

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 girls. The home specialises in providing a 12-month therapeutic programme for children.

The home also has an on-site school which children from the home can attend.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2022.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 March 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 23 June 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/06/2021	Full	Outstanding
05/03/2020	Full	Outstanding
21/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
06/12/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

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

At the time of the inspection, no children were living at the home. The last child moved out in January 2023. Since then, the home has undergone redecoration, with new furniture installed and carpets fitted.

Since the last inspection and before the last child moved out, three children had moved to the home. One child's placing authority was given immediate notice to end the placement. However, staff continued to support the child until a placement was found.

Not all children have had positive experiences living at the home. Some children did make progress and moved back to family or on to independent living. However, others were reluctant to engage in the 12-month programme and remained at risk.

Staff are supported by a clinical team who help them to support children in learning to keep themselves safe. The effectiveness of this work varied, depending on children's engagement. Staff did not always translate the guidance from the clinical team into a clearly planned programme of work. As a result, sessions were ad hoc and reactive and, at times, ineffective.

On occasions, staff practice was called into question. Concerns were raised by staff and a child about how one member of staff spoke to a child, referring to them as a bully. Concerns were also raised by staff about a blurring of professional boundaries, for example, cutting and dying a child's hair without permission from their parents or placing authority, and claims of favouritism towards one child. Managers took prompt action, suspended the worker and are undertaking an investigation. Managers also identified work to be undertaken with the wider team on fully understanding professional boundaries and expectations of roles.

Children did form positive relationships with staff. Children spoken to by the inspector said staff were caring. Staff also showed resilience and continued to offer praise and encouragement even when children did not want to engage. Some children have remained in touch, wanting to share with staff their experiences since leaving the home.

The home has an on-site school which all children attended. Even the most reluctant attended and engaged well. Children improved their skills, with some becoming aspirational about their future.

Staff promote healthy lifestyles through healthy eating and exercise. Children were helped to attend appointments and seek medical help when needed. Those who needed more specialist support, such as from child and adolescent mental health services, were referred.

Staff supported children to participate in a variety of activities. Children joined boxing clubs, went to football matches, got their nails done and went shopping. At Christmas one child remained at the home. To make this special for them, staff planned the day according to their wishes, including which staff they wanted to be there and the food and activities. As a result, the child was able to enjoy the day despite not being with their family.

One social worker complimented the home's staff on their commitment to help children stay in touch with their families, such as taking children on visits, staying over in the places children lived and taking children to other parts of the country to see other family members. This enabled a child to keep in touch with those people who were important to them.

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

Children living at the home were vulnerable to exploitation. Staff developed risk assessments and behaviour plans to reduce the risk of further exploitation. However, staff have not always considered all the triggers for children. For example, there were several incidents when children forced their way into the office to gain access to mobile phones and other items. These triggers were not considered in children's plans and as a result children were able to access mobile phones when they should not have done so.

Managers have not always made sure staff fully understand children's risks and know what action they are to take. For example, when one child went for an overnight stay with their family, staff did not carry out all the necessary welfare checks. Following an incident of a child going missing from the family home, the staff member said they had not fully read and understood the plan. As a result, staff were not aware of the child going missing until the following day. Managers addressed this with the worker through supervision and reminded them of the need to fully understand and act on risk assessments.

Managers have not made sure that staff employed by the organisation who do not usually work at the home fully understand children's risk assessments. For example, on one occasion, staff allowed a child to use the home's laptop. The child was able to access a chat room and social media sites. This could have resulted in the child being in contact with those who might have taken advantage of their vulnerability. Managers have put in place measures to ensure that all staff are aware of children's plans and the steps they need to take to keep children safe.

Children living at the home undertake a 12-month programme of support and learning. For some, this support is beneficial, which has made them increasingly safe. However, due to lack of engagement by some children, the lack of robust plans to help children learn about risks, consistently and in an informal way, meant they continued to take risks.

On occasions, children have gone missing. When they have, staff have been proactive in reporting this to the relevant professionals and searching so that children were found as quickly as possible and returned to the home.

On occasions, staff had to use physical intervention to keep children safe during incidents. This was only used when necessary and as a last resort.

Staff have had to speak to children when they were being unkind to each other. Staff challenged and addressed this with children through key-work sessions, mediation and learning about bullying. This helped children to understand the impact on others of what they do and say.

When concerns, complaints or allegations are made, managers take appropriate action in reporting and investigating. When necessary, managers are not afraid to suspend staff while investigations take place. As a result, children feel listened to and that their concerns are taken seriously.

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

Since the last inspection, there has been a change in the management team at the home. The previous registered manager left and a new manager started. She has registered with Ofsted and knows the home well, having previously worked there as deputy. This has provided some continuity to children and staff.

The manager has monitoring systems in place, however, they have not been as effective as they could have been. This inspection identified several shortfalls which could potentially have been avoided if systems were more effective.

Leaders and managers have reflected and developed an improvement plan. This includes recruitment and training of staff, so that they have the skills and knowledge they need to care for children who may live at the home. As a result, there is a planned period when the home will not take in any children so this work can be undertaken.

Staff are receiving regular reflective supervision and a variety of training, both face to face and online. However, the manager's system of monitoring this is not fully effective and, as a result, she was not clear about which staff had undertaken what training and when.

Managers are not afraid to challenge placing authorities when they feel decisions being made are not in the best interests of a child. This shows the commitment by managers to 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 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— 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v))</p> <p>Specifically, that risk assessments and behaviour plans detail known risks and behaviours, along with strategies for staff to reduce those risks. In addition, that managers check that staff fully understand their responsibilities when safeguarding children.</p>	5 May 2023
<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>	5 May 2023

understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;

ensure that staff—

understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;

protect and promote each child's welfare;

treat each child with dignity and respect;

provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background;

help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect;

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.

(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi))

Specifically, that staff treat children with dignity and respect and that plans are in place to provide personalised care.

Recommendation

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff, including the home's manager. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

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: Cambian Childcare Ltd, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Kira Arlett

Registered manager: Kelly Howes

Inspector

Debbie Bond, Social Care Inspector

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