

SC476289

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 private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home is led by an experienced and registered manager.

Inspection date: 28 March 2023

Date of last inspection: 4 October 2022

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.

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 did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

Children are making progress. They are settled and staff keep them safe. Overall, children and staff have positive relationships and children said that they are happy living in this home.

Some basic care needs for children have not always been met. For example, a child went for an overnight stay with family and was not provided with a toothbrush or other necessities. This led to a concern being raised by the child's social worker. The manager has taken steps to ensure that this does not happen again. Another child had a medical appointment and assessment delayed because staff failed to send the relevant paperwork. These documents were subsequently found in a staff member's work tray. This has led to an unnecessary delay in the child receiving medical oversight.

All the children have education provision. However, one child's education arrangements change regularly. The child is not receiving formal education and so the focus is on developing the child's confidence through nurture and a limited timetable aimed at the child's pace. The manager attends regular meetings with school and adjusts the plan when all professionals involved and the child feel it is right to do so.

Children are supported to engage in activities at home and in the community. They are helped to stay in touch with people who are important to them. One child's time with their family has led to regular overnight stays, which are positive and help the child to maintain their identity and sustain these important relationships.

There have been complaints from a family member about a child's care. The manager has investigated these complaints and taken the appropriate action in response.

The safety of children

Since the last inspection, the manager has undertaken work with staff to support improvements in approaches to managing children's risk and behaviour. These new systems are taking time to become embedded in staff practice but, recently, there has been a reduction in incidents and allegations against staff.

Overall, children's individual risk assessments are sufficiently detailed and provide clarity to assist staff practice. However, the risk assessments do not always contain known and current concerns. Some known risks have not been evaluated effectively. Consequently, in these instances, staff do not have strategies or guidance on

managing risks. For example, one child who is known to harm themselves does not have a risk assessment that includes how staff monitor the child's health following an incident of self-harm. Not all staff have read updated risk assessments, which could lead to inconsistency in care practice or concerns not being appropriately responded to.

Staff do not consistently respond to concerns over children's use of mobile devices and the internet. For example, one child had an app on their device that was not age-appropriate. Staff had not taken appropriate action in response and had not been adequately supervising the child online. This does not protect children from harm they may be exposed to when accessing the internet.

Some language used in reports and assessments is judgemental at times. This language does not accurately reflect the care shown to the children by staff and could impact on children in the future were they to read these descriptions of them.

The manager has investigated a whistle-blower complaint and taken the appropriate action in response. As a result, some changes have been made in the running of the home and there has been some reflection on the working practices of staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Since the last inspection, the manager has taken some steps to drive improvements in the home. These are not yet fully embedded. The requirements from the last inspection have been met. However, further shortfalls have been identified and so two statutory requirements have been reset.

At times, the manager does not have sufficient oversight of what has been happening in the home. There has been, at times, a lack of information sharing and poor communication within the team. Staff do not always share or discuss information with the manager. There have been occasions when the manager has not been aware of events until other information emerges later through complaints, emails or team meetings. This prevents the manager from having a good understanding of what is happening in the home and the care being provided to children.

The manager has not used internal monitoring systems to good effect in ensuring that children's plans are individual to them and contain the relevant information. The manager has allocated tasks and responsibilities to staff. However, there is not a system in place to ensure that these tasks have been completed within the required timescales. This means that some information is often not up to date or accurate.

Not all staff have completed the specific training that would support them to develop their knowledge and understanding of children's needs. Staff do not have regular professional supervision in line with the organisation's policy or the home's statement of purpose. This minimises opportunities for reflection and the development of practice.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/10/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/11/2021	Full	Good
07/01/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/08/2019	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, 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— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; provide to children personal items that are appropriate for their age and understanding. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(iv)(viii)) This specifically relates to children being given items and equipment to meet their personal needs.	1 June 2023
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;	1 June 2023

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)(i)(b))

In particular, the responsible individual should ensure that risk assessments set out staff responsibilities following incidents of children harming themselves. Additionally, ensure that staff safeguard children who use the internet and social media.

Recommendations

- The registered person should lead and manage a home in a way that delivers the ethos, outcomes and approach set out in the home's statement of purpose. They are responsible for leading a team that provides high-quality care for all children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.4)
- The registered person must have systems in place to ensure that all staff receive supervision of their practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that staff record information in a non-stigmatising way and in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC476289

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Lorna Fearon

Registered manager: Deborah Robertson-Kesterton

Inspector

Sarah Orriss, Social Care Inspector

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