

SC065855

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for three children up to the age of 18 who have social and emotional difficulties. The home is privately owned.

The manager is experienced and suitably qualified. The manager is registered with Ofsted.

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.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 June 2021

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	inadequate
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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: 27 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/01/2020	Full	Good
08/01/2019	Full	Good
08/05/2017	Full	Good
02/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

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

Staff support children to attend routine health appointments. The registered manager has liaised with external agencies to consider children's specific health and emotional needs. This shows that children's health needs are considered and that some steps are taken to seek support for children when needed. However, this effective liaison with other agencies is not always consistent. On two occasions, staff did not seek medical advice in a timely way.

Inspectors found some good examples of staff considering children's views and feelings in relation to things that matter to them, such as their relationships with their peers. Children also have their say about the day-to-day running of the home, what they like to eat and what activities they would like to do. However, children's views are not always sought about issues such as arrangements for seeing their families.

With staff support, one child has seen his parent after not seeing him for many years. This is a positive development for this child. Another child has experienced a significant change to the time he spends with his family, but the reasons why are unclear. The registered manager has not raised this with the placing authority. As a result, it is not clear how decisions have been made about this and if the child's views have been considered.

Staff undertake direct work with children to discuss behaviours that cause concern. However, some records documenting this work are poor. Direct work does not always link to children's plans, and it does not always help children to gain insight into their behaviours and the impact of this on others. For example, one child continues to smoke and, on occasions, does so in his room. In addition, staff do not work clearly and effectively with children about how to use the internet safely.

Children develop some positive relationships with staff. Two children told inspectors that they get on with staff and can talk to them about how they feel. The home environment is homely. Children have personalised their rooms, and one child has a pet which they enjoy caring for. This helps children to feel a sense of belonging.

The registered manager has worked with education providers to ensure that children attend school. There have been meetings to discuss children's educational progress and adjustments made to children's timetables in school, in line with their needs. One child has enrolled on a college course, and there has been a meeting with tutors at the college to ensure that his needs are understood, and that relevant support is in place should it be required. This good support helps to promote children's learning.

Children have been on holiday with staff and had a good time. Staff help children to create memory books which collate positive and memorable moments for them to keep. This is a lovely way to help children remember the good times they have shared with staff.

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

As part of children's preparation for adulthood, they spend time on their own in the community. However, guidance to staff on how to help children manage this well lacks clarity. For example, the written guidance does not include information about how often staff should keep in touch with children to check where they are and that they are safe. Staff are not always making regular contact with one child and do not always know where he is. There are some known risks to this child in the community, and the absence of regular calls and the lack of clarity about where he is have the potential to place the child at risk.

Physical interventions are only used as a last resort, when de-escalation strategies have not worked. There has only been one restraint since September 2020. The incident record shows that staff involved in the incident undertook the debrief with the child. Consequently, someone independent did not talk to the child to see if they had any worries about what happened. In addition, not all staff involved in the incident have been spoken to, and the incident report was not signed by those involved in the incident. The registered manager's overview has not identified these issues in his monitoring, so they have not been used to help to develop staff practice.

When children raise concerns in relation to the alleged actions of staff, the registered manager has not sought advice from the local authority's designated officer. This was found to be the case on two occasions. While the registered manager addressed this immediately and the designated officer determined that the matters did not reach the threshold for their involvement, not sharing information and seeking advice about safeguarding matters have the potential to leave children at risk of harm.

There has only been two missing-from-home incidents since September 2020. The record of one incident shows that staff did not follow missing-from-care protocols. For example, staff did not complete a search of the local area and did not report him missing to the police in a timely way. Although the registered manager identified this shortfall, he has not addressed this with staff effectively. This is a missed opportunity to learn from what happened.

Staff have supported one child to reduce the number of times they hurt themselves. This demonstrates good progress for this child from her starting point. However, this good work has not been consistent in recent months. Staff have not been alert to potential risks as quickly as they could have been and, on two occasions, this could have compromised the child's health.

Staff do not receive clear guidance about the level of supervision and monitoring of children's internet use. Risk management plans are not updated following incidents of concern, and this does not promote children's safe use of the internet.

Staff promote positive behaviours and, at times, will undertake effective restorative work with children. This has led to children being more settled and a reduction in challenging incidents.

The fire risk assessment is completed annually. Staff and children regularly take part in fire evacuations, which ensures that everyone living in the home is aware of the fire safety procedures and how to exit the building quickly in such an emergency.

The home's location risk assessment is thorough and provides useful information to children and staff about the local area. This helps children to understand potential risks in the local area and how to manage these.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager is experienced and qualified. However, he does not have insight into the strengths and needs of his service. A new responsible individual who can offer regional support to the registered manager has recently been appointed. Leaders understood the findings of the inspection and are committed to addressing the shortfalls.

Feedback from professionals to inspectors about the quality of care children receive at the home was mixed. Two social workers said they had good relationships with staff and the registered manager, and were able to give examples of how they have worked together to meet children's needs. A teacher felt that staff could show more professional curiosity about one child when he is out in the community on his own. This is in relation to where he may be and who he may be with. One parent stated that she does not feel she is always kept informed about her child's progress and did not feel her views were listened to by staff. As a result, improvement is required in listening to and working collaboratively with all professionals and families to better support children.

Supervision records seen highlight that supervisions happen regularly. However, they are not always reflective and do not address issues around staff practice adequately. As a result, staff do not receive all the support they need to develop their practice and care for children.

Training records show that staff have good opportunities to learn the skills and knowledge required for their role. Staff have undertaken additional training to help them understand the specific needs of children in their care. Despite this, staff do not put learning from training into practice. This was evidenced by the shortfalls identified in the response to an incident where a child went missing from the home and risks associated with internet safety.

Children's case records are not always organised, with some being filed incorrectly, while others could not be located, including incident records and statutory local authority paperwork. Inspectors have been informed that regular file audits have taken place. Despite this, shortfalls remain. In addition, the delegated authority form has not been signed by a parent who holds parental responsibility for a child.

The registered manager completed a quality of care review but did not submit this to Ofsted within the required time frame. Consequently, the regulator is not kept informed appropriately, and the registered manager is not working in line with regulation.

Staff working at the home are experienced, with some of them having worked there for several years. Staff spoken to during the inspection stated they liked working in the home and felt generally supported.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (b)(c))	15 August 2021
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child. (Regulation 7 (1)(b)(2)(a)(iii))	15 August 2021
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— an understanding about acceptable behaviour;	15 August 2021

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—that staff— encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; 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. (Regulation 11(1)(b)(c)(2)(a)(iii)(iv)(v))	
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 are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))	31 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—	15 August 2021

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; 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)(b)(c)(f)(h))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	15 August 2021
The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. 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; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (2) (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	15 August 2021
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. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))	15 August 2021

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that they submit to Ofsted their review of the quality of care at least once every six months. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 65, paragraph 15.3)

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: SC065855

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: Dimple Ghera

Registered manager: Shane McCarthy

Inspectors

Shazana Jamal, Social Care Inspector
Sophie Hills, Social Care Inspector

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