

# 1257796

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private company. It provides care for up to 12 children with ongoing mental health needs and who may not be able to live in the community without continued support. There is a separately registered school on site. Inspectors only inspected the social care provision.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2018.

### Inspection dates: 13 and 14 December 2022

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>good</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 20 April 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/04/2021	Full	Good
31/07/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/06/2019	Full	Inadequate
23/01/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness

## Inspection judgements

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

There were 10 children living at the home at the time of this inspection. The manager and staff have a detailed knowledge of the children's needs. Children's plans are informed by mental health and education professionals. Children make good progress across all areas of their development.

Children's views are central to all care planning. Children have access to a visiting independent advocate to share any concerns. A manager formally responds to all children's complaints. One child attends the managers' governance board to represent the views of the children living at the home. Children's views help prioritise improvements at the home, including improving internet access.

Many children are new to the area and, due to their needs, have not spent much time without staff supervision. Staff help children plan for how they will manage their free time away from the home. This helps children to feel confident in new situations and builds on their independence.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities, which are planned for enjoyment as well as building resilience and independence. The manager and staff review the effectiveness of these activities to inform planning for future opportunities. Children said they really enjoyed the home and school prom event and were looking forward to going to the theatre for a pantomime as part of the Christmas festivities.

Independence plans are detailed. Staff support children to learn new practical skills and strategies for managing their emotions and mental health. This helps prepare children for moving on to less supported environments.

Children all have very good and improving levels of attendance at school. This is monitored closely by the manager. Professionals and relatives said that they have been impressed and surprised at the success the staff have had in encouraging children's participation in education. One child's relative said, '[Child's name] really loves the school. This is a child who never went to school. They do now; it's fantastic.'

Staff encourage children to exercise and take up outdoor activity. Children have access to bicycles and boxercise equipment. Children are supported by staff who know them well to attend healthcare appointments. Staff receive extensive training from the home's specialist therapists to understand the impact of children's mental health conditions on their well-being.

Children are helped to maintain positive relationships with their families. Staff help children to plan stays at home, providing transport and support, including staying close by overnight. Relatives are grateful for the kind and caring reassurance that staff provide through regular communication and updates. One child's relative said,

'We couldn't pick a nicer place and a safer place for [child's name]. The staff are there no matter what. They help calm me down when I'm worried and they take the time to explain.'

The manager has continued to review and make improvements to the physical environment of the home. This has encouraged children to use communal areas such as the lounges, which have a cosy and intimate feel.

The management team reviews the practice of staff to look for ways to reduce institutional practices and build on the work to improve the homely atmosphere. However, catering is provided on a large scale for all children and staff, which detracts from mealtimes having a family-style feel.

Children's individual identities are valued and promoted. Staff have good-quality training in the importance of recognising and supporting children in exploring their sexuality and gender identity. This work is led by a passionate and skilled champion who was supported to achieve qualifications to deliver this training.

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

Children said that they feel safe. Risk assessments are comprehensive and reviewed regularly and extensively by the multidisciplinary team. Children are actively included in these meetings and their views and ideas are valued. This has helped children understand the reasons why adults have concerns for their safety in particular circumstances.

Staff have extensive training in safeguarding matters. Any incidents are quickly notified to relevant professionals, who said that any investigations or reviews are carried out robustly by the manager, with oversight from the responsible individual.

Most children have histories of self-injurious behaviours and suicide ideation. Therefore, very close monitoring and supervision is in place. The manager tracks incidents of these behaviours and has seen a significant reduction in incidents. Professionals said that the good care provided at the home is a cornerstone of this. One professional said, 'The reduction in risky behaviour has been remarkable, which is a credit to how safe [child's name] must feel.'

Due consideration has not been given to ensure children's privacy needs are met. One child, who was considered not to be at risk at night, was still being checked every 15 minutes through the observation window in their bedroom door.

There have been infrequent incidents of children going missing from the home. When children do not return home as planned, staff take quick action to find them and return them safely. Staff make sure that children receive a warm welcome home. In addition to return home interviews, staff have detailed discussions about the incident, at the child's pace. This helps children to understand their own vulnerability and to reflect on what they were feeling and thinking at the time to help plan an alternative way of managing in the future.

Staff use restraint to keep children safe from immediate harm. The manager ensures that children can share their views after an incident. Any concerns arising from a restraint are escalated appropriately to external professionals and investigated fully.

The home has been built to include safety features relating to the risk of fire and to mitigate self-harm risks. Staff are trained in the use of specialist equipment for emergency first aid. However, two self-closing fire doors had objects in the way to prevent them from fully closing. The provider took immediate action to rectify this on the first day of the inspection.

The manager reviews the impact of any child moving into the home. Before a child moves in, their needs are considered in detail, as is any likely negative outcome. Therefore, placement breakdowns at the home are rare. When a child's needs cannot be met at the home, this has been due to undisclosed or newly emerging risks. In this rare event, the manager has worked closely with local authorities to maintain the child's placement for as long as possible and to find solutions.

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

The manager is dedicated to the home and the needs of children. She is committed to ensuring that children have every opportunity to stabilise their mental health in a caring and homely environment and make progress in their enjoyment and achievement.

Improvements have been made to the quality of records and record-keeping. Records are legible and comprehensive. When meetings take place about children, the manager ensures that children have access to written feedback about what was discussed. However, one child's placement plan, which delegates certain authorities to the home, had not been signed as is required.

The manager is experienced and knowledgeable in the care of children with ongoing mental health needs. She is committed to reducing institutional stigma and models of care. The manager has been extensively involved in the design of the provider's new model of care, that blends social and emotional development with clinically led support. This approach will be implemented at the home over the coming year.

Nearly all the staff feel very well supported and find the manager to be aspirational for children and approachable for staff. The manager values the importance of training and development for staff. Most managers at the home have progressed to their senior posts while working there. External professionals find the manager very positive to work with.

The manager has built positive relationships with community-based and hospital professionals. This work has broken down previous barriers and helped dispel misunderstandings about the support that the home provides.

A new approach to recruitment has been successful. However, the monitoring and review of the use of agency staff has not been sufficient to find any trends or reasons why this has been high, or the impact that it may have on children.

## 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 registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>the privacy of children is appropriately protected;</p> <p>any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>is necessary and proportionate;</p> <p>is kept under review and, if necessary, revised;</p> <p>and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that observation windows in children's bedroom doors are only used when there is an assessed need to do so to monitor children's safety. Monitoring of children overnight must be proportionate to their assessed levels of risk and safety.</p>	15 January 2023
<p>If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (1) applies to the home—</p> <p>the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that fire doors and doors that should close automatically are not obstructed.</p>	31 December 2022

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that each child's placement plan sets out the permissions that their placing authority has delegated to the registered person. In particular, the registered manager should ensure that these records have been signed by the appropriate professional to confirm this. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 30, paragraph 6.2)
- The registered person should ensure that the use of agency staff is carefully monitored and reviewed to ensure that children receive continuity of care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.16)

## 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:** 1257796

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Cambian Childcare Limited

**Registered provider address:** 5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane,  
Potters Bar EN6 1AG

**Responsible individual:** Michael Coleman

**Registered manager:** Alex Mitchell

## Inspectors

Jamie Cousins, Social Care Inspector  
Paula Edwards, Social Care Inspector  
Mary Costello, Social Care Inspector

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