

# SC066897

Registered provider: Cambian Autism Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to 28 children with learning disabilities and/or sensory impairment. The home forms part of a residential school specialising in care, education and therapy for children with autism spectrum disorder. At the time of the inspection, 26 children were living across the six houses.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2022.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

**Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022, and 9 February 2023**

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b> | <b>good</b> |
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|   |      |
|---|------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
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|---|------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | good |
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 21 June 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 21/06/2021      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 25/02/2020      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 22/01/2019      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 21/06/2017      | Full            | Outstanding          |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children experience well-planned care from staff who are attentive and familiar with each child's personality and needs. Interactions between children and staff are warm and nurturing. Children's parents and external professionals speak highly about the quality of care provided to children.

Staff are familiar with each child's methods of communication and enable children to influence decisions about the day-to-day running of the home. There is a particular focus on helping children to make choices about the food that they eat and the activities that they do. Children are treated with dignity and respect, and their views are valued.

Staff are committed to helping children to learn how to live as independently as possible. Each child has a case study that describes their individual targets. Providing support to children to help them to achieve their targets is embedded in staff practice. Children's success is celebrated and shared with their families in a range of ways, including weekly e-postcards, digital stories and celebration days.

Staff understand that for the children, life skills are just as important as practical skills, such as joining in at mealtimes, learning how to play with friends and developing social communication skills. Staff use every opportunity to help children make progress in these areas. Managers speak with pride when they describe the progress children have made. The careful support children receive gives them the confidence to achieve the goals that are important to them.

Encouraging children to engage in education is a priority for staff. Children make good progress from their starting points. Managers and staff work collaboratively with education professionals. Children's school attendance improves when they come to live at the home.

Children's bedrooms have personal items that reflect their interests and identity. However, in some of the living areas of the home, the decor is tired and in need of updating. Plans for redecoration are in place. Some rooms have an institutional feel due to televisions being encased in plastic and wooden frames and storage areas being locked without clear and regularly reviewed rationale. As a result, the environment is not as homely as it could be, and there is potential that children are not able to be as independent as possible.

Children's health needs are supported by staff through careful planning and strong communication with external health professionals. Staff are thoughtful about the best setting to take children to when they need support from health professionals. One health professional said, 'The staff prepare the children for their visits, and this really makes a difference. The team is fantastic.'

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

Staff have a good awareness of each child's strengths and vulnerabilities. They receive good-quality training and are attuned and responsive to the risks that are present for children individually and as a group. As a result, staff can make sound decisions to ensure children's safety and well-being.

The designated safeguarding lead is knowledgeable and is passionate in her efforts to ensure the safety of the children. Thorough and detailed records show effective joint working with external agencies when safeguarding concerns arise.

Staff are adept at noticing changes in children's presentation and behaviour. They recognise that those changes may indicate that children are struggling and need additional support. Consequently, the use of physical restraint is kept to a minimum.

When behavioural incidents occur, the behaviour support team carries out thorough reviews. It puts in place strategies to reduce the risk of a similar incident happening again. Input from the organisation's therapy team and psychologist ensures that there is a consistent approach to helping children to learn how to cope and express their feelings.

Safe recruitment practices are understood and implemented by the manager and staff responsible for this area of practice. All necessary checks are in place to ensure that children are protected from unsuitable people working in the home.

There have been 13 medication errors since the last inspection. All medication errors are taken seriously, investigated and acted on. The systems for storing, administering and recording medication are currently under review with the intention of reducing the risk of medication errors.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

A registered manager has been appointed since the last inspection. She is ambitious and has high aspirations for what the children can achieve. She receives good support from her colleagues in the management team and from the responsible individual. Managers are deeply committed to improving children's life chances.

As a result of effective monitoring and oversight, managers have a well-rounded view of the progress children are making and the quality of care they are receiving from staff. Managers take swift and decisive action if children's plans need to change.

Staff report excellent support from managers. Staff receive good-quality training and regular, meaningful supervision. Feeling valued and respected enables staff to give good-quality care to children.

Working closely with the people who are important to children is given high priority. The parents and other professionals spoken to during the inspection said that communication with the home is effective and open.

Managers demonstrate that there is an embedded culture of welcoming feedback from external sources. Criticisms and comments about the service are seen as an opportunity to learn, reflect and improve.

## 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 health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child to—</p> <p>achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans.<br/>(Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the systems for storing, administering and recording medication reduce the risk of errors.</p> | 31 March 2023 |
| <p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home;<br/>(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii))</p>  | 31 March 2023 |

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| In particular, keep under regular review the locking of storage areas and the encasing of televisions in frames. |  |
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## 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:** SC066897

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Cambian Autism Services Limited

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

**Responsible individual:** Katherine Landells

**Registered manager:** Kirsty Marsden

## Inspectors

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