

SC035657

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care for up to seven children who may experience emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. At the time of the inspection, four children were living in the home.

The purpose of placements is to provide medium- to long-term care for children who have a plan to return to live with relatives or move on to independent living.

The manager of this home was registered by Ofsted on 10 August 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We visited this setting on 11 June 2020 and 5 August 2020 to carry out monitoring visits. We also visited on 2 and 3 September 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The reports are published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 May 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and widespread failures that mean children are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 24 April 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: Compliance notices were issued following the monitoring visit on 11 June 2020. They related to regulation 12, the protection of children standard, and regulation 13, the leadership and management standard. The monitoring visit carried out on 5 August 2020 confirmed that the provider had met the notices.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Since the last full inspection, this children's home has received two monitoring visits and one assurance visit. Despite assurances from senior managers, improvements in how the registered manager assesses the suitability of referrals to the home have not been sustained.

Since the last inspection, nine children have been admitted to the home. Two children have been discharged due to the placement being incompatible with their needs. There are four children currently accommodated in the home, all of whom have a significant history of substance misuse, criminality, going missing from home and violence, including the use of weapons. Consideration has not been given to the effects of placing these children together, or how their risks will be managed in the home or community.

Impact risk assessments that are used to determine the suitability of children to live in the home are ineffective, as they do not consider all the risk factors documented in the children's referral information. For example, concerns linked to child sexual exploitation or county lines are not identified as risks. This means that assessments do not consider the negative effect of accommodating children who have similar significant risk-taking behaviours. Failure to ensure that children are carefully matched into the home compromises the safety and stability of all the children placed.

Residential care planning is poor. Plans do not identify how children are to be helped to lead happy and healthy lives. For example, behaviours which have a considerable negative effect on children's lives are not thoroughly assessed. Staff are not provided with guidance or strategies for addressing issues, such as how to help a child who has a reliance on substances or the emotional effect of negative friendship groups. Consequently, key-work sessions provide little evidence of any in-depth, planned conversations or work with children to address these areas or to help them make positive changes in their lives.

Planning for care is compromised because some records are duplicated and/or cut and pasted from other children's records. For example, the guidance for managing the contact arrangements for one child referred to another child who had different arrangements. This means that children are not cared for in accordance with their contact plans. A lack of monitoring and oversight of children's contact arrangements compromise the measures in place for children.

Placement plans are not consistently followed by staff. For example, staff are aware that one child visits his family when he is away from the home, however, his placement plan clearly sets out that all contact is to be supervised. The registered manager has not taken any steps to address this concern or provide staff with

guidance on how to manage this. The failure to comply with the local authority's placement plan places the child at risk of significant harm and compromises the relationship with his family.

Children do not consistently engage in recreational activities but do spend a great deal of time with their friends in the community. However, this free time is not suitably monitored because staff are not aware of where children go, who they are with or what they are doing. Consequently, time away from home is not appropriately risk assessed and children are not provided with reasonable boundaries or expectations while in the community.

Records of key-work sessions demonstrate that children engage on a superficial level with staff, who have little input. Sessions are not planned or linked to placement targets. Referrals to external agencies are made, but records from visits are not held on file. This means that the staff and agencies are not working together to support the child to make progress. Consequently, children are not receiving assessed, planned and proactive care to meet their identified needs.

The healthcare needs of children are not suitably assessed. Staff have not received training in caring for a child who has asthma and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, nor are staff trained to support children who have a dependency on substances. For example, staff do not consult with medical professionals when a child presents as being under the influence of an unknown substance. This means that staff are not provided with suitable guidance or have the necessary knowledge and skills to address these concerns.

All children have an education placement and records show that attendance has improved. However, during the inspection, one child was excluded from school, one child was missing from home and another child had chosen not to attend school. The inspectors observed that staff had not prepared any educational material for the children during the first day of the inspection and took children shopping on the second day. Consequently, it is difficult to assess the children's overall educational progress.

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

The home has experienced two fires in a 12-month period. However, managers have failed to act in accordance with fire safety recommendations and have not developed an individual fire evacuation plan suitable for the size, structure and layout of this home. This means that managers, staff and children are reliant on a generic company fire evacuation plan, which compromises the safety of all people in the home.

Procedures for responding to safeguarding concerns are weak. For example, when a child returned to the home late at night in a taxi, staff did not attempt to gather any information from the taxi driver, the taxi company or take the details of the car. There are no records to show how this matter was followed up or if the information

was shared with the placing social worker. This demonstrates a significant lack of safeguarding awareness and fails to reduce the risk to children.

Allegations against staff are not managed in accordance with the company's safeguarding policy. For example, internal investigations were carried out prior to alerting the designated officer when a child made an allegation against a staff member. The failure to comply with the company's policy means that the independent safeguarding body is not alerted at the earliest opportunity to assess the risk to the child and decide on any steps necessary to keep the child safe.

Children are frequently missing from home. However, the missing-from-home risk assessments do not provide staff with guidance or strategies to help children to reduce their missing-from-home episodes. Although some return home interviews take place, there are no records of these interviews on file. Therefore, potentially vital information used to locate children who are missing is not shared with managers and staff.

Children earn monetary incentives, which are given to them directly. This contradicts previous management assurances and the home's policy. There is only one record that demonstrates spending was supervised. In addition, there are no records to show how individual incentive money is being used, how much is spent or that demonstrates a running tally of any money not used. This means that children with known concerns relating to substance misuse have access to money which is not monitored.

Management of negative behaviour is weak. Robust behaviour management strategies are not in place. Positive and negative behaviour is superficially managed with monetary rewards or deductions. This demonstrates a lack of planning for care. Staff are not equipped with the knowledge, skills and understanding of how to manage behaviours in an effective and purposeful way.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Staff have not received the necessary training to support the children who live in the home. This means that staff lack the knowledge and skills necessary to provide consistent and safe care for children.

Internal monitoring of the home is ineffective. The daily 'golden-hour checklist' lacks an in-depth analysis of the issues arising relating to children. This means that patterns and trends in the cycle of children's behaviour are not identified and not assessed. The lack of effective monitoring allows children's risks to continue.

Despite previous assurances from senior managers, the registered manager has not received the necessary support to develop skills to appropriately assess, review and analyse information. Consequently, the registered manager's skills in identifying risks, patterns and trends and developing effective strategies to manage and reduce these risks remain weak.

Regular audits undertaken by the company have not identified shortfalls. In contrast, the independent visitor's report identifies areas for development. However, the registered manager failed to demonstrate how these matters have been addressed. Consequently, this children's home has failed to sustain the improvements identified at the assurance visit in September 2020.

The registered manager is not leading and managing the home in a way which is consistent with the home's statement of purpose. The failure to address and suitably manage significant risk-taking behaviours and safeguarding concerns serves to exacerbate the cycle of risk. Therefore, outcomes for children are compromised.

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 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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(iv))	27 June 2021
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. 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;	27 June 2021

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 develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship; 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. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)(vii)(ix))	
*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; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; 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;	11 July 2021

that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(b)(e))	
*The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's 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 each child's relevant plans are followed; that the child's placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child's relevant plans is requested, if— 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; the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the home without permission. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(a)(c)(e)(i)(ii))	11 July 2021
*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; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;	11 July 2021

ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to 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; 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)(e)(f)(h))	
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(1) applies to the home— paragraph (1) does not apply; and the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2))	27 June 2021
A responsible individual must— have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(b))	27 June 2021

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are skilled in understanding the range of influences that friendships can have and should encourage those with a positive impact and discourage those with a negative impact. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 38, paragraph 8.8)
- The registered person should ensure that where there is a possibility that a child will run away or go missing from a children's home placement, their placement plan should include a strategy to minimise this risk. If the child is looked after, their care plan (arranged by the placing authority) should include such a strategy. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.24)

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: SC035657

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Registered provider address: 5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane,
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Responsible individual: Asjad Mahmood

Registered manager: Mohammed Suleman

Inspectors

Maria McGranaghan, Social Care Inspector
Judith Birchall, Social Care Inspector

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