

1225136

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 large national provider. It provides care for two children who experience social and/or emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2024.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 December 2024

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: 28 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Ofsted imposed a condition on this home on 20 February 2023, under section 13 of the Care Standards Act 2000. The condition was that the registered person must inform Ofsted of their intention to accommodate children in the home at least three months before any child moves in. This was due to there being challenges in recruiting enough staff, and no children living in the home. The home was reopened in June 2024 after a monitoring visit was completed.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/07/2021	Full	Good
02/01/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/05/2018	Full	Good
30/01/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

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

Since the home reopened, three children have moved in. Two children were supported to move in a well-managed and planned way and they have been making good progress. However, in the absence of the manager, a decision was made by the responsible individual to move a third child into the home. Difficulties in staffing at this point made it difficult for the child to settle in. As a result, staff have struggled to form positive relationships or de-escalate incidents effectively.

Staff support children's health needs. They are registered with all relevant health services and referrals to specialist services are made when required. Some children have been reluctant to attend some appointments. However, staff have persevered and encouraged children to attend. Two of the children were malnourished when they moved into the home and staff have worked hard to promote a good diet and positive attitudes to food. However, on one occasion medical advice was not obtained after low-level substance misuse.

The staff and manager are aspirational for the children in terms of accessing education. None of the children were attending formal education consistently before they moved into the home. The manager has worked with education professionals and two children are now attending an alternative provision, with a view to reintegrate them into mainstream school. Another child is due to start alternative provision. However, there is a lack of daily structure, which prevents consistent routines being implemented for children.

The children have access to a range of leisure activities and are encouraged to develop new interests. Family time is promoted and staff and the manager try to form good relationships with family members. When children are living far away from their family home, the manager ensures that children are kept informed about the area they were raised in with a child-friendly newsletter. This promotes their identity and recognises that the children may one day return to this area.

The home is well maintained and is a safe environment for the children. The children have been able to choose the decor for their bedrooms and are encouraged to personalise their own space. Children have family photos displayed, which promotes a homely environment. One child said: 'I like this care home, it's a good place to live.'

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

There are plans in place that guide the staff on how to support the children and manage risks and vulnerabilities. Two children have previously been deprived of their liberty by

the courts and staff followed strict protocols to ensure that they were kept safe. The staff team worked with professionals and the children to reduce risks and allow for progression of the plan and restrictions have now been removed.

There has been one missing-from-home episode since the home reopened. Staff have followed protocols and have reported the child as missing from home to all relevant agencies and searched for the child. However, they had not collected the child when aware of their whereabouts and this led to the child returning in a taxi alone.

Staff attempt to promote good behaviour through incentives and rewards. Negative consequences are used on occasion but are usually restorative in nature. The manager reviews the consequences given and challenges those that she feels are unduly punitive or ineffective. Physical intervention is rare and has only been used on one occasion. However, while it was necessary and proportionate, clear records of this event have not been completed in a timely manner.

Staff complete a range of training in safeguarding matters. Staff know how to escalate safeguarding concerns, including outside of the company to relevant agencies. Staff recruitment has been done safely so that only suitable individuals work with the children.

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

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified and her practice is child-centred. However, the manager does not always have full oversight of incidents in the home. Recording by staff is not of a consistently good standard. Additionally, on some occasions when the manager has scrutinised staff recordings, some important elements have been missed. This has meant that potential learning from events has not always been identified in a timely manner.

Staff members have been recruited from a variety of backgrounds. Some staff are experienced and qualified in childcare. New members of staff complete an induction before being enrolled to attain a recognised childcare qualification.

Staff receive regular supervision which is of good quality and allows them to reflect on their practice and identify any emerging needs of children. Team meetings are held regularly. However, not all documents were available at the time of the inspection, with some staff rotas not present.

Staff and the manager work effectively with other agencies. The manager is a strong advocate for the children and challenges other professionals when necessary.

There is a large amount of training available for staff. The manager has ensured that when new needs emerge for children, staff complete appropriate training. However, the use of several staff from other homes has impacted on team cohesion, staff well-being and their confidence. This has meant that children do not get consistent messages and

boundaries from staff, which can then impact on behaviours. Leaders have identified that there are shortfalls and are taking steps to address these.

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 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>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and</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)(vi)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that effective arrangements are in place to collect children after they have been missing from home.</p>	6 February 2025
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p>	6 February 2025

<p>meet each child’s behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child’s relevant plans;</p> <p>help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;</p> <p>communicate to each child expectations about the child’s behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child’s age and understanding;</p> <p>strive to gain each child’s respect and trust; and</p> <p>that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)(viii)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that positive routines and boundaries are in place in the home for children.</p> <p>Furthermore, the registered person must ensure that positive relationships are encouraged between children and staff. When this is not the case, efforts must be made to promote and repair the relationship.</p>	
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that when accepting new children into the home, there is a robust staff team that can meet their needs.</p>	6 February 2025
<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 promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p>	6 February 2025

<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;</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; 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)(b)(c)(e)(f)(h))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that there is a consistent team of staff who are suitably skilled and experienced to care for the children living in the home.</p> <p>Additionally, the registered person should ensure that she has sufficient oversight of significant events and that any incident records are evaluated fully. Learning from these incidents should be taken into consideration when making improvements to the care afforded to children.</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p>	<p>6 February 2025</p>

<p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii))</p>	
<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children’s home.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4;</p> <p>ensure that the records are kept up to date; and</p> <p>retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that copies of the staff duty roster of persons working in the home and actual hours worked are kept.</p>	6 February 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff are aware of when they should seek further medical advice for a child and that they should then contact the relevant services. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,’ page 34, paragraph 7.12)

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: 1225136

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: Louise Winward

Registered manager: Hayley Prince

Inspector

Eve Ostridge, Social Care Inspector

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