

1227060

Registered provider: Cambian Autism Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is in the grounds of a residential special school. Both the school and the home are owned and managed by a private company. It provides care for up to six children. On the 17 September 2021, Ofsted approved the organisations application to vary their conditions of registration. The variation reduced the number of children to six.

The children may be placed by various local authorities from across the United Kingdom. Their residential placements are for 38 or 52 weeks of the year. The school also caters for day pupils. The children may have learning disabilities and/or a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. They all have an education, health and care plan.

The registered manager is in day-to-day charge of the home. He registered with Ofsted in November 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 9 September 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit to review compliance notices. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 February 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 14 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

During the monitoring visit on 29 March 2021, Ofsted identified breaches in the leadership and management arrangements of this home. These failings were detrimental to children's safety, protection and welfare. Consequently, Ofsted issued two compliance notices under regulations 12 and 13.

Inspectors reviewed these compliance notices during a monitoring visit on 13 May 2021. They identified that the required steps within the compliance notices had not been met. These notices were reissued.

Ofsted carried out a further monitoring visit on 22 June 2021, Ofsted identified that leaders and managers had again failed to complete all the necessary steps required to meet the compliance notices. Ofsted had lost confidence in the safeguarding and protection of children, and in the leadership and management arrangements of the home. Ofsted had reasonable cause to believe that a person will or may be exposed to a risk of harm, and the decision was made to suspend the registration of the home.

Ofsted carried out a further monitoring visit on 3 August 2021. A tour of the site and discussions with the head of care confirmed that there were no children living in any of the houses that are linked to this registration. An action plan was in place to address the shortfalls found at the previous monitoring visits. Leaders and managers were monitoring the plan, and some progress had been made. Ofsted reissued one compliance notice under regulation 13.

A final monitoring visit took place on the 9 September 2021, where the final step in the compliance notice was reviewed and found to be met. The suspension notice ended on the 15 September 2021, allowing the organisation to admit children to the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/01/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
21/05/2019	Full	Good
29/01/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/11/2018	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Fundamental changes to the home are starting to impact positively on the children. The environment has been adapted to meet the needs of the children. The home is welcoming and a place where children can safely socialise.

Children who historically have struggled to go to school are now routinely attending. Children are achieving in education. Partnership working between the home and the school leads to the creation of individualised plans and tailored support for children. For example, a child was able to do their catering exam in the home's kitchen, and this removed the unpredictable distractions that can occur in school.

Children are leading a healthier lifestyle, which helps to improve their physical and mental health. Children attend routine health appointments. Although some children have the confidence to attend appointments independently, other children receive the support from staff or their parents. However, the information gained from the children's health appointments or assessments is not routinely recorded. This could lead to children having unmet health needs.

Children currently living in the home are matched to live together. They have similar qualities and abilities that encourage peer relationships. However, an error in the admissions process has meant that an 18-year-old has moved into the home with no clear transition plan to adult provision. Placement planning for children is not successfully concluded by the manager, who has failed to finalise all necessary records and consult with relevant professionals.

Staff provide the children with guidance and boundaries. Children are discouraged from spending extended periods of time on their own. The staff plan the children's day to include social time and going on activities, including attending community groups. This helps children to expand their social circles and to learn new skills. A parent said, 'My child now has the opportunity and desire to go on activities. [Child's name] is enjoying new experiences that we could not facilitate at home.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff understand that some children's behaviours are a form of communication and not an intentional action. De-escalation techniques equip the staff to recognise and respond to children's behaviours and risks. The manager's oversight of incident reports has led to continual improvements in staff care practices. This has reduced the need to use physical restraint to manage children's behaviours.

The children receive high levels of care and supervision from staff. This helps to keep them safe and reduces the risk of harm, including minimising opportunities for children to go missing from the home. Children do not go missing from this home. If children were to go missing from this home, prepared documentation enables a timely response from the police. However, missing-from-home protocols are not individualised in order to consider each child's vulnerabilities.

Risk assessments provide staff with strategies to support children, and staff recognise that children with disabilities have additional vulnerabilities. However, as children become adults, their risk assessment fails to identify all additional risks associated with turning 18 years of age and gaining greater independence. This potentially increases the risks to children's safety.

The home is settled, and the atmosphere is relaxed. However, internal door locks in some communal areas mean that staff can restrict the children's movement around the home. In addition, if children wanted to make a private phone call from within their home, there are no means to facilitate this. These measures are restrictive and unlawful.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager is in day-to-day charge of the home. Lessons have been learned from the previous failings, and the manager, in partnership with the senior leadership team, is taking positive steps to improve outcomes for children.

Staff's knowledge of care and practice is improving. Their attendance and involvement in an extensive training programme underpin a consistent practice. Although training is improving staff knowledge, some staff have yet to complete the necessary qualification for their role or do so within appropriate timescales. The manager has not taken effective action to address this.

The manager does not have complete oversight of all necessary records. As an organisation, some processes and records have become a centralised task, for example staff online training records. The manager is not monitoring these records, and therefore is not addressing any shortfalls to ensure that these do not impact on children.

The manager's internal and external monitoring systems provide opportunities for practice reflection and learning. The manager reviews the quality of care provided to children living in this home and how this impacts their outcomes. Although, the manager completed this six-monthly report, this was not received by Ofsted.

Children are supported by a stable team of staff. Although no permanent staff have been appointed, the recruitment of casual staff has continued. Safer recruitment processes for a casual staff member are not routinely followed. The manager has no oversight of the recruitment checks and failed to identify or address the shortfalls.

This means that the manager cannot confirm the suitability of casual staff to work with children.

Staff morale is good, and feedback from professionals and families is consistently positive. Staff report that they are supported by the manager through supervision. At the time of the inspection, there was no procedure or policy to ensure that casual staff received supervision. The manager does not have direct access to his staff supervision records, further limiting his oversight of staff practice.

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
<p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child is registered as a patient with a general medical practitioner and a registered dental practitioner; and</p> <p>that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(b)(c))</p> <p>This is carried over from the monitoring visits.</p>	8 April 2022
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(a))</p>	8 April 2022

<p>This regulation applies to a child who is looked after by a local authority.</p> <p>The registered person must co-operate with the child's placing authority in agreeing and signing the child's placement plan. (Regulation 17(1) (2))</p>	8 April 2022
<p>This regulation applies to a child who is not looked after by a local authority.</p> <p>The registered person must consult the child's placing authority when preparing the placement plan. (Regulation 18 (1) (6))</p>	8 April 2022
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.</p> <p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or</p> <p>in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))</p>	8 April 2022
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	8 April 2022

<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. (Regulation 36 (1)(a))</p>	<p>8 April 2022</p>
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Recommendations

- The registered provider should ensure that they provide children with access to a telephone that they can use privately (regulation 22(3)(a)). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.17).
- The registered provider should ensure that just as in a family home, children should be able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home (regulation 21(c)(i)). Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home, must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10).
- The registered provider should ensure that the generated regulation 45 report is sent to Ofsted and the placing local authority of all children in the home who are looked-after children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.3)
- The registered provider should ensure that where there is a possibility that a child will run away or go missing from the home, that their placement plan should include a strategy to minimise this risk. If the child is looked-after, their care plan (arranged by their placing authority) should include such a strategy. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.24).

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: 1227060

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Cambian Autism Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Samantha Campbell

Registered manager: Romuald Stysial

Inspector

Jennifer Fenlon, Social Care Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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