

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	25/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC459857
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	St Christopher's Fellowship
Registered provider address	St Christopher's Fellowship, 1 Putney High Street, London SW15 1SZ

Responsible individual	Ron Giddens
Registered manager	Jennifer Hiskey
Inspector	Barnaby Dowell

Inspection date	25/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
<p>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</p> <p>This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.</p> <p>Two recommendations resulted from the last full inspection of the home. Managers have addressed both of these successfully. There is one recommendation resulting from this inspection.</p> <p>The home now benefits from a permanent staff team, with no vacancies. Agency staff use is minimised. A recent successful round of recruitment has resulted in the positive integration of three new full-time team members. It is a young, vibrant and diverse staff team, fully able to meet the complex needs of young people. Staff report that morale is very positive, with excellent support, training and supervision from managers. The staff team is growing and developing together. Young people benefit from improved levels of consistency in behavioural management.</p> <p>Independent return-to-care interviews now occur more regularly. Information gained from these interviews is shared with staff. Care plans provide an individualised step-by-step response for staff, when young people go missing. Good communication with professionals ensures the full exchange of information to key partners and helps to keep young people safe.</p> <p>During one recent admission, staff failed to adhere to established risk assessment procedures. Staff did not seek feedback from the previous placement, nor did they obtain a copy of the local authority care plan prior to admission. This resulted in a poor assessment of the impact of the admission on other young people and disrupted the home for a limited period, prior to the relevant young person leaving the home.</p> <p>Young people are very happy in their home. One comments, 'It is very nice here, I like it.' Feedback from placing professionals is equally positive. One refers to the 'invaluable experience offered by the home.' Young people report excellent relationships with staff and high levels of support. On moving on from the home, young people remain in touch and staff support this by offering outreach support and monitor progress in conjunction with close family and friends.</p> <p>Young people continue to make good progress. This is monitored and evaluated by</p>	

comprehensive and thorough risk assessments. These assessments offer clear guidance for staff and support the management of complex behaviours. Assessments benefit from excellent access to support from specialist resources such as psychologists and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) practitioners. Staff work in partnership with these services to review and evaluate behavioural management strategies. This helps young people to learn how to manage their own behaviours and supports good levels of behaviour.

The voice of young people is consistently heard. They played an active role in the home's recent recruitment drive and sat on the interview panel. This offered a unique perspective on the performance of prospective candidates. Following feedback from young people, it was agreed to record key work sessions in a less formal way. These sessions are now recorded by the use of informal letters, which are skilfully used as part of life story work. Young people are now more engaged and at ease in the key-work process.

Educational attainment is prioritised and incentivised by the behavioural management system. Staff push placing authorities to offer prompt access to educational provision and if this is not forthcoming, tuition is provided. Monitoring checks are made on a daily basis. When young people struggle with their education, professionals' meetings are called to assess the situation further. Staff recently advocated for the provision of a taxi to support attendance for one young person and this worked well.

Work on developing semi-independence skills is well-established. Staff make good use of structured work books. The registered manager has developed closer working relationships with staff at the semi-independent provision owned by the home's parent organisation. This supports well-timed and appropriate transfers into semi-independence.

Information about this children's home

A charity and provider of social housing operates and manages this children's home. Registration permits the care and accommodation for no more than eight children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The age range is from 12 to 17 years old, with two of the eight bedrooms used as emergency placements for 140 days only each calendar year.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/10/2016	Full	Good
18/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/09/2015	Full	Good
19/03/2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation:

- 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)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

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.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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