

SC476270

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

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 aged up to 17 years. Children are likely to have emotional and behavioural difficulties and may have experienced trauma.

There has been no registered manager since December 2019. Managers have been in post since this time but have resigned without registering with Ofsted. The current manager has yet to submit their application to register.

Inspection date: 27 July 2022

Date of last inspection: 8 June 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

At this inspection, we identified serious concerns in relation to the care and protection of children at this home. As a result, one compliance notice was issued under regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard).

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

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

Inspectors have 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 identified the following serious concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection:

- safeguarding arrangements in the home are not always effective
- some staff do not have the skills, experience or knowledge to consistently meet the children's needs
- management oversight and monitoring of the home are inadequate
- leaders have not taken sufficient action to address requirements made at previous inspections
- the home has not had a registered manager since December 2019.

The care of children

Not having a consistent manager has meant that the monitoring and oversight of the home have been poor. This has resulted in several shortfalls which have had an impact on children's progress and day-to-day experiences at the home. As a result, Ofsted has issued a compliance notice under regulation 13.

Since the last inspection, one child has left the home due to a serious safeguarding concern. No new children have moved to the home. There were two children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The inexperienced staff team does not always receive clear guidance and support from managers. As a result, staff are not always successful in managing children's behaviours or supporting children to manage their emotions. This has contributed to a deterioration in children's behaviour, and, for some children, a disengagement from education and activity clubs. However, after what has been a turbulent period for the children, the home has been more settled recently.

At the time of this inspection, children were much more settled. They appear happy and are engaging with staff and resuming their usual activities. Staff have planned a holiday for the children, which both children say they are looking forward to. As a result, children are now beginning to rebuild their relationships with staff and enjoying things as other children do.

The safety of children

Behaviour management plans are not regularly reviewed or updated with new or emerging risks. Furthermore, these plans contain limited detail as to the action staff should take to reduce risks to children. This means that staff are not given the required guidance to manage children's behaviours and keep them safe.

Staff's inability to manage children's behaviours has resulted in children causing significant damage to the home. Steps have been taken to fix this damage; however, this has yet to be concluded.

Staff have had to use physical interventions to keep children safe. However, when such measures of control are used, managers have not always reviewed the records related to these incidents or ensured that children and staff have had an opportunity to have a debrief. This means that there are missed opportunities to review staff practice and identify improvements.

Managers have not taken action to address the poor quality of staff's recording of incidents. This means that it is not always clear what may have triggered an incident or what actions staff have taken to prevent an incident from escalating. As a result, managers and staff have been unable to identify and reflect on patterns and trends to help reduce future incidents.

Children have gone missing from the home. However, staff have followed children's missing-from-home protocols. Staff remained in communication with the relevant professionals and searched areas known to be used by children. This ensures that children return to the home promptly.

At times, children have used threats and intimidation towards each other. Staff have not always recorded these incidents or the actions that they have taken to reduce these incidents. As a result, managers do not understand the extent of the concern and/or the effectiveness of staff's response.

Children have been allowed to watch television programmes that are not appropriate for their age or maturity. This is because staff are not able to identify and implement appropriate boundaries for children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Since the last inspection, the previous manager has left and a new manager has been appointed. The new manager intends to apply to Ofsted to be registered. The absence of a permanent manager has been a long-standing issue and the home has been without a registered manager since December 2019.

The new manager has only been in post for a few weeks, but she has begun to make some positive changes at the home. This includes the introduction of monitoring systems to review the care provided to children. The ability of the manager to bring about sustained changes is not yet known. The manager recognises that there are still widespread shortfalls in the quality of care currently being provided.

Limited progress has been made in meeting the requirements raised at the last inspection. As a result, all the requirements have been restated. In addition, two new requirements have been raised.

At the previous inspection, it was identified that managers had not fully considered the needs of the last child who moved into the home. Managers have still not taken steps to rectify this shortfall. This does not demonstrate effective leadership.

Staff have completed training to help them to care for the children living at the home. However, the learning from this training has not fully equipped staff with the necessary knowledge or skills to provide children with the care and support they need.

Managers do not always notify Ofsted when serious incidents occur at the home. This means that the regulator is not able to have full oversight of what is happening at the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/06/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/10/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/07/2021	Full	Inadequate
19/12/2019	Full	Outstanding

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; 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; and seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)(d)) This specifically relates to the registered person working with other professionals where more specialist input may be needed for children and promoting and advocating with other professionals where needed to engage them in progressing children's care plans.	11 September 2022
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults.	11 September 2022

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(xiii)) This specifically relates to ensuring that any incidents of bullying are recorded and that staff take action to reduce incidents of bullying and intimidation.	
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; 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; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child’s health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(vii)(d)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that there are clear plans in place to help staff manage risks to children, and that staff follow safeguarding procedures and understand what these are.	11 September 2022

The registered person must also ensure that the home suits the needs of the children living in the home and that any damage is repaired. This is restated from the last inspection.	
*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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(h)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that: staff working at the home are suitably experienced, skilled and knowledgeable to meet the needs of the children; there are effective management systems in place to undertake robust audits and monitoring within the home; that leaders and managers understand the quality of care provided to children and take swift action to address shortfalls. This is restated from the last inspection.	11 September 2022
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.	11 September 2022

(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that the home has a registered manager through meeting requirements specified in regulation 28 relating to fitness of manager for registration as required by section 11 of the Care Standards Act 2000. This is restated from the last inspection.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home’s statement of purpose; that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that they have clearly considered the different needs of all the children when considering moving new children into the home and how they can meet those needs. This is restated from the last inspection.	11 September 2022
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.	11 September 2022

The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls two years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual— does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b)) The registered person must ensure that staff acquire their level 3 qualification within the required timescales. This is restated from the last inspection.	
The registered person must ensure that— 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— the name of the child; details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used;	11 September 2022

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; 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 has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within five 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. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that: there is management oversight of incidents; children are given debriefs by an independent person after incidents; and that the authorised person offers staff debriefs after incidents within the required timescales. This is restated from the last inspection.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or	11 September 2022

there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.
(Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))

This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that Ofsted is notified promptly.

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour, and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out. This is restated from the last inspection. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC476270

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: John Ryan

Registered manager: Katie Pearce

Inspector

Debbie Bond, Social Care Inspector

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