

SC359846

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is part of a large private organisation. Staff provide care for up to five children between the ages of eight and 16. The children who live at the home may have experienced childhood adversity.

The post for a registered manager has been vacant since May 2023. At the full inspection, the home's leadership and management was judged to be inadequate. Since this inspection, the manager in post has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 8 August 2024

Date of last inspection: 23 April 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home. During the inspection, the inspector spoke to one of the children. They like living in the home and have formed positive relationships with the staff. The child appeared relaxed and comfortable in the home.

Care planning arrangements for children moving into the home have improved. A child's recent move to the home was carefully considered and child focused. The manager visited the child before they moved and was able to answer any questions the child had and provide them with reassurance. Consequently, the child has settled into the home and is making progress.

The manager and staff liaise with relevant professionals when changes to children's care plans are made. For one child, managers and the staff have been proactive in ensuring that the child's needs have continued to be met despite significant changes.

One child has moved on from the home in difficult circumstances. The decision was made to keep the child and others safe. Managers could have done more to arrange support for the child on the day she left. However, staff visited the child the day after the move, took her belongings and spent time explaining why she needed to move on from the home and providing support regarding this.

Children's health needs are promoted by staff. They are supported to attend routine health appointments and are up to date with optician and dental appointments. During the inspection, the inspector observed staff attentively attend to a child who was feeling unwell.

Staff are making efforts to work with others to organise an educational placement for the child who has recently moved in. This proactive approach is helpful to the child so that she can commence education as soon as practicable after the summer holidays.

Staff understand the importance of children being able to see their families, particularly for children who are living out of area. Family members are welcome to visit the home. This helps to ensure that the children enjoy significant, valuable time with people who are important to them.

For one child, who no longer lives at the home, there was an increase in missing-from-home episodes. Overall, staff worked hard to try and locate the child and return her safely to the home. They also attended multi-agency meetings and worked together with professionals to try to manage and reduce risk. However, on

one occasion, the child left the home early one morning without staff realising. On another occasion, staff could have reported the child missing to the police sooner than they did.

On two occasions, staff did not report concerns promptly to managers. When managers were made aware, they acted swiftly and effectively to address these concerns and keep children safe. Managers have revisited with staff their safeguarding roles and responsibilities to mitigate the risk of this happening again.

Since the last inspection, the manager has recruited two appropriately qualified senior members of staff. In appointing new staff, the manager has followed the organisation's safer recruitment guidance. However, senior managers have not ensured that the same process is in place when staff are redeployed from other homes in the organisation. For example, relevant information was not shared to support the manager to have oversight staff practices in the home.

Aspects of the home environment are homely, warm and well maintained. However, some areas of the environment and garden require maintenance. For example, the hallway has scuffs to the walls, and the garden has broken play equipment. This detracts from a homely and comfortable environment.

Some aspects of monitoring and oversight by leaders and managers need to improve. For example, information about children and some records are not well organised and easily available. As a result, what is happening for children is not always clearly set out. Quality assurance managers provide some helpful input, but this is not joined up with the manager and this is a missed opportunity for managers to come together to identify areas for improvement and implement development plans.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/04/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/06/2023	Full	Inadequate
08/02/2023	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, 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— 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)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, ensure that staff follow missing-from-home protocols consistently and report any concerns about children's safety and welfare without delay.	16 September 2024
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))	31 October 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets children's needs. In most cases, children's homes should be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should maintain good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguard children and minimise potential risks to them. In particular, when staff move to work in a different home in the same organisation, all relevant information should be shared. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC359846

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: Joseph Monaghan

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Lydia Isaac, Social Care Inspector

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