

# SC035657

**Cambian Childcare Ltd**

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

The children's home is operated by a private organisation. The home provides care and accommodation for up to seven children who may experience emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is currently operating without a registered manager. A manager has been recruited to the home and is in the process of making an application to Ofsted for registration.

**Inspection date:** 11 June 2020

## **This monitoring visit**

On 11 June 2020, Maria McGranaghan, social care regulatory inspector carried out an urgent monitoring inspection. The inspector identified poor practice relating to care planning, safeguarding and risk assessments.

Ofsted received a regulation 40 safeguarding notification on 8 June 2020. The notification alerted Ofsted to a fire, which had been deliberately started by two children in a bedroom on 5 June 2020. Further enquiries were made regarding the extent of the fire. The responsible individual stated that the damage was not extensive and did not have an impact on the children living in the home. A request for photographic evidence showed that there had been substantial damage to the bedroom.

The home is registered for seven children. At the time of the fire, three children were accommodated. At the time of the monitoring visit, two children remained resident.

During this visit, the inspector reviewed the bedroom that had fire damage. The provider had taken action to rectify the environment and decorators were on site. The window had been completely removed, and a new window was due to be fitted the following day. There was no smoke damage to other rooms situated on the first

floor, and the smell of smoke was limited to the bedroom that was being redecorated.

The inspection confirmed that all staff have completed basic fire safety training. However, the record of a staff meeting held on 10 June 2020, following the fire, highlighted that some staff raised concerns to the manager that they do not know how to use a fire extinguisher. Therefore, despite training being provided, not all staff understand how to safely and appropriately address a fire. As a response, the provider has booked additional face-to-face fire safety training for 22 June 2020.

A review of the admissions and discharge of children was undertaken. The review highlighted that since July 2019 there have been eight children admitted and discharged. Placements have lasted from one week to four months before coming to an end.

The provider has failed to consider the individual needs of each child before they move into the home and the compatibility of the group. Consequently, children are placed together who have a known history of similar risk-taking behaviours. This includes cannabis misuse, episodes of going missing from care, aggressive and violent behaviours and a number of placement breakdowns. As a result, children's risk-taking behaviours have escalated since they have lived in the home. Some children have experienced a further placement breakdown, as staff were unable to manage the escalation in their behaviours. The acting manager recognised that placements are not robustly matched or risk assessed and that this had increased the cycle of risk.

The registered provider has failed to assess the suitability of the children's home location particularly in cases where vulnerable children are placed with a history of substance misuse. The location lends itself to swift and easy access to illicit substances. Therefore, vulnerable children are easily coerced by peers to continue their use of cannabis, placing them at risk of harm. There is a significant lack of urgency in addressing behaviours relating to the use of cannabis. This does not demonstrate that children are supported to understand the risks and potential impact of cannabis misuse on their health and well-being.

Individual behaviour management plans lack effective strategies for staff to follow to minimise risk and support children to understand safe and acceptable behaviours. Behaviour management strategies focus on financial penalties only. In addition to their weekly pocket money, children can earn up to £33 per week for the completion of daily tasks and maintaining appropriate behaviour. However, children are given their daily incentive even when their behaviour has not warranted this. This is because staff are unable to manage the explosive behaviours of children if they are not given their financial reward. Records demonstrate that since January 2020 there have been 17 episodes of extreme aggression, violence and damage when children have demanded additional finances.

Risk assessments fail to provide staff with realistic and individualised strategies for managing each child's risks, for example strategies to manage violent and aggressive behaviours. The acting manager said, 'Children are well built and cannot be managed in a physical intervention without there being a risk to staff.' Consequently, there have been a number of physical fights between children, and the home is frequently damaged. Likewise, managers do not review the patterns and trends for risk-taking behaviours, for example the escalation in aggressive behaviours because of which children may not have earned their daily financial incentive. As a result, risk assessments are not effectively or regularly revised in order to sufficiently manage the risks children present with.

The registered provider has not implemented effective strategies to safeguard and protect children from going missing from the home. Since January 2020, there have been 21 incidents when children have been reported as missing from the home. Records show that children go missing alone and in groups, leaving the home late in the evening or as a group in the early hours of the morning. Although, in the majority of cases, children return after several hours, staff do not attempt to stop children from leaving the premises. The acting manager said, 'We only have one waking night staff [member]. When children are in groups, it would be too dangerous for staff to intervene.'

Records of physical intervention reveal that between July 2019 and November 2019 there were three episodes when an intervention was carried out. On two occasions, children became violent and aggressive after being refused additional finances, and on one occasion a child became violent after being asked to bring his crockery downstairs. The acting manager stated that using physical intervention became dangerous because children would gang up together. Therefore, staff were unable to manage the children during incidents that included children fighting, damage to property and stealing personal items. The culture of acceptance of such aggressive behaviours has resulted in this children's home being unable to provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment in accordance with the home's statement of purpose.

The management team is not leading and managing the home in a manner that is consistent with the aims outlined in the statement of purpose. The failure to address the significant risk-taking behaviours, safeguarding concerns and children's disengagement with the service serves to exacerbate the cycle of risk. Therefore, outcomes for children are exceptionally compromised.

Internal monitoring of the home is deficient. The management team has failed to identify patterns and trends in the cycle of children's behaviour and how these have an impact on children's progress in the home. The lack of analysis has resulted in the management team's failure to identify when they are unable to meet a child's needs or keep them safe

In Ofsted's view, the shortfalls highlighted demonstrate poor leadership and management practice and a lack of ability to take effective action to improve the

quality of care in the home. This compromises the safety, experience and progress of the child accommodated in the home. As a result of these findings, Ofsted has taken the decision to serve two compliance notices under the protection of children standard and the leadership and management standard, alongside a number of requirements.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 24/04/2019      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 13/02/2019      | Interim         | Declined in effectiveness       |
| 01/05/2018      | Full            | Good                            |
| 31/10/2017      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |

## 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   |
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| <p>6: The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>protect and promote each child's welfare;</p> <p>treat each child with dignity and respect;</p> <p>provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background;</p> <p>help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect.</p> <p>(Regulation 6(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v))</p> | 30/07/2020 |
| <p>11: The positive relationships standard</p> <p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 30/07/2020 |

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| <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>meet each child’s behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child’s relevant plans;</p> <p>help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;</p> <p>encourage each child to take responsibility for the child’s behaviour, in accordance with the child’s age and understanding;</p> <p>help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship;</p> <p>strive to gain each child’s respect and trust;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>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)(xi))</p> |                   |
| <p>*12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>30/07/2020</p> |

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| <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home’s child protection policies is monitored regularly.</p> <p>(Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)(c))</p> |                   |
| <p>14: The care planning standard</p> <p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>that each child’s relevant plans are followed;</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>30/07/2020</p> |

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| <p>that the child's placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child's relevant plans is requested, if—</p> <p>the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child's needs;</p> <p>the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the home without permission.<br/>(Regulation 14(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(c)(e)(i)(ii))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |            |
| <p>*13: The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage a home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcome, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure the staff work as a team as appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure the workforce provides continuity of care for each child;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.<br/>(Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(e)(f)(h))</p> | 30/07/2020 |
| <p>25: Fire precautions<br/>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must—</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 30/07/2020 |

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| <p>take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home;</p> |  |
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| <p>make arrangements for persons working at the home to receive suitable training in fire prevention.<br/>(Regulation 25(1)(a)(c))</p> |  |
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\*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** SC035657

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Cambian Childcare Ltd

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

**Responsible individual:** Asjad Mahmood

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspectors

Maria McGranaghan, social care inspector

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