

SC457266

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private provider and offers care for up to two children. Care is provided for children who experience social, emotional and/or learning difficulties

Since the last inspection, one child was given notice to leave the home and another child moved into the home. At the time of the inspection two children were living in the home.

The previous registered manager resigned from the service in November 2024. A new manager has been in post since January 2025, they have not applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 February 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

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: 24 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/10/2023	Full	Outstanding
04/10/2022	Full	Good
03/08/2021	Full	Good
26/11/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

The three children who have lived in the home since the last inspection have had different experiences and outcomes, with varying amounts of progress. For one child, staff were unable to keep them and others safe and, as a result, this child had to move to a new home in an unplanned way. For another child, staff have not been able to support the child to experience a positive daily routine and staff struggle to help them sufficiently engage in education. Approaches to this child's care has been inconsistent and staff are not adequately helping to reach their full potential. Staff support the third child well and help them to make progress. They attend education and take part in social and recreational activities.

Children know how to complain and when they have, the responses have been thorough, and child focused. All the concerns raised are taken seriously and sensitively addressed. A letter was then given to the child and the outcome discussed through a conversation with them to help ensure the child understood what happened as a result of their complaint.

Children are consulted in relation to plans to freshen up the home and make improvements to their environment. However, some of the children's bedroom furniture is broken and has not yet been repaired or replaced. Storage for children's belongings is not sufficient resulting in children's bedrooms looking cluttered and not conducive to children developing positive routines.

Staff are caring and compassionate. They speak warmly about children, even when they themselves have been physically hurt when situations have escalated. Staff have developed positive relationships with the two children who live in the home. As a result, children feel safe and cared for. Children's achievements are celebrated and praised. Staff support children to spend meaningful time with their families and people who are important to them. Children enjoy shopping and cooking with staff.

The staff have helped children to enjoy a range of social and recreational activities that reflect the children's interests and help them to build their confidence and self-esteem. Activities include horse riding, attending a gym, swimming baton twirling and a trip to a theme park. Staff understand the importance of children having these positive experiences and how they help children to grow socially and emotionally.

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

Staff have endeavoured to create positive relationships with children but there have been some incidents that have escalated out of control, necessitating staff to call the police on four occasions. While safeguarding incident reports mostly give a thorough account of what

happened and include a clear and full chronology of events, managerial oversight of these incidents has been ineffective. Areas where lessons could be learned, have not been identified to help keep children safe. Poor staff practice has gone unchallenged, and discussions held with staff following an incident are not always effective to have a direct impact on improving children's experiences.

Restraint has been used at times to prevent children from harming themselves or others. The use of restraint is proportionate and used as a last resort, when staff have exhausted all other options. Events leading up to the use of physical intervention have not been sufficiently analysed to consider what could be done differently in the future. Equally, practice that had been deemed as successful in preventing an incident escalating have not been shared with staff or added to children's behavioural support plans.

Staff understand the difficulties that children have experienced in their childhood. However, positive behaviour is not always promoted. Staff do not consistently maintain clear and important boundaries that encourage acceptable behaviour and promote safety. This means children do not always know what behaviours are safe and acceptable or helped to develop positive routines.

Children said they feel safe living in their home and have staff they can trust, one child commented that there is nothing staff could do to make them feel anymore safe. Children and staff have developed positive relationships and staff take time to listen to children when they express worries or concerns and compassionately respond to allay them. Staff are able to discuss sensitive topics with children and take time to talk about children's feelings when they are distressed, angry or frustrated to help support children to manage their own behaviours safely.

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

Over, the past two months, the new manager has started to review and identify areas for improvement, including some of the shortfalls found during this inspection. A number of changes are being made to improve the quality of care to children, and help children make progress. Staff are being provided with refresher training to promote the culture and ethos of caring for children therapeutically. Alongside this, the language used to record children's experiences is being reviewed to ensure that documents are written sensitively and non-judgementally.

Leaders and managers have not had sufficient oversight and monitoring of the service to help ensure that the quality of care provided fully promotes children's welfare and supports all children to fulfil their potential. Staff have not always been provided with clear instruction and guidance on how to support children to meet care plan aims, such as a consistent approach to supporting children to have less screen time or a healthy diet. While children rarely go missing, written guidance is again not explicit to ensure that staff know what to do in such situations. The independent person has rarely identified practice shortfalls to support and promote improvement.

Leaders and managers work positively with external professionals to maintain working relationships. Feedback from professionals and family members was positive. However, managers have not effectively challenged local authorities when they are concerned that decisions made are not in the best interests of children.

Staff say they welcome the new managers appointment. Supervision prior to the new manager starting was inconsistent but this has now been addressed. The experienced and long-standing staff team provide consistency and stability for the children. The home is properly resourced and staffed to meet the children's needs and staff regularly volunteer to work extra to avoid the children being cared for by agency staff. Team meetings are held regularly and are well attended, with the children at the centre of discussions held.

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
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)) In particular, the register person should escalate their concerns when the support from external professionals is insufficient in meeting the needs of children, particularly with regard to future care planning and ensuring children's plans to move out of the home are appropriate.	31 May 2025
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;	31 May 2025

help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans; (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(x)) In particular the registered person should ensure all children are fully supported to consistently engage with education and be offered the fulltime educational provision they are entitled too. In addition, the registered person should ensure children are provided with informal education as an addition to formal learning and not a substitute.	
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	31 May 2025

a child's welfare; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(e)) In particular, the registered person should identify shortfalls in staff practice and adapt approaches to the children's care immediately after a serious incident, to help minimise children's exposure to similar risks in the future.	
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 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)(e)(f)(h)) In particular the registered person should have effective oversight and monitoring of the service to identify areas for improvement and help staff understand the importance of maintaining clear boundaries within practice.	31 May 2025

In addition, through monitoring and review ensure that children have the appropriate furniture in their bedrooms to support them developing positive routines.	
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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: SC457266

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Ltd

Registered provider address: Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Nicola McClements

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Gary Turney, social care inspector
Sarah Canto, social care inspector

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