

1236620

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

The home can provide care for up to four children and young people who have social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home is part of a large private organisation and the company employs its own clinical team. This resource is shared between this home and two other homes within the organisation

Visit dates: 10 to 11 September 2020

Previous inspection date: 10 July 2019

Previous inspection judgement: Good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We identified no serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

Young people move into the home in a well-planned manner. Where possible, young people visit the home, and creative measures are used for those young people who cannot visit, such as virtual tours.

Young people have positive and trusting relationships with staff who know them very well. Support and behaviour plans are well written and help staff to understand the complex needs of the young people. Because of consistent and risk-assessed boundaries and responses, there is a reduction in young people engaging in risk-taking behaviours.

All young people engage well with learning. Creative learning opportunities during the COVID-19 restrictions enabled all young people to continue with learning. Because of this, young people have continued to make progress.

Young people's health needs and progress are captured well across a range of personalised records.

The safety of children

Staff understand how to help young people to keep safe. Comprehensive and regularly reviewed risk assessments provide staff with guidance on how to support and manage young people's complex behaviours.

Staff are experienced in supporting young people when they are upset and worried. Training equips the staff to de-escalate potentially challenging situations. The skill set of the staff team is such that there has been no use of physical intervention.

Since the previous inspection in July 2019, there have been incidents when young people have gone missing. However, leaders and managers have taken immediate action following each incident. They have introduced measures that have resulted in the reduction in the incidents of young people going missing. Training, reflective supervisions and conversations following each serious incident provide opportunities of learning for the staff and young people.

Records of allegations, complaints and safeguarding concerns are well kept. They provide a clear audit trail of action taken by the manager and staff to report and share concerns.

Leaders and managers

The registered manager is experienced and is capably supported by a deputy and a team of qualified and trained staff. She has led the home through a challenging period, including some staff changes, the COVID-19 restrictions and staff being challenged by the complex needs of the young people. That said, young people have been cared for and kept safe.

Routine and regular monitoring externally and internally takes place. The independent visitor provides monthly monitoring reports on the safety and well-being of the young people. Leaders and managers use this external scrutiny to inform the continued development of the home. However, the inspector found areas within these reports that would benefit from greater analysis and detail.

Consultation with young people about their care is a key strength of the home. Comprehensive records that are regularly reviewed and evaluated by the registered manager chart the progress the young people make from the day they move into the home.

Staff spoke warmly of the support they receive from both the registered manager and the deputy. Regular supervision and opportunities to critically reflect on practice help staff learn, feel valued and respected.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.24) In particular, ensure the report provided by the independent visitor provides sufficient overview of the safety and well-being of the young people.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1236620

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Registered provider address: Cambian Child Care Limited, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Victoria Elworthy

Registered manager: Lara Gorgulu

Inspector

Linda Bond, Social Care Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
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