

SC476289

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It provides care for children who have suffered early life trauma. The children may have emotional and social difficulties.

There is an experienced and registered manager leading this home.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 October 2022

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: 16 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/11/2021	Full	Good
07/01/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/08/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/03/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

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

Children do not benefit from a well-decorated home. In recent months, there has been considerable damage to the home, some of which is still evident. Managers have persistently requested that the organisation carries out repairs. However, there have been delays in undertaking the work required. Children's bedding presented as tired and worn. One child's bed was broken in places. These issues were rectified by the manager. The current condition of the home has the potential to prevent children from taking pride in their home and could affect their self-esteem.

Children say they are happy, despite the shortfalls in the physical condition of the home. They have good relationships with staff, frequently sharing hugs, humour and words of affection. Children have interests such as reading, swimming and baking. These are encouraged by the manager and staff. This helps children to build their confidence and master new skills.

Children are in good physical health. They are supported to attend routine medical appointments. The manager and staff ensure that children's emotional health needs are met. This is achieved through reflective practice and team around the child meetings led by the in-house clinical team. As such, a trauma-informed approach is maintained within the children's care plans.

The manager and staff ensure that children attend school. When children find this difficult, the manager and staff implement bespoke timetables to help children learn at a pace that suits them. The manager works closely with schools to increase their understanding of children's needs. This enables them to provide children with appropriate support and help children manage the school day. The staff encourage children to complete schoolwork at home, which includes their own research projects. As a result, children increase their knowledge and capacity for learning.

The manager and staff have established good routines for the children to see the people who are important to them. This may involve travelling long distances. Staff are committed to fulfilling these arrangements, which means children maintain a sense of belonging in their families. One child, who had been fearful of seeing his brother, is now able to see him regularly. This achievement is due to the support provided by staff to help him make progress. He has also had a birthday party at the home with friends from his school. This has enabled the child to build new relationships, improve his quality of life and ensures that he maintains his sense of identity.

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

The safeguarding arrangements for children are not yet fully effective. There have been three incidents when risks to children have not been properly assessed. This has put children at increased risk. For example, on one occasion, staff did not seek timely medical advice for a child's injury. As such, there was a delay in getting the medical attention the child needed. The manager informed the relevant safeguarding agencies, and there are ongoing investigations into these incidents. Leaders and managers recognise that further work is required with the staff to ensure that children are always kept safe.

Staff have been required to manage several incidents of challenging behaviour from children. The manager has provided training, and staff receive additional support from the clinical team to help them manage the children's behaviour. Overall, this has been effective. The physical restraint of children is only used when other interventions have been exhausted. The manager has oversight of incidents and addresses shortfalls to ensure that safe practice is maintained.

Children have made several allegations about members of staff following incidents. These allegations are often withdrawn soon afterwards. The manager ensures that all allegations are investigated thoroughly. She involves relevant external professionals. This ensures that there is transparency of practice. Direct work is being undertaken with children and staff to increase their understanding of why allegations are happening. Consequently, children have started to communicate their feelings of distress in healthier ways.

If children go missing from care, the manager and staff respond well. This is a particular issue for one child. The staff are proactive in searching for the child, and they ensure all relevant external agencies are informed. This ensures that the child returns home safely. Return home interviews are carried out, which means that important information can be gathered about missing-from-care incidents and used to assess the potential risk of harm. The manager is working with external professionals to find strategies to reduce the number of times the child goes missing from care.

Children have trusting relationships with the manager and staff. This has been particularly important for one child, who has been able to talk about significant past experiences. As a result, she has been able to get help and support to process some painful and distressing events.

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

Leaders and managers know the children well. The children have confidence in the manager, who has invested high levels of time and energy into the home. The children often approach her for hugs and affection, which she readily provides. This helps children to feel safe and secure.

The manager has experienced several pressures in recent months. These have included staff recruitment and retention, maintaining the physical environment of the home and managing staff performance. Senior managers are aware of the impact of these issues and have begun to put additional measures in place to support the manager. The responsible individual is spending more time at the home to support the manager until these issues have been resolved.

There has been considerable staff turnover since the last inspection. The manager has conducted a thorough analysis to understand the underlying reasons for this. She is committed to maintaining a stable team which is reflected a comprehensive retention plan. The manager has now recruited staff and the team is almost to a full complement. However, some staff are not experienced in the sector. They are completing the relevant training to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. There is good support from the clinical team for those who are new to caring for children who have experienced trauma.

The staff are positive about the manager. They say she is supportive and listens to their views. The manager provides regular supervision, which staff find helpful. The manager provides praise and support where appropriate. She is also able to challenge staff when there are issues regarding performance and conduct.

Leaders and managers have systems in place to maintain oversight of the home. The manager completes monthly audits and 'golden hour' checks. The manager is addressing shortfalls in practice. However, some staff have made poor decisions without her knowledge. On one occasion, this led to a child coming to harm. The manager took decisive and effective action in response. However, she recognises there is more long-term work to do to minimise the risk of staff acting outside of agreed care practices.

The manager has good relationships with external professional agencies. She is a strong advocate for children, and she has been influential in decision-making about their lives. One child has successfully moved on to a foster placement, which is a positive outcome for him. Following a long period of living at the home another child has been able to move nearer to her family. This was due to the work of the manager collaborating with an external advocate on behalf of the child. External professionals report good communication and sharing of information. They say the home does not give up on children when they are going through difficult times. This gives children the stability they need when they are at their most vulnerable.

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 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— 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 provider carrying out repairs and redecorating the home in areas which are damaged or have become outdated.	1 November 2022
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— take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vi)(b))	1 November 2022

This specifically relates to ensuring that staff make sure that children receive medical attention at the point it is needed and follow children's care plans and risk assessments when making decisions about their care.	
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 work as a team where appropriate. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)) This specifically relates to making sure that the staff communicate verbally and in writing with each other and the manager to ensure consistent and safe care of children.	1 November 2022

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: SC476289

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Ltd

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

Responsible individual: John Ryan

Registered manager: Deborah Robertson-Kesterton

Inspector

Laura Walker, Social Care Inspector

Linda Mason, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022