

1159682

Registered provider: St Christopher's Fellowship

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

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.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 May 2017

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: 9 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because

- Young people receive highly individualised care based on a comprehensive assessment.
- The home has effective relationships with the police and local authorities which help keep young people safe.
- The home has strong systems in place when young people go missing.
- Staff maintain good involvement with parents to sustain fragile relationships.
- Young people benefit from a wide range of counselling resources.
- Behaviour management is generally effective and consistent.
- Young people's days are well planned.
- Young people benefit from a confident and competent staff team that is well supported.
- The home is very well managed by a registered manager who is ambitious for excellence and is always looking to improve the quality of care offered.

The children's home's areas for development

- The statement of purpose requires reviewing and updating.
- Clarity is required over when the police come to the home to help manage behaviour.
- Further detail is required from the Regulation 44 visitor in relation to an aspect of restraint practice.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
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?

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 with the given timescales.

Statutory requirements

Requirement	Due date
Ensure that the statement of purpose is kept under review, and that HMCI is sent a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3) (a) (b))	09/08/2017

Recommendations

- Ensure that an agreement is made with the local police force to agree procedures and guidance on police involvement with the home, to reduce unnecessary police involvement in managing behaviour and criminalisation of behaviours. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.40)
- Ensure that the independent person makes a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding. This particularly relates to explicitly assessing the grounds for, and process of, any restriction of liberty. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people at the home receive highly individualised care based on a thorough initial assessment of their needs. This is then translated into personalised risk plans, the placement plan and daily planners. This focused attention means that all young people make some positive progress and have access to a wide range of experiences.

The home works closely and effectively with local authorities, and the police in particular. Sexual health workers and drugs and alcohol workers also routinely work with young people in the home. In addition, individual counselling is available to young

people, and they strongly benefit from the range of resources on offer to them. Staff involve parents in young people's care wherever possible, starting at pre-admission time. They continue to maintain and grow these important links through successfully offering social occasions at the home and by facilitating regular contact. Young people generally benefit from having warm, nurturing relationships with staff. They enjoy fun shared experiences such as shopping and fashion shows, as well as sometimes sharing painful memories and focusing on changing entrenched behaviours that are not safe.

Young people all develop trusting relationships with at least some staff members in the home. This enables them to make good progress in keeping themselves safer. Some young people engage better with education than they did and receive certificates of achievement. Others learn strategies to help them better regulate their emotions, and most learn practical life skills which will help them in their future.

Young people are usually engaged in their individual care, and often record their views on behaviour management strategies and key-work sessions. They are involved in the life of the home and have a strong voice on their diet and activities. They frequently take part in the recruitment of new staff. Their views on their future are listened to and they are supported to take these forward, for example on where they want to live in the future.

Young people's days are well planned, and contain a mixture of education input, their preferred activities, and planned sessions with their key workers or external professionals. Some young people require specific help in establishing healthy routines such as getting sufficient sleep. To assist them, staff create personalised plans involving 'feeling safe' measures, such as sitting outside the young person's door, and lengthy relaxation routines.

Young people are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves as soon as is practically possible. For example, all are involved in learning cooking, budgeting and laundry skills, while their ability to keep themselves safe is also regularly tested. Some young people can now get back and forth to education placements by themselves, and others can manage their own basic mobile phone safely. For these particular young people, this represents significant progress.

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

The home has developed effective processes to support its young people, who are all at high risk in the community. These processes include an overarching risk plan, which is very regularly updated, and a specific and detailed risk assessment that assesses the vulnerability of young people in the event that they from go missing from the home. Young people are helped to become safer by their involvement in these processes. In varying degrees, they begin to understand some of the dangers that they face. For some young people, this means that they recognise when situations are putting them at risk and ask for help. For others, it means that that their periods of going missing decrease, and some begin to understand that they can consent or otherwise to sexual activity.

Since the last inspection, staff have been challenged by incidents in which young people have caused considerable criminal damage to the home. On occasion, the police have been called to help manage these incidents while they are underway. However, there is a lack of clarity among staff about what threshold is applied prior to calling the police. This risks inconsistency and inappropriate criminalisation of young people.

The home has appropriately low rates of restraint use and of restriction of liberty. Staff are aware of the high thresholds necessary before these measures are used. Any use of restraint is appropriate, well documented, and overseen by managers. However, there is room for further improvement in monitoring restriction of liberty events. Although the Regulation 44 independent visitor currently notes these events, their review lacks explicit evaluation. Therefore, opportunities to consider how best to reduce risk further are lost.

The home has highly effective, individualised systems in place when young people go missing from the home. These are underpinned by strong relationships with the police missing person's team. Recently, this partnership working resulted in swift action to find a young person who was in a dangerous situation and therefore prevented the risk of serious harm.

Staff have a tenacious commitment to following young people when they go missing from the home. For example, recently staff spent most of a day following a young person on and off trains and enlisting the help of the British Transport Police. Eventually, the young person gave up trying to run away and went home safely with staff.

The recording of missing from the home events is comprehensive and thorough. These records include good, and reflective, management oversight on how these events occurred and were subsequently handled. Strategy meetings are requested if the young person is missing for more than a part day, or if activity during the missing episode suggests additional concerns. Local authority 'return from missing' interviews are always requested and followed up. As a result, the frequency of interviews has improved.

Behaviour management practice has improved since the last inspection. Staff are more consistent in their approach to challenging negative behaviour and encouraging positive behaviour. Local authority colleagues said, 'They are good at keeping boundaries and do what they say they will do.' This helps young people realise that there are consequences to all behaviours.

Allegations of harm are dealt with well. Appropriate agencies are promptly involved, and decisive action is taken to resolve issues. Young people are confident about complaining, when necessary, and their concerns are taken seriously. They are further protected from environmental harm by good attention being paid to their environment. Important health and safety checks are routinely carried out, damage is repaired promptly, and young people are educated to increase their understanding of dangers such as fire setting.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is very well managed by a permanent, registered manager who is rightly ambitious for her team to offer excellent practice to young people. She is a qualified social worker who is currently mapping her extensive leadership and management training and experience alongside the requirements of the Level 5 qualification. This process will be completed via correspondence during this inspection year.

A recommendation was raised at the last inspection to update the statement of purpose. This has not been completed, which means that the current statement of purpose does not accurately reflect how the home is run.

The home is appropriately staffed. The confident and competent group of staff have all been at the home for a considerable period of time. They said that they feel well supported by their managers and receive routine supervision, and have thorough and testing appraisals. Training is geared to the particular challenges of the young people living in the home, and staff said that they find it stimulating and helpful. Staff members' understanding of young people is further enhanced by regular group discussions with the home's psychologist.

Management monitoring is highly visible and effective. Any concerns raised by external agencies are quickly responded to and, where appropriate, improvements are made. External scrutiny from the independent visitor is timely, generally thorough, and probing. The registered manager is proactive in identifying and acting on any issues that might adversely affect the quality of care offered to young people. For example, she has recently completed a piece of work focusing on clarifying roles and empowering her leadership team. This has helped both their confidence and visibility, and young people are no longer reliant solely on the manager to give various permissions. The registered manager is also actively involved in monitoring the progress that young people make. She has identified that the moving on of young people by local authorities does not always promote young people's continued progress in certain areas. As such, the registered manager has developed a new transitions programme with the young person's individual needs at the centre. This has already been taken up by one local authority, and means that young people can still benefit from the home's expertise once they have left.

The management team is quick to involve other agencies in taking action to prevent known risks to young people. For example, their intelligence has resulted in the police sending warning letters to individuals. The strong relationships between the home and local authorities mean that the management team can be successfully proactive in advocating for young people, for example over ensuring that they receive appropriate education.

Potential admissions to the home are carefully considered. This includes a full assessment of needs, visits to the young person concerned, and having them stay overnight prior to full admission. This helps to ensure that the mix of young people in the home works as well as possible, and that the home focuses its efforts on those young people who need them most.

Case records are well kept, regularly updated, and young people's awareness of them is clearly documented.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

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: 1159682

Provision sub-type: 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: Nwamaka Williams

Inspector(s)

Bridget Goddard, social care inspector

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