

# 1227060

Registered provider: Cambian Autism Services Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

This children's home is made up of a few separate houses in the grounds of a residential special school. Both the school and home are owned by a private company. There were three houses providing residential care at the time of the inspection: Oaktrees, Beeches and Cedars.

The children and young people are placed by various local authorities throughout the United Kingdom. Their residential placements are for 38 or 52 weeks of the year. The school also caters for day pupils. The children and young people may have learning disabilities and/or a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. They all have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). There is a clinical team employed that provides a range of specialist support.

A new manager has been in post since December 2019 and is in the process of applying for registration.

**Inspection date: 14 January 2020**

**Date of last inspection:** 21 May 2019

**Judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## **This inspection**

### **The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection**

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.

At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

The previous registered manager left in July 2019. An interim manager was promoted internally, who has recently stepped down and is now house manager for Cedars, who oversees the care in Beeches. The provider recruited a new children's home manager who started at the beginning of December 2019. There is a new house manager for Oaktrees, and recruitment is taking place for a new house manager for Beeches. This is significant change in the leadership of the residential settings. Continuity in the management arrangements was maintained by the interim manager, school principal and regional management support.

The new manager has completed an assessment of the setting, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. He has started to implement a development plan and is supported by his house managers and the school principal. There is an appropriate level of delegation of management tasks with checks and monitoring in place. This is maintaining good standards of care. Staff morale is good, and the staff are committed to supporting the children and young people's development and providing them with positive experiences.

With the changes in management, the six-monthly management reviews submitted to Ofsted have not improved since the last inspection. The views of the children and young people, their parents and social workers and of the staff are still not included in these reviews. There have been improvements to the consultation arrangements and more improvements are planned. The children and young people have a say in the running of the houses. This is through daily conversation with staff, house meetings, their complaints being listened to and independent advocacy. Senior managers challenge partner agencies to ensure that the children and young people receive good all-round support.

Young people leaving the home receive good support with their transitions. Leaders challenge placing authorities to ensure that there is appropriate planning so that young people move to a suitable setting in a supportive way. Where necessary, advocates are involved to promote the best interests of the young people moving on.

Admissions are planned well, and the three children and young people who have moved in since the last inspection are settled and making progress. Decisions about who lives in each house are made, taking the needs of all the children and young people into account. This helps give the children and young people a friendly environment to live in and helps keep them safe from posing a potential risk to each other. The children and young people can and do move from one house to another

or between the different flats in Cedars if they have difficulties getting along with each other.

The staff support the children and young people to develop their social skills, resilience and independence. Consequently, the children and young people are more able to reflect on their actions and recognise how they feel. They are able to ask staff for support. They become more sociable, spend more time with their peers and enjoy going out into the community. They improve their ability to complete house work and enjoy cooking. As the children and young people's social and emotional development progresses, the risks to their welfare diminish. For example, the amount of self-harm has decreased, and one young person has stopped wandering out into the middle of the road.

The children and young people benefit from the staff helping them with their relationships and they learn how to resolve their differences. Some staff have completed restorative justice training. This has started to be implemented to help the children and young people further. When it is necessary to keep the children and young people safe, the staff will use physical intervention. There is good management oversight of this, and the new manager wants to improve the level of staff reflection with the aim of reducing how often this takes place.

Leaders respond well to concerns and complaints raised by the children and young people and their parents. There is good partnership work with the local authority's safeguarding team and with placing authorities. The thorough system of record-keeping demonstrates that appropriate action is taken to help keep the children and young people safe and maintain good standards of care. The response to complaints and allegations about staff practice has improved since the last inspection. Two of the three previous inspection requirements are met.

The staff undertake a range of safeguarding training. Not all the staff have had the opportunity to complete training in county lines. The leaders consider that the risks to children and young people from county lines is low. However, there is potential that staff may miss particular indicators if any of the children and young people are at risk.

The three houses in use generally provide a homely environment. Repairs and maintenance issues are followed up by house managers to ensure that appropriate work is completed. One young person's bedroom did not have adequate window coverings, which has an impact on his levels of privacy and dignity.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/05/2019	Full	Good
29/01/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/11/2018	Full	Inadequate
13/02/2018	Full	Good

## 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 quality and purpose of care standard requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child (Regulation 6 (2)(c)(i)). In particular, ensure that bedroom windows have appropriate coverings to maintain the privacy and dignity of children and young people.</p>	28/02/2020
<p>Review of quality of care</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (5))</p>	31/03/2020

### Recommendations

- Staff skills for safeguarding should include being able to identify signs that children may be at risk, and support children in strategies to manage and reduce any risks ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.10). In particular, ensure that staff are

adequately trained in county lines so that they can identify signs that children may be at risk from county lines.

## **Information about this inspection**

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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:** 1227060

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

**Registered provider:** Cambian Autism Services Limited

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

**Responsible individual:** Christopher Strong

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspectors

Simon Morley, Social Care Inspector

Sue Hatton, Social Care Inspector

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