

SC476289

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care for up to four children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, four children between the ages of five and 10 years were being cared for in the home.

There is a registered manager.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 1 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/08/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/10/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/11/2021	Full	Good
07/01/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is furnished to provide a welcoming and comfortable family home that is suitable for the ages of the children. The kitchen and the bathroom have been refurbished to a good standard. The creation of a messy paint playroom is a success with the children.

Children's bedrooms are personalised and decorated creatively to suit their individual tastes and interests. They are well furnished and provide attractive personal spaces for children. One child said that they like their television in their bedroom as they enjoy playing on their games console.

The home provides lots of space for children to play and socialise. Attention has been paid to providing children with quiet spaces. There is a large, enclosed garden to the rear of the home, which provides ample space for children to play. This is maintained to a good standard.

Professionals said that children have told them they like living in the home. One said how they were impressed with the support provided for a child moving into the home. They particularly liked the welcome message written on a wall chalkboard in the child's bedroom from the children and staff. Managers and staff ensure that children living in the home are well prepared in advance for new children moving in. Children present new children with a small welcome gift. This promotes positive starts to relationships between children.

Managers and staff know the children well. They use innovative methods to communicate with them and to help them understand and participate in their daily routines. Examples of this are the use of symbols and a clock that has been adapted to show what happens at different times of the day. These visual aids help children to know what to expect from their routine.

Staff promote children's identity and culture, taking account of their age and stage of development. This includes everyday activities to expand their understanding of the wider world. Staff use their knowledge of children and their own diverse backgrounds to provide nurture and care that meet children's individual needs. One child is said to respond positively to a member of staff singing a nursery rhyme in the child's language when settling to bed.

Children are in good health and are provided with a range of enjoyable activities that promote their physical health and well-being. This includes activities such as bike riding, woodland walks, going to parks and playing in the garden.

Managers and staff ensure that children receive the support they need for their emotional and psychological well-being. They have access to clinical support, and managers ensure that external mental health services are accessed where required.

Children are supported to access and engage with their education. There are good arrangements to help children who need a combination of mainstream and alternative education. The manager has been and continues to be very proactive in advocating and challenging the local authority for one child who has been out of education for a significant period. During this time, she has ensured that staff support the child to undertake work set by the school. This is supplemented with extra-curricular activities.

Where appropriate, children are supported to maintain their relationships with their families. There has been successful planning and progress made for one child for their reintroduction to a parent they have not seen for a prolonged period.

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

Staff were observed to be affectionate and playful in their care of the children. They speak positively about them and demonstrate a good understanding of their individual backgrounds and needs. Children were observed to interact positively and approach staff for support and comfort.

There are good systems in place to ensure that children can express their wishes, views and feelings. A professional said, 'I think they capture the voice, wishes and feelings of the young people very well.' Staff are creative to ensure that children are helped to communicate according to their age and understanding. Children are supported to use an app to share their wishes and feelings. This also supports children to prepare for visits from their social workers and for the reviews of their care plans.

Key professionals said that children are receiving care that meets their needs and they are making progress. One professional described communication and partnership work with managers and staff as 'brilliant' and said that they are responsive and provide detailed updates about the children.

There are robust individual risk assessments in place for all children, which are regularly reviewed. However, the need for all children to have their bedroom door alarms activated has been generalised. This has resulted in alarms being activated when not required for all children. This was acknowledged by the manager, who has agreed to reassess and rectify this measure.

Due to the ages of the children, they require close supervision. As a result, the children do not go missing from home and are not engaging in any antisocial behaviours.

Managers and staff actively promote children's positive behaviour by providing a range of activities they enjoy. This is also achieved through praise and rewards. Children are provided with rewards through a gift selection box. This proves successful with younger children who are unable to manage a deferred reward.

When positive reinforcement and distraction methods are unsuccessful and staff use physical intervention to support children, this is used appropriately, proportionately and considers the stature of the child. Children and staff are provided with debriefs and there is clear management oversight.

The manager has good links with local authority staff and key safeguarding agencies, who report good communication and professional relationships that are effective in keeping children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has high expectations of herself and her team. She is very ambitious for the children, staff and the development of the home. She is supported by an effective and equally committed deputy. As a result, children are making good progress with improved outcomes. Staff said that they enjoy working at the home and feel valued and supported.

Managers know the children well and were observed to interact positively with them. They ensure that staff are provided with effective support and the training they require to meet the needs of the children. Staff said that they receive regular good-quality supervision. Team meetings are held monthly and provide information and support. The manager has developed good systems to support practice learning. This ensures the sharing of management information with staff, with the aim to improve practice. Staff speak positively about the managers and say that they are approachable, supportive and good leaders.

There are good working relationships with professionals and parents. Professionals said that communication and participation in the team around the child are effective and productive. The manager ensures that communication and information are provided in a timely manner. One professional said that she would have no hesitation in placing another child in the home.

The manager said that she has great support from the deputy, staff and senior leaders. She also has access to a group of other managers with whom she can share practice ideas and obtain support. Arrangements are in place for the manager to receive regular supervision and appraisals from the responsible individual. The manager said that she has a good level of support and can seek support outside formal meetings with her manager.

The responsible individual expressed that the manager is confident and very ambitious for the development of the home to ensure positive outcomes for children.

The manager and deputy are organised and have a good working relationship which complements their strengths. They have robust systems in place to maintain a good oversight of the home. They have worked hard to improve the physical environment and have been successful in providing a cosy, comfortable and safe home for children.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home and make any modifications to the environment of the home are only made to safeguard the child's welfare. This relates to the generalised use of alarms on children's bedroom doors. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 13.10)

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 Limited

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

Responsible individual: Deborah Robertson-Kesterton

Registered manager: Hannah Stevenson

Inspector

Angela Duffus-Palmer, Social Care Inspector

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