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: 5 June 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: Serious concerns were identified at the assurance inspection in February 2025. However, no enforcement action was taken as a result. There continues to be an ongoing police investigation relating to allegations in 2024. This was explored at the assurance inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/06/2024	Full	Good
23/05/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The inspector observed two children during this inspection.

There have been no changes to the children living at the home since the last inspection. There is a plan in place for another child to move into the home. This is being completed carefully in line with their needs, and the staff team are eagerly awaiting their arrival.

During the inspection, the home was being decorated throughout. Children's bedrooms are personalised and currently meet the needs of the children. For example, one child is currently sleeping on just a mattress due to them rolling out of bed. However, there is an agreed plan in place, supported by the company's occupational therapist, to introduce the child to a raised bed again.

Both children attend the school on site. They have good attendance and enjoy school. They are supported at the school by staff at the home, which provides them with consistency and supports transitions.

The children have enjoyed lots of different activities, including going to theme parks, swimming, bowling, youth groups and walking. The home is full of photos of these activities and the staff are currently planning a short holiday for the children. However, the staff do not use the local offer that could provide children with more experiences and opportunities.

Staff are supported by an occupational therapist. As a result, staff are aware of children's sensory needs and ensure that the children have access to equipment and strategies that support them to regulate and receive the sensory feedback they desire.

Children's general health needs are well met and children enjoy a healthy diet. When there is a need for more specialised services, the manager ensures that they are in place and is confident to challenge decisions in the best interest of the children. Additionally, any outstanding appointments are chased so that these do not drift.

Both children have time with their family that they enjoy. These visits can be in the home or in the community. Children also regularly videocall their families. One child will be seeing their brother soon, after not seeing him for some time. Additionally, the staff arranged the hire of a swimming pool for the children and their families to enjoy together.

A focus for the management team has been to develop the children's communication skills. In many ways, there has been progress made in this area. For example, the home is a very visual environment for children and the staff are regularly supported by a speech and language therapist to formulate plans. As a result, children are regularly consulted with and have been effectively using resources to make choices to express

their wishes and feelings. However, the staff do not yet have a full understanding of children's communication needs so that they can support children to reach their full potential.

Children are supported to develop their independence skills. For one child, this has resulted in being continent throughout the night. Other skills that the children are developing are making snacks, putting their clothes away and developing their personal care skills.

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

The children feeling safe in their home is important to the manager and the staff. Staff say that they fully understand the importance of raising concerns. Robust recording and monitoring systems are in place to support this. Staff receive monthly safeguarding training that is bespoke to the children living in the home.

Incidents are generally rare and there has not been any use of restraint. When children need light physical support, this is now well documented. With the support of the occupational therapist and staff adapting the environment, there has been a reduction in one child having incidents in the bathroom.

The children have an advocate who visits the home regularly to meet with them and forms part of a multi-agency team that supports the children. Children now take part in regular fire drills and can leave the building safely and in good time.

The manager follows safer recruitment processes that reduce the risk of unsuitable people supporting the children. In addition, the manager has oversight of agency recruitment files and ensures that these also meet requirements.

Should children hurt themselves when upset, the staff have clear plans to follow, including obtaining medical attention if required. However, on one occasion during the night, this was not followed. The manager addressed this with the staff member during the inspection. Additionally, it is not always clear in records that the staff have intervened to distract the child from hitting themselves, in line with their plans.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has applied to register with Ofsted. There have been further changes to the staff team, with staff moving on for personal reasons. When the situation has allowed, the manager has ensured that the children and staff have been able to say goodbye to each other. New staff report that the induction has been thorough and has helped them to settle into the home and that they had the time to learn about the children before supporting them.

Staff supervision sessions have improved since the last inspection. These are now detailed, child focused and two-way conversations with the staff that allow them to reflect on the children's progress and experiences. The staff say that these are regular

and that they feel supported by the manager. However, these do not extend to regular agency staff.

The manager ensures that there is always a senior staff member on duty, with appropriate on-call support arrangements in place. However, the rota does not always show the full names of agency staff working in the home.

The staff receive appropriate training to help them in their role, which is ongoing and specific to the children living in the home. Additionally, children's plans are of a good quality and are regularly reviewed for effectiveness and subject to change if necessary. This helps staff to capture the required detail of children's outcomes and experiences.

The manager has met the requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection.

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 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)) This relates specifically to the registered person ensuring that staff intervene, when appropriate, to stop a child hitting themselves, in line with their plans. Additionally, ensure that if children hurt themselves that medical advice is sought in line with their plans on all occasions.	20 June 2025
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.	20 June 2025

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—

ensure that staff—

understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; and

provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i)(iv))

This relates specifically to the registered person ensuring that the staff understand children's communication needs and how to support children to develop their communication skills to reach their full potential.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that managers and staff are aware of the local offer setting out the support available for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.4)
- The registered person should ensure that they have systems in place so that agency staff receive supervision sessions from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allow them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that the full names of staff are included on the rota, including agency staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

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: 2693741

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Autism Services Limited

Registered provider address: 5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Rebekah Dennett

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Kerri Lynch, Social Care Inspector

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