

SC066393

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned home that is part of a large organisation.

The home provides care for up to three children who have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager has been in post since February 2024 and has submitted their application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2024

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	outstanding
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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: 12 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2023	Full	Good
15/09/2021	Full	Outstanding
10/02/2020	Full	Outstanding
05/12/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, three children continue to live at this home and have been living at this home for a long time. Children said that they are happy and that they feel protected and safe, with one saying that it is brilliant living at the home. Children benefit from a nurturing environment.

Children trust staff and enjoy spending time with them. They benefit hugely from receiving affection and warmth from staff and seek this from them. These positive relationships ensure that children flourish.

Staff help children to gain life skills. This has resulted in children independently going to college, cooking meals and managing their finances. Two children are working towards living in supported accommodation. This supports children in preparation for adulthood.

Children make mixed progress with their education. One child is attending college and plans to go to university. Two children are not in full-time education, training or employment. The manager is working closely with specialist post-16 training providers to find suitable placements.

Children are actively involved in every aspect of their care. They have access to a mobile application to express their feelings, wishes and views about the care they receive. This has resulted in children feeling valued, respected and listened to.

Staff help children develop a positive self-view and sense of their own identity. One child shared that staff support them to express themselves through writing poetry, and this helped them understand themselves better. As a result, children have a better understanding of their identity.

Children enjoy a wide range of leisure activities with staff and other children. For example, children go to the cinema, attend drama classes and go to music events and the park. This supports their overall development and helps develop positive relationships with staff.

A strength of the staff team is the way it supports children to keep in touch with their friends and family. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the children's relationships with their friends and family. Parents shared that this has helped strengthen their relationships with children. This has resulted in children receiving meaningful time with their friends and family.

There are two separate recording systems used in the home, and this causes difficulties in locating care records that are stored electronically. This affects managers' ability to have effective oversight of the quality of care provided to the children.

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

Risk and behaviour management plans are purposeful and of excellent quality. Staff use a solution-focused approach and look beyond children's presenting behaviour. This is supported by research-informed behaviour management practice that helps staff identify early signs of changes in children's behaviour and is also used to explore risks with children. This helps staff provide support and reassurance to children very quickly.

Staff prioritise children's emotional and mental health needs. They work very closely with specialist mental health services to help children address specific mental health concerns. This has resulted in children being more resilient and more able to adapt when confronted with adversity and stressful situations. As a result, children's emotional and mental health has improved, and they feel more secure.

Staff have an in-depth knowledge of triggers to behaviours that may expose children to risk. This means that staff act proactively and swiftly to respond to emerging situations to help children stay safe. As a result, since the last inspection, there has been only one missing-from-care incident and no incidents of physical intervention.

Staff successfully use de-escalation techniques when children feel that they want to cause harm to themselves. They use a range of therapeutic strategies and interventions to help children self-regulate and develop alternative strategies. This has resulted in children coming to staff for help and guidance, instead of causing harm to themselves. As a result, self-injurious incidents have reduced in severity and frequency.

Staff help children to understand their adverse childhood experiences. This has resulted in children having access to weekly therapy sessions. Staff work very closely with a therapist through regular therapy consultation meetings. These meetings help staff understand how they can tailor the support they provide to children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager resigned on 5 February 2024, and a new manager was appointed immediately. The new manager is experienced and knows the home well. Since the last inspection, a new responsible individual has been appointed. In addition, there have been several staff who have left and others who have joined the team. Despite there being a period of change, this has not had a detrimental effect on the quality of care children receive.

The manager is child-centred and focused on providing a nurturing environment for children to flourish. This is supported by an equally committed staff team that shares her vision. All staff spoke highly of the management support they receive.

Staff are provided with a wide range of training courses delivered by various specialist mental health professionals. This has helped the manager align the delivery of care provided to children with external specialist mental health services. This has helped enhance staff skills and understanding of children's needs.

Children benefit from meaningful discussions that are embedded into the day-to-day care provided to them, with support from a therapist. This has empowered children to manage their own behaviour without becoming frustrated. As a result, children express themselves in a healthy and safe way.

Partnership working with external agencies is excellent. External professionals shared that the manager and staff provide a very good quality of care to children and that children are thriving, happy and have made progress since living at the home.

Managers do not complete their own interview monitoring records, and some records are unclear as to whether staff have suitable knowledge and skills to undertake their role. This has not directly affected the care provided to children but has the potential for staff who are not suitably skilled being employed.

Some staff have struggled in carrying out administrative duties due to a language barrier. This has not affected their relationships with children. However, it does place additional demands on the staff team when responding to urgent matters in the home.

In the main, the manager's oversight is good, and they take immediate action to address shortfalls. However, the manager does not always record lessons learned from their review of incidents and how this informs their future practice. This is a missed opportunity for the manager to demonstrate the effectiveness of their management oversight of significant incidents.

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 registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. (Regulation 32 (2)(a)(b) (3)(b)) The registered person must ensure that recruitment records for potential staff show the management oversight of staff suitability and the assessment of the skills to work with vulnerable children.	30 April 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should make best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in reviewing incidents and proactively implement lessons learned. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that all care records stored electronically can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff have the skills and confidence to communicate easily and understand the children they care for. This includes when carrying out day-to-day administrative tasks relating to the care of children.

(‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 22, paragraph 4.10)

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: SC066393

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: Fiona Rees

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Sam Dulay-Kainth, Social Care Inspector

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