

# 1155780

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to five children. The home specialises in providing a 12-month therapeutic programme for children who are at risk of or subject to child sexual exploitation.

There is an interim manager in post who has submitted their application to become 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.

### Inspection dates: 23 to 24 June 2021

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 5 March 2020

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
05/03/2020	Full	Outstanding
21/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
06/12/2017	Full	Outstanding
01/08/2016	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

This home provides a consistent, safe and nurturing environment within which children thrive. The atmosphere in the home is calm, relaxed and has a vibrant family feel. The manager and staff have put in extensive effort to ensure that each room within the home is child-focused and, in places, the décor displays each child's personality. For example, children have decorated a 'cinema room' by drawing their own murals on the walls. As a result, children feel a strong sense of purpose and belonging.

Children experience extremely positive moves into the home. This is because staff provide them with a high level of individualised support. Before children move in, the manager goes out of his way to find out about the children's likes and dislikes. Staff use this information creatively to welcome children. For example, providing a 'well-being box', and finding out the child's favourite smell, such as lavender, and spraying this in their bedroom.'

The manager and staff are very passionate about forming positive relationships with children. This is because they understand that positive attachments are a protective factor for children. Staff go over and above to support children to keep in touch with people who are important to them. Staff are committed to supporting children to reconnect with their family members, who they may not have seen for some time. This is often because of the exploitation the children have experienced. One child had not seen their mother for four years. They now stay with their mother during the weekends in preparation for returning to live with her. As a result of staff commitment, children have a safe support network of people who they can trust when they move on from the home. This is exceptional practice that improves children's safety and well-being.

The manager and staff actively encourage togetherness. They display photos of children and staff around the home. Some of these photos are of staff when they were children. Staff use these photos to empathise with children. Staff talk to children about their own experiences as children. This creative practice means that children feel that staff understand them.

Given their starting points, children are making excellent progress in their education. Since living at the home children's attendance has dramatically improved. Children are making remarkable progress. They are all on track to achieve qualifications by the time they leave the home. One child is undertaking a work placement alongside working towards their GCSEs. Another child has a place at college, in preparation for them transitioning home. As a result of these achievements, children will have opportunities to succeed.

The manager and staff are excellent advocates for children. As a result, children receive the specialist support they need. One child is now having an assessment to see if they need extra support with their education. This is because the staff have relentlessly advocated for this to happen. All children have independent advocates. This is to ensure that they can talk to someone who is external to the home. Children have numerous opportunities to express their views and opinions and as a result, complaints do not occur.

Staff sensitively support children who experience traumatic events. The manager works closely with the in-house clinical team who provide therapeutic support. One child living in the home experienced a bereavement. The manager supported staff to understand how children process grief. Staff respond sensitively to help children process their thoughts and feelings safely. They do this in creative ways, such as releasing balloons with personal messages on them.

The manager and staff actively model positive behaviours and attitudes. They celebrate difference and inclusion. Children use an inclusion calendar as a guide to plan activities together. These activities celebrate different cultures and diversity. Together, children plan and budget their own meals which they eat with staff. This has involved growing their own vegetables and fruit in the garden. One child introduced other children to new foods. This enables all the children to learn about this child's culture. Children also design their own presentations for staff and children about diversity. As a result, children are confident and develop a positive sense of acceptance and tolerance.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

The safety of children is the manager's and staff's top priority. They are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. Children's risk assessments are innovative and thorough. They reflect risks and the strategies staff must follow to keep the children safe. The manager reviews and oversees all activity which takes place outside of the home. Risk assessments include maps. The manager plots on them where children can go, and any risks identified in the local or wider area. They link these risks to the home's very thorough location risk assessment. This helps staff to safely plan and structure activities by being mindful of any areas which may have a high level of crime, such as child sexual exploitation.

Online safety is fully embedded into the manager's and staff's practice. The manager ensures that all children and staff complete an online programme with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Together with staff, children arrange contracts for their mobile phone and internet use. Staff encourage children to identify their own expectations for these contracts. As a result, children successfully keep themselves safe when they are online or using their mobile phone.

Children living at the home do not go missing. This is exceptional given their starting points. For example, before moving into the home, one child went missing on a daily basis. They no longer go missing and are now in the final stages of their therapeutic

journey. The manager has strong links with the local police and the Philomena initiative. This ensures that vital information about children is quickly shared. This helps to locate children as soon as possible if they go missing.

Children write their own care plans which help them navigate their therapeutic journey. Staff support them to do so in line with the homes model of care. They do this by helping children identify goals. For example, trying a new hobby or budgeting their money. Children have an exceptional understanding of the model of care. They explain with enthusiasm the stage they are at and what needs to happen for them to move to the next stage. Staff support children to take calculated risks in line with their progress. For example, once they complete work about keeping safe, they may be able to go out without staff.

Children say they feel safe. However, they say they do not like the restrictions in place to keep them safe. One child said they do not like staff 'telling them what to do'. They also said that living in the home has 'got better as time has passed'. This is because staff work hard to help children to understand why the restrictions are in place. They praise and reward children for their achievements. Children understand the expectations for behaviour in the home. They illustrate this in the excellent relationships they have with their peers.

A trauma-informed approach underpins the general ethos of care in the home. The manager uses research to inform behaviour-management approaches and is a keen advocate for positive reinforcement. Therefore, sanctions are not used in the home. Each child has a book which staff use to record daily positive recognition. When children leave, they are able to keep the books. This is excellent practice and ensures that children are able to reflect on their positive experiences to inform their personal history and sense of identity.

Staff help children to recognise and respond to their feelings safely. They help children develop alternative strategies to regulate their feelings, such as the use of 'squidgy cubes' and 'fidget spinners'. They explore with children their preferred form of communication. Some children draw or write to staff to tell them how they are feeling. As a result, some children have reduced their self-harming behaviours.

Leaders and managers respond to allegations and any incidents immediately. If these do occur, staff prioritise the safety and well-being of children. Managers are thorough in their investigations. They are prompt in sharing any learning to inform staff practice. The manager liaises appropriately with external professionals such as social workers or the designated officer. This ensures that there is external scrutiny of safeguarding measures in the home.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The manager and deputy manager are inspirational, forward thinking and innovative. Their vision is to continue providing children with the outstanding care they receive. They work well together and strive to achieve positive outcomes for children.

The manager is passionate about helping staff to understand children's behaviour. In particular, how this links to their experiences of trauma. The manager believes this is critical for staff in their role. As a result, staff are empathetic in their approach and committed to the children they care for.

The manager ensures that staff receive training pertinent to children's needs. This is despite the challenges of COVID-19. Staff receive in-house coaching and senior staff members act as role models. Staff evidence their learning in their practice. They record this in their personal development files which the manager reviews regularly. This is excellent practice and ensures that children receive care from staff members who are continuously improving their practice.

Senior staff members use creative methods of support to embed reflective practice. For example, staff spoke about having debriefs which they call 'huddles'. These take place at the beginning and end of each shift. This allows staff to discuss how children are, and any concerns they may have, so that they can adapt their practice to provide individualised care to children.

The manager responds in the moment to ensure children receive the care they need. For example, when one child was anxious about attending their review, the manager held a group supervision with the staff team. They did a practical activity which helped staff to understand how the child was feeling. As a result, staff were able to empathise with this child. They successfully supported the child to attend the meeting and express their views.

Staff speak highly of the manager and have confidence in them and describe them as being very supportive. Staff have regular supervision with the manager. The manager complements supervision meetings with coaching sessions in-between. Group supervision also takes place which provides staff with time to reflect together. They also explore topics specific to their practice, such as positive conditioning.

Newer staff members said they could not ask for better support. There are notable improvements to the induction process. This is comprehensive and includes reflection on practice, policies, and procedures. The manager contacts new members of staff after every shift during their probation. This debrief encourages new staff to develop into reflective practitioners.

The manager has an in-depth understanding of the strengths and areas of improvement in the home. This is because they have an array of monitoring tools that assist them to review the quality of care. The manager works through any areas of weakness with staff, and he challenges any practice which is not in children's best interests. The manager also identifies good practice, and shares and celebrates this with the whole staff team. Staff encourage and motivate one another by recognising each other's achievements. As a result, the staff work well together and focus on achieving the best outcomes for children.

Leaders and managers track the progress of children during their time living in the home. They critically review and evaluate placements when children leave. An example of this was when a placement ended after a serious incident had occurred. The manager's review did not identify any significant shortfalls. However, it helped them to get a better understanding of the child's lived experience.

The manager and staff have excellent relationships with stakeholders. Children's professionals gave unanimously positive feedback about the home, and the care children receive. One social worker commented, 'They're fantastic. They have been intrinsic to [the child's] journey.'

## **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:** 1155780

**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:** Alex Hornby

**Registered manager:** Post Vacant

## Inspectors

Sarah Berry, Social Care Inspector

Natasha Skinner, Social Care Inspector

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