

# SC065261

Registered provider: Cambian Autism Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

- The home is registered for up to 60 children.
- The home provides care for children who have autistic spectrum disorder and/or learning disabilities.
- The children's home is owned and run by a private national organisation.
- This service operates as a residential special school which also provides accommodation for a number of children for 52 weeks of the year. As a result, it is registered as a children's home.
- The manager has been registered with Ofsted since August 2017.

**Inspection dates:** 17 to 19 July 2018

**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 **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:** 16 October 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
16/10/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/06/2017	Full	Inadequate
01/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/06/2016	Full	Requires improvement

## 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><b>13: Leadership and management</b>            The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that 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 use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.            (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b), (2)(h))</p>	30/9/2018
<p><b>32: Fitness of workers</b></p> <p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home.            (Regulation 32(4)(a)(b), (5)(a))</p>	30/9/2018
<p><b>33: Employment of staff</b>            The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year.            (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b)(c))</p>	30/9/2018

## Recommendations

- Children's home staff should seek to identify and provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop themselves in accordance with their wishes and feelings and as part of the home's plan for their care. Each child's talents and interests should be understood and nurtured, with children selecting activities based on their personal preferences and abilities, so far as is reasonable. Staff should also support children to try activities that are 'new' for them, where appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards' page 31, paragraph 6.4)

In particular, these activities should be creative and stimulating. Leaders and managers need to ensure that staffing levels are such to enable all children to be able to access the community for activities.

- The capacity and competence of the staff to build constructive, warm relationships with children that actively promote positive behaviour, provide the foundations for managing any negative behaviour. Staff should have the skills to respond to each child's individual behaviour. Where necessary they should manage conflict, maintain constructive dialogues and react appropriately if challenged by a child in their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards' page 39, paragraph 8.14)

In particular, leaders and managers should consider including specific behavioural targets in children's long-term plan documents.

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards' page 42, paragraph 9.5)

In particular, risk assessments need to consistently contain enough detail about the antecedents and the strategies employed to reduce the level of risk.

- Any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. In some cases, children may need longer to work through their feelings, so a record that the child has talked about their feelings should be made no longer than 5 days after the incident of restraint. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards' page 46, paragraph 9.60)

In particular, ensure that records evidence that all children consistently receive opportunities for debrief discussions after an incident and in line with their abilities.

## Inspection judgements

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

The availability of activities for children is unreliable as it depends on there being enough staff. Too many children do not have good opportunities to engage in activities in the community, and this limits the quality of their experiences. Children who do not require two staff to support them have better opportunities to join in with community activities, and their access to the local community has increased.

The quality of activities also depends on which house the children live in and how creative staff in those houses are at making them stimulating and imaginative. Activities are not consistently expanding all children's experiences or developing their interests.

Overall, the quality of the environment in the majority of houses has improved. Staff have been creative in the way that they have decorated and furnished some children's bedrooms. Staff have continued to remove locks on cupboards. However, the environmental improvement work is ongoing. Some televisions remain boxed in, but the number has been reduced since the last inspection. Keypad locks remain in use in many of the houses. The purpose and use of these locks requires further review.

Work undertaken regarding the compatibility of children within each house needs to improve. In one home, the children in the current mix are not compatible. Leaders and managers have plans to rearrange where each child lives. Currently, decisions about the mix of children are not formalised in a written risk assessment.

Children's plans contain targets which staff regularly review to demonstrate the progress that children are making. However, these targets are not currently linked to children's behavioural needs as well as they are to other aspects of their lives.

Discussions with children after incidents and/or restraint require improvement. Some children's records show that they received an opportunity to debrief after the incident, but not all.

Staff have strong relationships with the children whom they care for. They treat them with dignity and respect. Staff celebrate the achievements that children make.

Staff have successfully improved their relationships with parents and carers. Parents feel that the homes are more open and welcoming than before.

The care, education and therapeutic teams are now working closely together to provide a holistic approach to the children's care and education. The teams also have good links with external agencies, which helps to provide children with any additional support that they may need.

A number of children are developing their independence skills in line with their abilities.

Staff give children good support to help them to move successfully to their next home. A member of staff monitors and evaluates this work to improve it for the next child who is to move on.

Complaints are well managed. Records of complaints evidence that the procedures for dealing with complaints is followed in practice.

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

Safeguarding systems are effective. Safeguarding records are detailed and show that leaders and managers take effective action to deal with child protection concerns.

Behaviour management plans are comprehensive documents that are now more specific to the individual child. Parents spoken to report that they have seen an improvement in their child's behaviours due to the updated support plans and behaviour strategies being shared across care and education, and with them. These improvements include the child's ability to manage their own behaviours.

Restraint is used as a last resort and for the minimum amount of time possible. Staff are no longer taking children to the floor to restrain them, and the number of ground holds has been reduced.

Staff have a good understanding of risk, and risk assessments are in place. Staff are aware of the additional vulnerabilities of the children whom they care for. However, risk assessments do not consistently contain enough detail on the antecedents and the strategies employed to reduce the level of risk.

The recruitment of staff follows safer recruitment practices, which helps to protect children. Fire, health and safety are well managed. This provides children with a safe environment in which to live.

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

Leaders and managers have not taken sufficient action to improve all of the weaknesses seen at previous inspections. Despite changes in the leadership team, too many staff are still not receiving regular supervision or an annual appraisal. A requirement to address this weakness has been raised at seven previous inspections.

Five staff have not completed the level 3 qualification within the required timescale. Leaders and managers are aware of this and are supporting staff to undertake this qualification. The two care managers have recently begun the level 5 qualification. Leaders and managers have initiated this to provide those who oversee the day-to-day operation of the homes with additional skills and increased understanding of the management role. The number of staff who are first-aid trained has increased, which ensures that a first-aid qualified member of staff is always on duty.

The monitoring carried out by leaders and managers requires improvement. Leaders

and managers have not identified the gaps in supervisions and appraisals. In addition, the monitoring of medication is complex and does not allow for early identification of medication errors.

The number of staff vacancies remains high. Leaders and managers are continuing to experience difficulties in recruiting new staff with the calibre of experience that they require. Currently, there are nine day-staff and 17 night-staff vacancies. Agency and bank staff are used to cover these vacancies. Where possible, leaders and managers strive to ensure that agency and bank staff are assigned to specific homes to provide consistency.

Leaders and managers have an understanding of some areas for improvement and have taken timely action to address these.

The registered manager is appropriately qualified for the role.

The majority of staff have confidence in the leaders and managers. Staff particularly praise the principal for her approach and openness.

The school council is an effective forum for children to express their views and effect changes in their home and school.

The staff team has built strong working relationships with external agencies. This has led to an improvement in information sharing and the development of children's plans.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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:** SC065261

**Provision sub-type:** Residential special school

**Registered provider:** Cambian Autism Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** Cambian, Waterfront, Hammersmith Embankment,  
Chancellors Road, London W6 9RU

**Responsible individual:** Virginia Bellard

**Registered manager:** Neil Johnstone

## Inspectors

Wendy Anderson, social care inspector

Sharron Escott, social care inspector

Guy Mammatt, social care inspector

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