

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	09/02/2017
Unique reference number	1159682
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	St Christopher's Fellowship
Registered provider address	St Christophers Fellowship, 1 Putney High Street, London, SW15 1SZ

Responsible individual	Ron Giddens
Registered manager	Vacant
Inspector	Bridget Goddard

Inspection date	09/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	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	
<p>This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. One recommendation has been made as result of this inspection. It relates to routinely updating the statement of purpose to reflect important changes in the service.</p> <p>At the full inspection two requirements and two recommendations were made. The requirements reflected weaknesses in behaviour management. Some staff were unsure about what approaches to take when managing young people’s behaviour, and this led to inconsistencies across the staff team. These shortfalls have now been addressed effectively.</p> <p>The leadership team has been strengthened. There is now a manager available on each shift to support staff in being consistent with young people. In addition, the whole staff team has been involved in reviewing the use of behaviour management strategies in the home. This process has resulted in a more confident and consistent approach to managing behaviour, and has included the introduction of individualised reward systems and clearer behavioural boundaries for young people.</p> <p>The two recommendations made at the full inspection have also been met. The first recommendation related to ensuring that the use of agency staff is monitored. The service’s successful recruitment of staff means that the use of agency staff is now minimal, and is confined to well-known individuals. These individuals also attend group supervision sessions, which help to develop their practice and understanding. The second recommendation related to young people contributing to their file records. Young people’s views are now clearly reflected in some records of sanctions and in records of complaints. Young people were also central to devising their personalised reward systems.</p> <p>All young people are routinely engaged in appropriate educational activities. The service has been persistent in achieving this. For some young people this level of engagement represents a significant improvement on their education attendance prior to living at the home. Other young people received certificates of achievement after taking part in the process of recruiting new staff. This acknowledgement helps young people to realise that they have skills which they can be proud of.</p>	

Although young people continue to go missing from the home, the frequency and length of these missing-from-home episodes are much reduced. In extreme situations the service is equipped to restrict individual young people's liberty for minimal periods of time. However, this practice is rarely used, and managers and staff rely instead on their knowledge of the young person and their relationship with them. This is an effective strategy. Recording of missing-from-home episodes is thorough. This assists staff and managers to note patterns of behaviour. Alternative and popular activities are then put into place to minimise the likelihood of the young person going missing on particular days or at particular times. These strategies have been successful in breaking established patterns and thereby have helped young people to stay safe.

The service has strong and effective relationships with other agencies, particularly the police. This sharing of intelligence means that if young people do go missing, they are returned to the service as quickly and safely as possible.

The service is successful at supporting family contact. Staff and managers have enabled family members to visit the service and some young people are now having regular contact in the family home. For some young people this means that vital relationships in their lives have been restored.

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young women. It is owned and managed by a charitable organisation. The home provides care for young women who are at risk of, or who are subject to, child sexual exploitation, and aims to keep them as near as possible to their own communities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/08/2016	Full	Good
15/06/2016	Full	Inadequate
12/01/2016	Full	Requires Improvement

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:

- Ensure that the statement of purpose is regularly reviewed to reflect key changes to practice in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)

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 who 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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