

# SC476270

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is run by a large private provider and can provide care for up to five children. The children placed are likely to have social and emotional difficulties and may have experienced trauma. A school, also operated by the same provider, is located on the same site. The school was not inspected at the same time as the social care provision.

A new manager has recently been appointed. However, she has not submitted an application to register with Ofsted.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home. All of the children were present for part of the inspection and the inspector was able to speak with them to gather their views.

### Inspection dates: 13 and 14 May 2025

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|

|                                           |      |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | good |
|-------------------------------------------|------|

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 21 January 2025

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** inadequate

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 21/01/2025      | Full            | Inadequate                      |
| 23/04/2024      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 04/05/2023      | Full            | Good                            |
| 08/06/2022      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Since the last inspection in March 2025, no children have moved into or out of the home. This period of stability has helped the children to feel settled, enabling them to develop secure relationships with staff and benefit from consistent routines and expectations.

All children have made measurable progress in education from their individual starting points. Effective communication between home and school ensures consistency and supports collaborative working. For example, when children experience difficulties in school, staff provide in-school support to reduce anxiety and promote re-engagement. Where children are unable to attend the home's on-site provision, managers advocate effectively to ensure that children's education, health and care plans (EHC plans) are updated to reflect their needs and to secure appropriate alternative provision. As a result of this advocacy, one child is now receiving individualised tutoring aligned to their EHC plan. Children learning at home are provided with daily educational activities and a system is in place to monitor their engagement and progress. This ensures that their educational development remains a priority, regardless of their current setting.

Children's health and well-being needs are consistently well met. All children are registered with appropriate health services and attend routine appointments. When children are anxious or reluctant to access healthcare, staff respond with patience and therapeutic support. As a result, one child who previously refused to attend medical appointments now engages positively with healthcare, demonstrating improved emotional resilience. In addition to supporting physical health, the clinical team offers emotional and psychological assessments. Recommendations from these assessments are incorporated into children's care plans and daily support. Staff also secure specialist input promptly when required. This comprehensive approach contributes to improved overall health and emotional well-being for children.

Children are encouraged to express their views and are actively involved in decisions about their care. Staff and managers ensure that each child has access to an advocate and is supported in personalising support tools such as incentive charts. This inclusive approach helps children feel empowered and respected. However, some visual aids and resources are stored in staff offices, which limits children's access and sense of ownership. Furthermore, toiletries were locked away rather than being incorporated into nurturing daily routines. This practice risked undermining children's dignity and independence. Managers responded promptly to this concern during the inspection, implementing immediate changes to ensure the environment remains child focused and homely.

Relationships with family members and significant others are prioritised, and staff work hard to promote safe and meaningful family time, even when children live far from home. This has contributed positively to children's identity and well-being. Staff

maintain positive working relationships with parents and social workers to support this. However, some parents reported recent lapses in communication, which led to anxiety and uncertainty around family time and aspects of care planning. Managers responded constructively, acknowledging these concerns and implementing a clear plan to restore consistent, meaningful communication. This responsive leadership helps maintain trust with families and ensures children benefit from stable and supportive networks.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

The commitment from senior leaders and managers to upskill the staff team has contributed to a stronger safeguarding culture within the home. Staff are now better equipped to support children effectively with managing their behaviours. The use of the PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) model of care has become more embedded in practice, and staff are adopting a more nurturing approach to their support for children.

Children report feeling safe and supported in the home and are able to identify trusted adults with whom they can share their worries. Inspectors observed warm, nurturing relationships between children, staff and the responsible individual. Children actively seek out trusted adults, including the manager, when they feel upset, reflecting the strong sense of emotional safety within the home. This relational approach enables children to build resilience and trust in adults, which in turn contributes to their overall development and stability.

Managers and senior leaders respond promptly when safeguarding concerns are identified, taking appropriate action to protect children and promote their welfare. When children raise concerns about staff, leaders ensure that information is shared swiftly with the relevant professionals, including social workers, Ofsted and the local authority designated officer. Managers advocate strongly for children to be seen by independent professionals, helping to reduce risk and ensuring that children's voices are heard. However, in one instance, poor recording compromised the clarity of a child's views following an incident. This weakened the effectiveness of the investigation and had the potential to leave the child vulnerable.

Staff are becoming increasingly therapeutically informed. Physical restraint is used only as a last resort, with staff employing the least restrictive strategies to support children. Managers review incidents critically and ensure that debriefs take place. However, some opportunities to gather staff reflections in a timely manner have been missed. Additionally, inconsistencies in recording, such as failing to clearly document which staff were involved and what actions were taken, limit the managers' ability to review incidents robustly and identify learning. This weakens oversight and could leave children exposed to repeated risks.

Children say that staff support them when their peers are unkind. Children are encouraged to develop positive peer relationships and staff respond effectively when incidents of unkindness are reported. Children receive targeted emotional support to

help them understand and regulate their emotions, with some children initiating repair work following incidents. However, in one instance, discriminatory language was not adequately addressed. A racial remark led to an escalation in behaviour and a physical intervention, yet follow-up repair work was not completed. This missed opportunity to challenge harmful views and support reconciliation had a negative emotional impact on both children involved. Managers have acknowledged this and are committed to implementing greater staff reflection and more proactive intervention to promote inclusion and diversity.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The home is led by an aspirational and child-focused manager, who is supported effectively by the responsible individual. Together, they demonstrate a clear and ambitious vision for both staff and children. Leaders have used learning from previous inspections to drive continuous improvement, ensuring that children benefit from a higher standard of care and more positive day-to-day experiences.

Robust internal and external monitoring systems are now well embedded and effective. These systems enable the manager and the responsible individual to maintain clear oversight of all aspects of care and the day-to-day running of the home. As a result, concerns are identified promptly and addressed swiftly. This has led to sustained improvements in the quality of care and a stronger focus on children's individual progress.

Staff benefit from a comprehensive training and development programme that is tailored to meet the specific needs of the children. Regular clinical input enhances staff's therapeutic understanding, and reflective discussions following training help embed learning into daily practice. As a result, staff are better equipped to meet children's complex needs, contributing to improved emotional well-being and greater stability for children.

Staff report feeling well supported by leaders, particularly in response to recent challenges. They describe increased morale and greater confidence in their roles. Professionals also speak positively about the care provided, noting that this has led to visible progress for children. While one professional highlighted a delay in a clinical assessment, this has since been completed.

Regular supervision and team meetings are used effectively to reflect on practice, assess risk and review children's progress. These sessions provide both support and appropriate challenge, helping to ensure that staff remain focused on achieving the best possible outcomes for children.

Significant renovations to the home have transformed the environment. Children now live in a warm, welcoming and personalised space that reflects their interests and achievements. Bedrooms have been redecorated according to each child's preferences, and hygiene standards are consistently maintained. Children's photos and

accomplishments are displayed, allowing the home to reflect the personalities and interests of those living there. These changes promote a sense of pride, ownership and belonging for the children.

## 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     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the name of the child;</p> <p>details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>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")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> | 27 July 2025 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <p>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.<br/>(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the provider ensuring that incident reports are recorded accurately and include details of all individuals involved, as well as any use of restraint. It also relates to the provider ensuring that any staff member involved in a restraint is spoken to within 48 hours of the measure being used.</p> |              |
| <p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; and</p> <p>are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the provider ensuring that children's records are accurate and that any actions taken in response to an incident are clearly recorded. It also relates to the registered person ensuring that records of discussions with children are clear and include an accurate description of their views, wishes and worries.</p>   | 27 July 2025 |

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they have a key role in seeking to develop the home's effective working relationships with relevant persons such as parents in engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met. These working relationships will also be key to success in delivering the care planning standard (Regulation 14). This specifically relates to the manager ensuring timely communication with parents, where appropriate, to ensure they are involved in their child's care planning. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.3)
- The registered person should ensure that staff take every step to make sure that individual children and young people are not subject to discrimination, marginalisation or bullying from their peers by virtue of their gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, disability or for any other reason. This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that children are educated about unkind behaviours and the impact of their actions on both themselves and their peers. The provider should also ensure that restorative work is carried out with children to support the maintenance of positive peer

relationships. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 36, paragraph 3.12)

- The registered person should ensure that children are supported to express themselves as individuals and are given an appropriate degree of freedom and choice in the day-to-day arrangements of their care. This specifically relates to children having freedom and access to their personal items, unless there is a clear and justifiable reason to restrict this. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.21)

## **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:** SC476270

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Cambian Childcare Limited

**Registered provider address:** 5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

**Responsible individual:** Deborah Robertson-Kesterton

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspectors

Nateisha Cardoza-Evans, Social Care Inspector  
Jenny Smith, Social Care Inspector

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