

1257796

Registered provider: Cambian Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This 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: 16 and 17 January 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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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: 13 December 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/12/2022	Full	Good
20/04/2021	Full	Good
31/07/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/06/2019	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Eight children have moved into the home since the last inspection. Three of these children have since moved out. In addition, a further six children have moved out of the home. Many of these children ended their time at the home in a positive and planned way. Staff support children exceptionally well. However, despite these efforts, staff were not able to meet the needs of two children who moved on from the home in an unplanned way. During these unplanned moves, staff provided children and their placing authorities with well-considered care and support. Nine children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Children make clear progress. For some children this fluctuates, depending on the state of their mental health. Children become safer and feel safer because of the time that they spend at the home. Self-harm reduces, emotional awareness increases and children's mental health improves.

For some children, attendance at the on-site school is variable due to their mental health needs. However, staff fully encourage children to attend school and they work collaboratively with school staff in the children's best interests. The home's staff support children to do their homework and they attend parents' evenings. Staff try hard to provide children with support that attentive parents would usually provide in family homes. Education provided at the school is differentiated, depending on each child's learning style and stage of learning. This provides children with education tailored to their age and stage of development.

A child said they feel safe and well cared for. They feel that staff can be trusted and are approachable, and said that they are receiving good support from staff.

Children have a wealth of opportunities to engage in the wider community. Staff manage the balance well between protecting children and preparing them for life after they move out of the home. Staff took one child to a theme park in Paris. Other children have been on camping holidays, trips to London and Swansea and attended gigs. The staff are not risk-averse; they ensure that children have enriching experiences while ensuring that risks are safely mitigated.

The equality and diversity lead has an impressive impact on staff and children at the home. He ensures that the services provided to children are fair and accessible to everyone. Training in areas such as LGBTQ2+, religion and cultural needs are fully covered. Children are seen as individuals and empowered to celebrate themselves and their uniqueness. Staff ensure that children are treated as equals and with dignity and respect and that their differences are celebrated.

There have been several medication errors since the last inspection. The provider has appointed a nurse to make improvements in the dispensation of medication. Consequently, medication errors have reduced since the nurse's appointment. When

medication errors do occur, they are quickly identified. Managers address these issues in supervision and, if required, support staff to improve their practice. Despite the rigorous responses from managers, medication errors continue to be made. Therefore, improvement in practice is still required.

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

Children are very much in the hearts and minds of staff. Children's mental health improves because of their time at the home. Consequently, children learn to make the most of the love, care and nurture that staff offer them.

Children benefit from routines, and from regular input from the on-site psychologist and a psychiatrist. This enables children to receive highly tailored treatment plans that remain responsive to their emotional and mental health needs.

Risk assessments address children's specific exposure to risk. Control measures are appropriate and are updated in response to emerging behaviours. Staff understand risks to children and how to support children in times of crisis.

At times, the restraint techniques used have fallen outside the scope of the approved techniques that staff have been trained to use. At such times, staff have used these techniques to maintain safety. Records show that the use of restraint has been reasonable, proportionate and necessary to maintain children's safety. Children and staff are spoken with after their involvement in restraint. Staff take time to discuss children's views about their involvement in restraint. Staff are committed to improving children's sense of well-being and are acutely aware of the potential for the use of restraint to fracture established relationships.

There have been several allegations made against staff since the last inspection. From the records viewed, it is apparent that the manager takes appropriate action when there are allegations about staff. Allegations are reported swiftly and internal investigations are carried out with rigour. All relevant staff and children are liaised with. The local authority designated officer is kept updated about the progress of investigations and their ultimate conclusions.

Children seldom go missing from the home. When they do, staff report children to the police promptly and actively encourage their safe return by looking for them in the community. Staff share information effectively with other professionals and ensure that children are appropriately supported and cared for on their return. The infrequency of children going missing indicates that they have a sense of belonging and feel safe living at the home.

Staff's responses to bullying are underpinned by a consistent therapeutic approach to support all children involved. Staff acknowledge that bullying does and will happen. They ensure that their actions help children to understand the impact on themselves and others.

Consequences are rarely used. When they are used, they are proportionate and reasonable. They are discussed with the child to help them to reflect on their behaviours and consider how they can manage things differently in the future.

Rewards are frequently used to celebrate children's achievements, however big or small. Children are presented with a range of treats that have meaning and importance to them. This encourages children to become safer and act with kindness and consideration.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers cultivate an ethos of high aspiration. Expectations of staff are high. When staff practice falls below the manager's expectations, this is addressed immediately to ensure that children experience good standards of care.

The manager's oversight and understanding of the children are exceptional. She is incredibly well organised. She leads the staff rather than managing them. She is a driving force for influential change and enhances the lives of children and the staff that she leads.

The manager knows the home's strengths and weaknesses well. When allegations, complaints or lapses in practice occur, the manager addresses concerns and improves children's experiences. There is excellent collaboration between the manager and other professionals that leads to positive change. Consequently, staff practice improves.

Staff describe a supportive team and good management ethos. They enjoy good relationships with their colleagues. Staff feel well supported by managers, who are always available and are responsive.

Supervision is regular and experienced as helpful. Targeted supervision is provided to staff in response to lapses in practice. Staff are provided with challenge and guidance in equal measure.

There are well-established arrangements for sharing information and for reflection, feedback and learning.

The home is decorated to a good standard. Children's rooms are personalised to their preference. There has been a clear focus on improving the homeliness of the environment. Vibrant fixtures and furnishings achieve this to good effect. The head of hospitality is dedicated to improving the environment further, with a craft room and nail bar planned and improvements being made to an external courtyard. Small yet significant changes increase the sense of homeliness. Changes such as improved decor in the medication room counteract what could easily be a clinical environment. These changes are made with children at the heart of decision-making, enriching children's experience of living at the home.

Children understand the procedures to complain exceptionally well. Complaints are made by children regularly. The responses to complaints demonstrate that staff take appropriate action and keep children updated about any action or planned action. This empowers children and they know that they heard. Children feel able to speak out about matters that concern them. Despite the number of complaints received, there is no dilution of response from managers. Managers take all complaints extremely seriously.

The manager makes decisions about children moving to the home following meticulous planning and consideration of their needs. She ensures that all children's interests are at the centre of her decision-making.

The manager has made a dedicated effort to improve practice by addressing all previous requirements and recommendations.

Staff are trained to a good standard; this ensures that the staff can suitably meet the needs of the children. However, some staff have not received training in 'Prevent' duty, substance misuse, criminal exploitation and report writing. Issues in staff practice relating to the recording of restraint records have recently been identified and addressed by the manager via an internal investigation. One learning point from the investigation was for the staff member to receive training in report writing. This is yet to take place.

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, The 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 make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home.</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b))</p>	16 February 2024
<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>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff receive training in the 'Prevent' duty, substance misuse, criminal exploitation and report writing.</p>	29 February 2024

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

Responsible individual: Michael Coleman

Registered manager: Alex Mitchell

Inspectors

Lianne Bradford, Social Care Inspector
Russel Breyer, His Majesty's Inspector

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