

SC043972

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a large private organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to five children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, there were two children living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2024.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 December 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/10/2024	Full	Inadequate
12/07/2023	Full	Good
26/10/2022	Full	Good
22/02/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

Since the last inspection, four children have moved out of the home, with two children moving in a planned and managed way. However, two of the children moved out at short notice due to incidents that occurred in the home. There has been a significant amount of change for children and staff, yet despite this, two new children have moved into the home, leading to further instability for staff and children. However, the children were supported to move in a managed way, and one child is starting to form relationships with staff.

Family time is promoted, and staff have built positive relationships with children's family members. One child is in the process of returning to live in their family home. Staff are keeping in touch with the child and visiting them in the community in an effort to ensure that the child and their family are supported during the move.

Education is valued by staff and the manager. One child is attending college and is making good progress. The other child is being supported to engage in education after not attending school for a long period of time and has been provided with a tutor. However, the child is not engaged in learning or structured activities for the whole of the school day.

The children have access to a range of activities, and they are consulted about their likes and dislikes. Children know how to make a complaint. When complaints are made, leaders ensure that the outcomes are communicated to the children.

Staff support children's health needs. Referrals to specialist services are made when health needs emerge for children. One child has historically been very reluctant to attend health appointments and take prescribed medication. Staff encourage the child to engage with their health plan, and the manager has engaged other health professionals in an attempt to educate the child on the importance of looking after their own health. However, records have not always been kept of when children refuse to take medication.

Children are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms and communal areas; the manager hopes that this will give children a sense of ownership of the home. There has been a recent mouse infestation; however, this has been responded to swiftly by the manager, and pest control measures are in place. Staff are also ensuring that the cleanliness of the home remains a priority.

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

There are now plans in place that guide the staff in how to care for the children and keep them safe. However, these are not always fully personalised to individual children.

Furthermore, up-to-date risk assessments have not always been fully accessible to staff or shared with each child.

Incidents are generally managed appropriately. The effectiveness of staff's response to missing-from-home incidents has improved. Children have been given the opportunity to speak to someone independent of the home after they have returned. The manager has had good oversight and has been able to identify when there have been issues with staff practice or following protocols and guidance. He has then ensured that any shortfalls are discussed with staff and actions taken to improve their practice.

Staff complete a range of training in safeguarding matters. Staff speak to children about the dangers of substances, being missing from home and managing relationships. This allows children to recognise and reflect on the consequences of taking unhealthy risks.

The number of negative consequences given has reduced. Staff are encouraged to focus on celebrating successes and building children's self-esteem, using praise and positive consequences. The manager has oversight of consequences and challenges those that are not appropriate. However, the evaluation of the effectiveness of consequences is still lacking.

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

There is now a new manager who has been in post for six weeks. He is suitably qualified but has not yet applied to register with Ofsted. The manager has a clear vision for the home and a drive to improve the quality of care provided for the children. However, although the manager and responsible individual are putting systems in place to facilitate this, they are not yet embedded.

Staff say that they feel supported by the manager and the responsible individual. Staff receive regular supervision, and the manager has identified how this can be improved to further support staff practice. Team meetings are used as a forum for discussion, learning and re-enforcing expectations and are held regularly.

Some staff are experienced and qualified in childcare. The manager is mindful of the need to up-skill the staff to increase their confidence and support them to meet the children's needs. The manager has a plan to develop the staff and widen their responsibilities in order to give them a sense of shared ownership and investment in good outcomes for the children.

Oversight has improved and the manager has introduced a range of monitoring systems to review and evaluate the care that is provided for the children. Leaders and managers have taken steps to address the shortfalls identified at the last inspection and most of the requirements have been met.

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; 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; 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; and 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)(v)(vi)(b)) In particular, the registered provider must ensure that children's individual risk management plans provide staff with clear strategies to manage and reduce risk that are individualised to each child. Additionally, risk management plans must be fully accessible to all staff and shared with children. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	20 February 2025

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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that when accepting new children into the home, the impact on children already living in the home is fully considered, as is the ability of the staff to meet the needs of all children living in the home. Additionally, the registered person must ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent the need for immediate notice to be served on a child’s placement.	20 February 2025
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline, or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(vii)) In particular, the registered provider must ensure that they review the effectiveness of any consequence given to a child. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	20 February 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when a child is not participating in full-time education, they are supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should ensure that records are kept of the administration of all medication, including when prescribed medication is refused. ('Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)

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: SC043972

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: Leanne Woodings

Registered manager: Karl Boddy

Inspectors

Eve Ostridge, Social Care Inspector
Simon Jones, Social Care Inspector

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