

SC482294

Registered provider: Cambian Asperger Syndrome Services Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to 29 children with learning disabilities. Children are accommodated in three houses, and all the children attend the school that is located on the same site. Care is provided to children with a primary diagnosis of an autism spectrum condition. There were nine children living across the homes at the time of this inspection.

The assurance inspection was brought forward following a serious incident that took place at the home. The education provision was not inspected during this inspection.

Inspection date: 31 October 2023

Date of last inspection: 4 July 2023

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Outcome from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Findings from the inspection

A serious incident occurred at the home which resulted in a child sustaining a significant injury. Inspectors found that risk assessments for the child were detailed and individualised. There was evidence of a collaborative approach from all relevant professionals and the child's family in supporting the child. Actions leading up to and after the incident had been recorded to a high standard, with effective oversight from leaders and managers. Inspectors found no shortfalls in practice around the management of this incident.

Since the last full inspection, leaders and managers have been proactive in implementing plans to improve practice. Their approach has been child-focused and open to learning. This has positively influenced the overall quality of care and the children's experiences.

The shortfalls identified at the last inspection regarding medication errors have been taken seriously by leaders and managers. The medication policy has been reviewed and updated. This now includes details identifying levels of severity of medication errors and provides suggested action to take for each level. The manager has full oversight of medication administration as well as staff training and assessment of competence. The manager has provided staff with further training. When medication errors have occurred, these have been fully investigated and followed up appropriately. Consequently, medication errors have significantly reduced since the last inspection.

There has been a reduction in significant events. When there has been a serious incident, managers and leaders have notified Ofsted when required. Monitoring and oversight from leaders and managers are now well documented and reviewed.

Leaders and managers have prioritised maintenance to the children's homes since the previous inspection. Damage to property is not as frequent but when work is needed, this is rectified swiftly. As a result, the houses are more welcoming and homely for children.

There have been no physical interventions since the last inspection. While this is a remarkable improvement, inspectors were unable to review staff practice to make an assessment regarding whether the recommendation has been fully addressed. Therefore, the recommendation set at the last inspection remains in place.

One parent has raised a complaint raised since the last inspection. The investigation into the complaint is not yet concluded. However, there is a clear

process in place to ensure that complaints are taken seriously and are fully investigated. Leaders and managers demonstrate an openness to learning from complaints and a commitment to working with parents to resolve issues that may arise. The majority of the requirements and recommendations set at the last inspection have been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/07/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/06/2022	Full	Good
28/09/2021	Full	Good
07/06/2021	Full	Inadequate

What does the children's home need to do to improve? Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that written guidance to staff provides information about the risks that restraint carries. These include causing physical injury, psychological trauma or emotional disturbance. When considering whether restraint is warranted, staff in children's homes need to take into account:
 - the age and understanding of the child;
 - the size of the child;
 - the relevance of any disability, health problem or medication to the behaviour in question and the action that might be taken as a result;
 - the relative risks of not intervening;
 - the child's previously sought views on strategies that they considered might de-escalate or calm a situation, if appropriate;
 - the method of restraint which would be appropriate in the specific circumstances;and
 - the impact of the restraint on the carer's future relationship with the child ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.55)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC482294

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Cambian Asperger Syndrome Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Alison Priddle

Registered manager: Jack Murphy

Inspectors

Skye Frain, Social Care Inspector
Kelly Marchmont, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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