

1159258

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a large private company. The home provides care and support for up to four children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. Three children were being cared for at the time of this inspection.

The registered manager post has been vacant since September 2020. A new manager has been appointed. She has not yet applied to be registered with Ofsted.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 31 July 2019 to carry out a full inspection. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 May 2021

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 31 July 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 31/07/2019 | Full | Good |
| 05/03/2019 | Interim | Declined in effectiveness |
| 10/07/2018 | Full | Good |
| 30/01/2018 | Interim | Sustained effectiveness |

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children from diverse backgrounds and with differing experiences of being cared for away from their families make good progress from their individual starting points.

Children experience care which is individualised to their needs. This promotes their identity and supports them to build self-confidence and resilience.

A stable and consistent staff team means that children are able to build relationships with staff and form positive attachments. When additional staff are needed, these are usually staff who have worked regularly at the home and are already known to children. This further promotes consistency of care.

Children have been well supported to understand the restrictions on their lives due to COVID-19. Children who were required to isolate, due to positive COVID-19 tests, were cared for by a small number of staff. Staff worked for extended periods of time to ensure that they were able to consistently support children. The children worked with staff in a collaborative and mature manner. This led to positive outcomes from a challenging situation.

Some children are not currently engaging with education. Staff remain persistent in their attempts to find activities which will help children to move back towards formal learning. There is good sharing of information between the home and children's education provisions. This means that their education is promoted and their emotional well-being is understood and addressed consistently.

Children's experiences of arriving at and leaving the home are generally positive. Staff remain in regular contact with one child who returned home to their family. The child's parent said, 'My child has come home a better person. Thank you for going the extra mile for us.' Another child who left the home wrote, 'You have fought battle after battle for me. You always stuck by me.'

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

Children are safeguarded effectively as a result of the care they experience. Staff use their assessments of risks to identify the progress of children and to address areas of concern. Where an identified risk is no longer relevant to a child, these risk management plans are removed from their day-to-day care planning and case records. This is a clear and concrete way of showing children the progress that they are making.

Incidents of bullying between children are not always recognised as bullying by staff, including the manager. Although this harmful behaviour between children is addressed by staff, the lack of acknowledgment and formal recording of these behaviours as bullying has the potential to make some children feel that their

experiences are not being taken seriously. Children who initiate bullying behaviours towards their peers are not always given clear messages about their impact on others.

Children are rarely restrained by staff. On the few occasions when this has happened, in the reporting period, this has been to safeguard children who may be placing themselves at risk of physical harm in the home. Physical interventions are minimal and proportionate. Recording of these interventions is clear, and children are encouraged to reflect on and comment on these records.

There have been two incidents of maladministration of medication. These incidents have both been quickly identified and medical advice sought. No children have been adversely affected by these errors. The manager and her deputy have swiftly put into place improved monitoring of medication administration, and staff have a clear process to follow. Staff have received further training and observations of their practice. As a result of these changes, the likelihood of further errors is reduced.

When children go missing from care, staff are proactive in their attempts to find them and ensure that they return home safely. Staff work to gain a good knowledge of the individual children's peer groups and preferred places to spend time. This knowledge helps staff to get children home as swiftly as possible. Recording of these incidents is detailed and clear. Information is shared in a timely manner with key people and agencies. However, the manager is not ensuring that local authorities provide each child with an independent return home interview. This is potentially a missed opportunity to gain more information which will help keep children safe in the community.

Sanctions are used proportionately in response to negative behaviours in the home and in the community. Children can see a clear link between their behaviour and the sanction that has been imposed. Alongside this, children are regularly rewarded for positive achievements. These rewards show children that staff are aware of and appreciate their achievements.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager post has been vacant since September 2020. A new permanent manager was appointed from within the organisation in November 2020. She has not yet applied to be registered with Ofsted.

The interim manager has no previous experience in the registered manager role. Since coming into post, she has demonstrated a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the home. She has implemented changes to the internal recording and sharing of information, which supports staff to have a more immediate and thorough understanding of the needs of children.

The interim manager is welcoming of external advice and scrutiny. She has worked well to address practice issues raised in the monthly visits from the independent

person. This openness to listening to and learning from others places the interim manager in a good position to further develop good practice in the home.

Staff are positive about the impact of the interim manager on the home and welcome her open approach. Monthly staff meetings support staff to share information and are an opportunity for the full staff team to reflect on the progress and experience of children. These meetings are well recorded and give staff a clear shared understanding of current issues and expectations on them as team members.

Since the interim manager came into post, there has been an improvement in the frequency of supervision for staff. As well as regular supervision meetings, single-subject meetings are held with staff when needed to provide them with support and challenge in relation to particular issues or incidents. On occasions, these focused meetings replace full supervision meetings. As a result, staff and managers are not having an opportunity to discuss in more depth a range of practice issues. In addition, supervisions are not child-centred. Staff are not receiving professional support and challenge from managers in supervision that help them to understand and promote the needs of children. Changes to the staffing structure of the home have not yet been reflected in an updated statement of purpose.

The home environment is generally good. The large size of the home means that children have a variety of places to spend time and involve themselves in a range of different activities. The home lacks decor which reflects the personal taste of the children. As a result, it does not give the impression of being a family home.

There is an established practice in the home to lock the door into the kitchen each night. The interim manager informed the inspector that this was used as additional security against potential intruders to the home. As result of this practice, children's liberty is restricted on a daily basis. This practice is not supporting children to have a normal home life.

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, The 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 |
|--|--------------|
| <p>The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if there is no registered manager in respect of the home. (Regulation 27 (1))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the manager applying for registration with Ofsted.</p> | 30 June 2021 |
| <p>The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))</p> | 30 June 2021 |
| <p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that the kitchen is not locked at night and concerns regarding the security of the premises are addressed appropriately.</p> | 31 May 2021 |

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| <p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ('the missing child policy') setting out—</p> <p>the steps taken, and to be taken, to prevent children from being absent without permission; and</p> <p>the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of persons working at the home, in relation to a child who is, or has been, so absent.</p> <p>Before implementing, or making an amendment which the registered person considers to be substantive to the missing child policy, the registered person must—</p> <p>consult, and take into account the views of each relevant person; and</p> <p>have regard to any relevant local authority or police protocols on missing children. (Regulation 34 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that local authorities provide an independent person to complete return home interviews for each child.</p> | <p>30 June 2021</p> |
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children's home staff make sure that individual children are not subject to bullying from their peers, that any incidents of bullying are clearly recorded as such and that all staff understand what constitutes bullying behaviour. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.12)
- The registered person should ensure that the home provides children with a nurturing and supportive environment that meets their needs. This will, in most cases, be a homely, domestic environment. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: 1159258

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: Asjad Mahmood

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Dawn Parton, Social Care Inspector

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