

# SC482294

Registered provider: Cambian Asperger Syndrome Services Limited

Full 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 a primary diagnosis of autism. Children are accommodated in four houses, and most children attend the school that is located on the same site. There were 11 children living across the homes at the time of this inspection.

The registered manager has been in post since 24 April 2023.

The education provision was not inspected during this inspection.

### Inspection dates: 25 and 26 November 2024

**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:** 4 July 2023

**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>
04/07/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/06/2022	Full	Good
28/09/2021	Full	Good
07/06/2021	Full	Inadequate

## Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy living in this homely environment. They like their bedrooms and enjoy personalising them. Consequently, each bedroom reflects an aspect of the child's personality and their interests and hobbies. Children contribute to the homes' decor, and their 'collections' are displayed in communal areas and in their bedrooms. Some children have pets, supporting their ability to respect and care for others. This gives children a sense of belonging and ownership and pride in their homes.

Children enjoy socialising and making friendships. This is encouraged by staff who support children to join in with weekly activities, such as swimming, trips to the cinema and going out for meals. Some children have been on holiday, and some children learn to budget, shop, and prepare and cook meals. These activities help children with their independence skills and increase their opportunities to achieve.

Children benefit from emotionally warm and positive relationships with managers and staff. As a result, they feel comfortable to express their wishes and feelings and have confidence that their voices will be heard. This is further enhanced by the 'house council' where children make suggestions and have a say about all aspects of their care. Children know how to make a complaint if they are unhappy. Children spoke about being able to raise any concerns in relation to bullying. They describe their houses as a relaxed, calm and a safe space to live in.

Children receive input and support from the clinical therapy team. This team works collaboratively with children, their key workers, family members and other professionals that are involved with them. This helps to provide children with a holistic approach to the care that they receive and supports their progress and positive outcomes. Including, helping children to understand their feelings, future ambitions, challenges and next steps in their lives.

Photos displayed in the houses and in 'life books' beautifully capture children having fun and making memories. Children's achievements are celebrated, however small, and this further supports their progress. Children make progress in their education and independence skills. They learn how to socialise and learn patience. Children enjoy spending time with their families and friends.

Impact risk assessments are not as thorough as they could be. They include risks and current needs of a new child moving into the home and that of children who already live there. This is informative. However, when some challenges are identified within the assessment, strategies to resolve these are not always clear. For instance, a place was offered for a child despite the assessment identifying that there was insufficient staffing at that time. The outcome of the assessment was that a place can be offered. There was no clear rationale for this decision and the assessment did not evidence any leadership

or management oversight. However, the child moved into the home at a later date when sufficient staffing was in place.

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

Children live in a safe and supportive environment. A skilled safeguarding team ensures that any concerns are identified swiftly and managed well.

Staff create effective working relationships with external professionals. There is an open and transparent approach to all safeguarding concerns and professional guidance is sought when required. This ensures that children are provided with safe care.

Staff are trained in positive behaviour management and use these strategies effectively. There are good systems in place to analyse behaviours and explore de-escalation techniques. Following incidents, staff and children are given opportunities to reflect and learn.

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. They talk positively about what action they would take should they have concerns about children's welfare and are confident to challenge leaders and managers if they needed to. This helps to underpin a strong and positive safeguarding culture that keeps children safe.

Recruitment is robust, and staff do not start working in the home until all checks have been received and verified.

Children's risk assessments are not always clear. This is because different risks are captured in various records, and it not always clear to staff which record they need to access. This means that key information could be missed. In the main, this is a recording issue and does not impact on practice. This is because staff understand children's needs well and know how to respond when they start to struggle.

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

Since the last full inspection, leaders and managers have continued to be proactive in implementing plans to improve practice. Their approaches are child-focused and they are open to learning.

The home is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager who is supported by a committed and supportive deputy. The registered manager is dedicated and has worked tirelessly to make the improvements required following the last inspection.

The registered manager fully understands the strengths and areas for further improvement of the home. Leaders and managers have implemented clear monitoring and reviewing systems that are now embedded. This has enabled the registered manager to drive further improvements and to identify longer-term goals and plans for

the direction of the home. The registered manager values the support that he receives from leaders, and this has enabled him to further enhance his role.

Staff talk highly and positively about leaders and managers and how they support them to fulfil their roles. They say that leaders and managers are consistently visible and are approachable. Staff say that their views are regularly sought, are valued and that it is 'safe to have an opinion.' Staff value their monthly supervision sessions as they enable them to reflect on their practice and development and discuss children's needs.

Staff talk proudly about children and the progress that they have made. They can identify how they, as staff, have brought enrichment, opportunity, and genuine care to children's lives. Staff respect each other, work well together, enjoy natural camaraderie and help to enhance each other's skills. Consequently, staff morale is high.

Since the last inspection, recruitment has been successful. There is now sufficient staff to meet the children needs. Staff receive good-quality inductions and ongoing training. However, a significant number of staff have not achieved a relevant level 3 qualification in the required timescales.

## 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 registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children’s home if the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.</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—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>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 (2)(a)(3)(b)(4)(a)(b)(5)(a))</p>	<p>10 January 2025</p>

### Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children’s risk management plans are recorded and updated in a consistent format so essential information is not missed by staff. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child’s assessed needs as recorded in the child’s relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 56, paragraph 11.4)

## **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:** 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

Hannah Cox, Social Care Inspector

Kelly Marchmont, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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