

SC476270

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a large private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to five children who may have emotional or social difficulties. The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024.

Three children were living at the home at the time of the inspection. All three children were present during the inspection and spoke with the inspector.

Inspection date: 19 November 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.

One child has moved into the home since the last inspection. The manager appropriately considered the risks and needs of the child moving into the home alongside the needs of the children already living there.

The manager is an ambitious and inspirational leader who has high aspirations for the children and the staff team. The manager and the responsible individual work as a team and have a strong presence in the home. Children are supported by a dedicated staff team. The manager and responsible individual are determined to implement additional support and resources to change the safeguarding culture in the home to ensure that children's safety and welfare are prioritised.

Children have experienced a period of instability as one child is struggling to understand and manage their emotions and behaviours positively. This has resulted in a child displaying behaviours which are harmful to themselves and others. Incidents of this nature occur daily, resulting in the use of restraint to keep children safe.

The quality of the incident records varies. Some records clearly identify de-escalation strategies used to support children, while others do not. Some incidents could have been avoided if staff had followed the de-escalation strategies set out in children's behaviour support plans.

The quality of the manager's review of safeguarding incidents varies. Some incidents have an analytical review which appropriately identifies and addresses poor practice. However, other reviews lack professional curiosity and do not identify or evaluate poor practice. This approach leaves children vulnerable to harm as poor practice is not promptly addressed to improve the care and support to children. Additionally, discussions following incidents with children and staff have been late or do not take place. This does not provide staff and children with a space for reflection, or to request any support required.

Managers fail to review all restraint practice effectively. For example, when children are restrained in their bedrooms, there is no evaluation of this practice to offer alternative strategies to reduce recurrence. This practice could contribute to children feeling vulnerable and unsafe in their bedrooms, which should be their safe space.

Leaders take action to provide additional support to the staff team. This enables staff to support children safely during this period of crisis. The manager uses team meetings as a place of reflection and learning. This provides contextualised safeguarding training to upskill staff to support children appropriately when they are feeling upset or angry. Leaders source support from professionals to help staff with strategies to enable them to provide individualised support to children. Training has

been provided to address the quality of recording. At the time of the visit, this support has not yet been effective in managing the crisis.

Managers have discussions with the children's placing authorities to share their concerns. Safety planning and multi-agency meetings take place. Managers have delayed increasing the staffing ratio to support children when in crisis. This delay has had a significant impact on all children's safety and welfare. Staff morale and confidence have been affected by managing incidents daily. Additional staffing was implemented on the day of the visit alongside other safety measures to support the child during this period.

There has been significant damage to the home environment daily during behavioural incidents. Managers ensure that repairs are addressed promptly. Ongoing damage has resulted in a bare environment that lacks warmth and the atmosphere of a home where children live. The ongoing incidents and the damage to the environment undermine children's sense of safety and stability. Consequently, the progress that children make is affected.

Prompt action is generally taken when children raise concerns. This ensures that children's immediate safety is prioritised. However, on one occasion, there was a delay in notifying the local authority designated officer. This led to a delay in the child's social worker speaking to the child to enable them to share their views with someone independent of the home. This practice does not align with the home's policy and could leave children feeling unsafe with staff whom they report caused them harm.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/04/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/05/2023	Full	Good
08/06/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/10/2021	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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vii)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that when children raise concerns, this is shared with the local authority designated officer promptly. Additionally, children must be given an opportunity to speak with their social worker promptly to share their concerns.	31 January 2025
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— 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")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and	31 January 2025

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(b)(i)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that staff and children are given the opportunity to share their views and experiences following the use of restrictive physical interventions within appropriate timescales. This also relates to managers ensuring appropriate evaluation of restraints in children's bedrooms to offer alternative strategies to avoid this happening.	
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)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that leaders and managers review incidents and address unsafe practice promptly.	31 January 2025
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—	31 January 2025

meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that the home environment is designed to meet the needs of the children living in the home.	
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Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC476270

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: Deborah Robertson-Kesterton

Registered manager: Chloe Asbury

Inspector

Nateisha Cardoza-Evans, Social Care Inspector

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