

1159868

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 provides care for up to three children who may have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. At the time of the inspection there were three children living here.

The home has been without a registered manager since September 2021. The manager in post has not swiftly submitted a complete application to register with Ofsted as required.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 April 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/or widespread failures that mean children are not protected, their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 6 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 06/07/2021 | Full | Requires improvement to be good |
| 20/04/2021 | Full | Inadequate |
| 05/12/2019 | Interim | Sustained effectiveness |
| 02/04/2019 | Full | Good |

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

The experiences of children in this home remain mixed due to ongoing concerns identified at several inspections regarding the inability of leaders and managers to sustain necessary improvements. There is an unacceptable delay in the manager applying to register with Ofsted. This lack of strong registered leadership and effective support from senior leaders means that actions required to develop the quality of care are not prioritised.

At the time of the inspection, there were three children living in the home. One child had recently moved into the home. Another child had returned to the home after a move to a new placement had failed. The third child has lived in the home for four years.

Of the three children, only one is in full-time education, with good attendance. Virtual education is being arranged as an interim measure for the child who has recently moved into the home. The third child had completed a 16-week course during this inspection period, as well as obtaining employment. However, both have now come to an end and further efforts by staff to motivate and engage the child have proved unsuccessful. The child is not currently in education or employment.

Planning for children to move into and out of the home is also mixed. Professionals told the inspector that when children move in or out of this home staff have worked flexibly and children have settled well. However, independence planning for one child has been too slow to prepare them effectively for adulthood. Plans are missing or lacking sufficient detail to ensure routine for the child and consistency across the staff team.

Children's health appointments are prioritised by staff. The inspector found that staff are creative in encouraging children to attend health appointments and ensuring they are up to date with their vaccinations.

The home lacks a homely feel. There are no photos or personal touches in the shared spaces outside the children's bedrooms. Children's bedrooms were also in a poor state of tidiness and cleanliness.

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

The safety of children in this home is seriously compromised. Leaders and managers do not have a clear plan about how to safely keep lighters in this home. This is significant as the property is thatched and there is a greater risk of fire. The inspector found one child had multiple lighters in their bedroom. Staff and managers were unaware of this situation, further demonstrating poor oversight and maintenance of children's bedrooms.

One child has had multiple incidents of going missing. While the child has a personalised plan for such occasions, staff do not follow this effectively. Leaders and managers have failed to review these incidents effectively to identify ways to reduce the incidents and increase safety.

Staff are challenged by one child's behaviour, and this has led to an unhelpful and unsafe dynamic within the home. Some staff feel unable to challenge or set boundaries for fear of the possible repercussions. This means that the staff are not always in control and children are not consistently helped to behave positively.

Children's records are of poor quality. Important information on how to care for children is missing and use of jargon or ambiguous language makes records unclear.

Children's memories and experiences in this home are not captured in a meaningful way. Staff have not taken enough action to ensure that important memorabilia is kept and stored safely.

Feedback from a parent was positive. They spoke highly of the team and recognised the efforts that staff have made for their child. They also felt that they had good communication with the staff and are kept well informed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There is no registered manager in this home. An appointed manager has been in day-to-day charge since September 2021. No complete application has yet been received to register with Ofsted. It is an offence to manage and operate a home without registration. Senior leaders have not taken enough action to ensure an application is submitted swiftly.

Shortfalls are evident in relation to the effective management and oversight of the home and the quality of care. Requirements have been made about these shortfalls at all of the last six inspections and monitoring visits, and have been subject to compliance notices in January 2021 and again in March 2021. Insufficient action has been taken by leaders and managers to embed changes to staff practice; improvements made are short-lived and have not been sustained. Two compliance notices have been issued because of the findings at this inspection.

When incidents have occurred, management oversight has been weak. Staff do not routinely receive debriefs and opportunities to reflect are missed. When managers have identified actions to take, these have lacked clarity and focus and have not been robust enough to bring about positive change and improve outcomes for children.

Following a significant incident when a child went missing, leaders and managers completed a thorough review to identify learning and sought to address the gaps through training. As part of this process, staff received a debrief and were appropriately challenged. However, this learning has not been applied to subsequent

incidents of children going missing. Ongoing oversight is insufficient, and leaders and managers have failed to recognise that practice has not improved and that protocols are still not followed. This lack of learning places children at continuing risk of harm.

The inspector found some mandatory staff training to be out of date for some staff, including the deputy manager. Leaders and managers monitoring had not identified this weakness.

Staff told the inspector that they enjoy working in this home and describe the staff team as a 'family', who work well together.

Repeated breaches of regulation have been identified at this inspection. These relate to the management of the home and the quality of care. In addition, new areas of concern were identified concerning, fire safety, missing from home and care planning. Ofsted will continue to monitor this home closely and undertake additional inspections.

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 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>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>protect and promote each child's welfare;</p> <p>treat each child with dignity and respect;</p> <p>provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background;</p> <p>help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult;</p> <p>provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably;</p> <p>provide to children personal items that are appropriate for their age and understanding; and</p> <p>make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which</p> | 3 June 2022 |

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| <p>give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice; and</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)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that children are provided with the appropriate level of care and guidance to prepare them safely for independence. Also, ensure that the home environment is made comfortable and reflects the children who live there.</p> | |
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies; and</p> | <p>3 June 2022</p> |

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that protocols are followed in response to episodes of children going missing, that staff show professional curiosity and that learning informs future responses.</p> | |
| <p>*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; and</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(e)(h))</p> <p>In particular, ensure robust management oversight of practice in the home, to improve children's experiences. Also, ensure staff receive debriefs and opportunities for reflection so learning can be applied.</p> | <p>3 June 2022</p> |
| <p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.</p> | <p>3 June 2022</p> |

| | |
|--|-------------|
| <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that arrangements are in place to—</p> <p>manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and</p> <p>plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority;</p> <p>that each child’s relevant plans are followed;</p> <p>that staff help each child to access and contribute to the records kept by the registered person in relation to the child. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(b)(ii) and (iii)(c)(f))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that children’s records contain sufficient detail for staff to follow and to support children according to their individual plans. Also, ensure children are supported to move from the home to independence in a well-timed and structured way.</p> | |
| <p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must—</p> <p>take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children’s home. (Regulation 25 (1)(a))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that risks assessments are reviewed in light of potential smoking in the house.</p> | 3 June 2022 |
| <p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment.</p> <p>(Regulation 8 (1)(2)(a)(ix))</p> | 3 June 2022 |

*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 looked after including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1159868

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: Nicola McClements

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Katie Ratcliffe, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022