

SC476326

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It provides care for up to five children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home's manager has been in post since January 2022 and is yet to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor, and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 23 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

At the last interim inspection, the home was judged to have declined in effectiveness. Two compliance notices were issued under regulation 13 and 32. The home also had a notice restricting accommodation. At this inspection, the inspector found that the provider had not taken sufficient action to meet all aspects of the compliance notices and as a result these have been reissued. A further compliance

notice was issued under regulation 12. The notice restricting accommodation, which was issued on 25 March 2022, remains in place.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/03/2022	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
23/06/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/01/2020	Full	Good
12/03/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

At the time of the inspection, there were only two children living at the home. Children have experienced a number of changes in the staff team. For both children, none of the members of staff caring for them when they moved into the home remain working there. One child has experienced multiple changes in the staff looking after them. As a result, children are not able to form long-lasting, positive relationships with those caring for them.

Staff have not developed comprehensive plans that will provide structure and routine to children. In addition, children's targets are broad and there is insufficient guidance informing staff about how they help children meet those targets. Staff do not regularly review children's progress and children's plans do not contain sufficient detail to show the child's journey. This means that staff have not provided sufficient support to the children. As a result, the progress children have made since moving to the home is limited.

Children are encouraged to attend education and those who struggle with attendance are helped by staff with home study. However, the constant change in staff has caused one child to become anxious when someone new takes him to school. This has the potential to disrupt his education through lack of attendance or anxiety on arrival.

Staff have not prioritised children's health. Staff have not made sure that children's health documents are up to date with immunisations, or when appointments have been attended. Staff have not made follow-up appointments as advised by medical professionals. As a result, children's health may deteriorate.

Staff help children to stay connected with their families. However, on occasions, staff have not supported children to stay connected with their families or important people, as agreed in their plans. This has meant that there have been long gaps between children being able to see or speak to their families or people who are important to them.

Staff interact well with children. The inspector observed lovely interactions between staff and children. Staff were nurturing in their approach and children told the inspector that they liked the staff.

Children are helped to access the local community. Children go swimming, to the local trampoline park, the cinema and trips into the countryside. These activities provide children with opportunities to try new things which they may have not had the opportunity to do before.

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

Managers do not report concerns about children's welfare promptly or accurately to children's placing authorities or the local authority designated officer. On one occasion, the manager delayed reporting a concern for three days. This prevents safeguarding agencies from taking prompt action to protect children and leaves children at risk of harm.

Staff have not developed rigorous risk management plans for children. These plans are of poor quality and do not include important information about the full range of risks posed to and by children. For example, there was not a risk management plan or a review of the fire risk assessment for a child who is known to barricade themselves in rooms. For another child, information relating to the risk of them pulling on the car handbrake when travelling in the car was missing from their risk assessment. In addition, there was no information informing staff of how to mitigate this risk. These omissions leave staff without essential information to help them keep children safe.

Children's behaviour can, on occasions, mean that staff need to use physical intervention to keep children safe. However, following an intervention, not all children and staff have an opportunity to have a debrief. Despite requests from one child's social worker, staff have not always sent a copy of the report informing them of the intervention. This does not give those involved in the physical intervention or those involved in the care of the child opportunities to reflect, raise concerns or have oversight of practice within the home.

Managers have not ensured that staff are recruited using safe recruitment practices. One employee has commenced work at the home prior to safer recruitment processes being finalised. Managers had not verified all of the person's references and the reasons why the employee had left previous employment involving working with vulnerable adults or children. Poor safe recruitment practice leaves children vulnerable to care from unsuitable adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers have failed to provide consistent care for children. Poor recruitment and retention of staff have resulted in there not being enough permanent staff to work with the children and the home having to rely on staff from other homes within the organisation to care for the children.

Due to significant shortfalls and there not being enough staff to care for the children safely, leaders and managers made the difficult decision to serve immediate notice on children living at the home. Children that were living at the home left in the days following the inspection.

Management oversight and monitoring of the home are inadequate. Managers have not identified or rectified shortfalls in the internal care planning for children, gaps in

children's records or failures in staff's practice. This compromises children's safety and the quality of care that they receive.

Managers have retrospectively reviewed one child's impact risk assessment. However, this does not clearly show the impact the child would have on children already living at the home or vice versa. This lack of assessment and planning means that children may not be well matched and pose a risk to each other.

The frequency of staff's supervision has improved. Managers have also implemented personal development plans and improvement plans to make sure that staff undertake and complete the relevant qualifications within the required timescales.

Managers have not taken sufficient action to meet all aspects of the compliance notices issued at the last inspection in relation to the leadership and management of the home and the safe recruitment of staff. As a result, these have been reissued. Due to shortfalls in safeguarding practice, a further compliance notice was issued in respect of regulation 12. The notice restricting accommodation was not lifted due to the failings found at this inspection and the potential risks to children.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)) This specifically relates to children's health records being kept up to date with immunisations and appointments attended. That children are helped to attend their appointments and follow-up appointments are made and attended.	12 June 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—	12 June 2022

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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)) This specifically relates to leaders, managers and staff fully understanding the whistle-blowing procedures and that they respond promptly to safeguarding concerns. In addition, that full and accurate information is shared with other professionals. Also, that all risks for children are fully assessed, with clear guidance, strategies and advice for staff to respond to and reduce the risk of harm to children.	
* 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 the home has sufficient staff to provide care for 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)(d)(h)) This specifically relates to having a sufficient number of qualified competent staff employed in the home to care for the number of children the home is registered for. In addition, that managers’ monitoring systems are robust and	12 June 2022

action is taken to promptly address shortfalls in the quality of care.	
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 arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home; that each child’s relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(ii)(c)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that children’s transitions into the home are planned effectively. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	12 June 2022
* The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety. The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(d)) This specifically relates to the managers ensuring that all references are verified and the reason why a worker left their previous employment involving work with vulnerable adults or children is explored.	12 June 2022
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—	12 June 2022

details of the child's behaviour leading to 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 effectiveness and any consequences of the use 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. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(iv)(v)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that recording of physical interventions is clear and there are no omissions in recording. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	
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* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: SC476326

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: Post vacant

Inspector

Debbie Bond, Social Care Inspector

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