

SC066821

Registered provider: Cambian Whinfell School Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home provides care, accommodation and education for a maximum of 14 young males. The home's statement of purpose states that care is provided for children who have a diagnosis of Asperger syndrome or autism spectrum disorder and possible accompanying conditions, which may include attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, pathological demand avoidance and mild to moderate learning difficulty.

Accommodation is split, with most children living on the main site and facilities for some children working towards semi-independent living a short distance away.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in June 2020 and has the relevant level 5 leadership and management qualification.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 2 March to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 November 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 18 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: Outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: The home had a monitoring visit on 27 January 2021, when two compliance notices were issued. The first concerned children's safety and staff's understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children. The second concerned the children's views, wishes and feelings. Both these notices were deemed to have been met at the subsequent monitoring visit on 2 March 2021.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/02/2020	Full	Outstanding
29/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
15/05/2017	Full	Outstanding
12/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

In general, children make good progress at this home. The current cohort of children is settled, and most children are happy to live there. Although there is sometimes friction between children, they are helped to maintain positive relationships. They are supported to be considerate of each other and live together comfortably.

Children engage in a wide range of activities. This helps them to learn new skills, to socialise and to broaden their experiences. Some children are reluctant to participate in activities. Staff offer encouragement and praise when they do join in. Some children have made excellent progress in respect of their engagement and are now intending to take part in a planned ski trip.

Staff are keen and committed. They want the best for the children and are prepared to work hard to achieve that. Good relationships are developed between staff and children. This has a positive effect on children's feelings of well-being and happiness.

Placement plans for children are detailed and individualised. Staff writing the plans clearly have excellent knowledge of the individual they are writing about. Some good examples of visual aids were seen. These help children to understand their routines and to know what is expected of them. This reduces their anxieties and supports positive behaviour.

Some children who have previously not attended education are now attending. They make good progress and take qualifications, which has a positive impact on their future. The school was inspected at the same time as the home and the inspector noted some exceptional artwork. When children find attending education difficult, bespoke plans are implemented to help them attend as much as possible.

Children's physical and mental health needs are met to a high standard. Staff seek the involvement of external agencies as appropriate in most cases. On one occasion, a child declined medical attention after being injured. Staff did not advocate for the child and get advice from a medical professional on his behalf. This minor shortfall is addressed in a recommendation regarding good practice.

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

Children who live at this home are safe. Children who previously put themselves at risk are safer because they came to live at the home.

The manager ensures that children are not prevented from taking part in activities because of any inherent risk. He works to overcome barriers and to make sure that children living at the home are not limited or restricted in what they can do.

There are good systems in place to educate children about safety. When children have identified needs around criminal exploitation and racism, work is done to help them reduce these risks.

All children are educated about bullying. The home has detailed plans for a thorough exploration of this topic during anti-bullying week. Restorative work is both reactive and proactive. It helps children to improve their relationships and reduces the risk of bullying.

The manager compiles a monthly audit and analysis of incidents involving restrictive interventions. This helps to identify patterns and trends and supports the reduction of physical interventions through understanding and avoiding trigger situations.

Risk assessments are generally detailed and individualised. However, shortfalls were identified in some children's risk assessments. One child's risk assessment did not include information about a specific and potentially serious risk. One did not direct staff in how frequently a child should be checked up on. Another child's risk rating in one area was not commensurate with the risk. While there was no detrimental impact on the children's safety, a requirement is made to reflect these shortfalls.

Staff are not trained to use ligature kits. Although there are no children who are currently believed to be at risk in this area, it would be good practice for staff to be trained in the event that the kits are needed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home's manager is committed to the children in his care. He shows a proactive approach to ensuring they achieve their potential and have positive experiences while living at the home. Inspectors observed him to have a positive rapport with children.

Staff feel good about their work and believe that they are making a difference. They describe the home as a supportive and inclusive environment. Some staff still in their probationary period have not been supervised at the stipulated frequency. Some staff have not had an annual appraisal. These are necessary to ensure that staff are fully supported in their role and are given opportunities to reflect on their practice and further their professional development.

Staff team meeting records are particularly detailed. They show that managers are focused on developing staff knowledge and understanding of children's needs. Examples of topics discussed include peer-on-peer abuse, trauma and attachment.

The manager has good monitoring systems in place. This ensures that tasks do not get overlooked. Systems also serve as a tool to review, evaluate and identify any patterns or trends which can subsequently be addressed.

The home's statement of purpose has been updated since the last inspection. The latest version has not been sent to the regulator, which has an impact on service monitoring.

The home has had a significant amount of money invested in it. Lots of improvement work, both to the interior and exterior of the building, has been carried out and is continuing. This interior investment is already resulting in a nicer and more homely environment for the children, particularly in some of their bedrooms.

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 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>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))</p>	<p>16 December 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.</p> <p>(Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))</p>	<p>16 December 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year.</p> <p>(Regulation 33 (4)(c))</p>	<p>16 December 2021</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff receive supervision of their practice by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. In particular, staff who are in their probationary period should receive supervision in line with the agreed frequency. (‘Guide to the

children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

- The registered person should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is in any way at risk of harm. The registered person should ensure that skills in safeguarding are gained, refreshed and recorded in the home's workforce plan. Specifically, staff should be trained to use the home's ligature kits. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)
- The registered person should ensure that staff should have sufficient understanding of relevant health services, including the functions of the designated nurse for looked after children in their area. They should support children to navigate these services, advocating on their behalf where necessary and appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.8)

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: SC066821

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Cambian Whinfell School Limited

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

Responsible individual: David Phipps

Registered manager: Ian Sharpe

Inspectors

Charlie Bamber, Social Care Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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