

SC457272

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to three children aged between 11 and 18. The home's aim is to provide care and support to children who may have experienced abuse, neglect and exclusion in the past.

The manager has been registered at the home since June 2020.

Visit dates: 16 to 17 September 2020

Previous inspection date: 11 January 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Sustained effectiveness

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

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

The care of children

This children's home reopened in June 2020 following a period of closure. Two children have recently moved into the home.

The staff have built trusting relationships with the children. They spend quality time with the children and are always available to them. Social workers said that the children have progressed over a short period of time because of the relationships that the staff have with them.

The children benefit from the clear, structured routines that the staff have incorporated into the children's daily living. This has supported the children to feel safe.

The children have benefited from being able to maintain good relationships with their families and friends. The staff have worked closely with social workers to facilitate the children's contact. The staff check, before arranging visits, that the children's family members and friends are not presenting with COVID-19 symptoms. Ensuring that the children can see the people who are important to them has helped to reduce episodes of the children going missing from care.

One child has started education at the organisation's school. A clear transition plan was put in place to support this. The transition has been successful and the child's school attendance is good. The manager is working closely with the social worker of the other child to provide them with suitable education.

A child said that they like living at this home more than any previous children's home. This child told the staff that they were frightened that someone would be able to get into the home at night. The staff responded by taking the child on a 'security check' each evening, to check the doors and windows, which made the child feel safer.

The safety of children

The staff safeguard the children well. Social workers said that the staff have a good understanding of children's risks. The staff follow the home's clear, comprehensive risk assessments, which are regularly reviewed and updated.

Behaviour management plans are clear and informative. The plans help the staff to identify the potential triggers of unwanted behaviour and understand how to manage the behaviour. The staff undertake key-work sessions with the children to help them to understand and change these behaviours. The children benefit from a restorative rather than punitive approach to behaviour management.

The staff have undertaken safeguarding training. They are clear on the reporting process in relation to any safeguarding concerns.

There has been one episode of a child going missing from the home. The staff actively searched for the child and worked with police to ensure the child's safe return. The child was welcomed back into the home and a debrief and key-work session were undertaken to support the child to understand the risks of going missing.

Leaders and managers

The home reopened in June 2020. The manager spoke of the challenges in recruitment in relation to COVID-19. However, the provider has been able to recruit staff to enable the home to reopen. The provider also experienced challenges due to COVID-19 in sourcing external tradespeople to undertake redecoration of the home.

The staff who have been newly recruited have undertaken induction training, although this was delayed by a week due to COVID-19. Comprehensive internal and external monitoring of the home is in place. The manager reviews and updates the workforce development plan regularly. These processes help the manager to continue to develop the home.

Partnership working between the manager and external professionals is effective. Social workers said that the manager informs them of any concerns and looks at ways of improving outcomes for children.

The staff said that they are supported by the manager. Regular, good-quality supervision and staff meetings are helping the new staff team to develop its practice.

There has been a consistent staff team since the home reopened in June 2020. The staff have undertaken an induction and the organisation's mandatory training. However, only one member of staff has a relevant level 3 qualification. The manager is undertaking a level 5 qualification.

The manager has met all the requirements and recommendations that were raised at the last inspection.

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
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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(c))	14/01/2021

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC457272

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Registered provider address: Cambian Child Care Limited, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Michael Coleman

Registered manager: Tom Watson

Inspector

Trish Palmer, Social Care Inspector

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