

# St Michael's Fellowship, 52 Palace Road

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52 Palace Road, London SW2 3NJ

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this residential family centre

St Michael's Fellowship is an established independent charity dedicated to improving families' lives. Part of its services consists of four residential family centres in south London. The centre at 52 Palace Road offers residential assessments for up to six young mothers and their children. Fathers are unable to reside on the premises.

The manager started working at the centre in 2005 and has a long-standing registration with Ofsted.

**Inspection dates:** 21 to 22 May 2019

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and parents, taking into account</b>	good
How well children and parents are helped and protected	good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding

The residential family centre provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of previous inspection:** 4 April 2016

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## What does the residential family centre 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, Residential Family Centre Regulations 2002 and the national minimum standards. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>Further requirements as to health and welfare:</p> <p>The registered person shall ensure that–</p> <p>unnecessary risks to the health and safety of residents are identified and so far as possible eliminated. (Regulation 11(4)(c))</p> <p>In particular, address the potential hazards identified in the unsatisfactory electrical installation report.</p>	<p>01/08/2019</p>

### Recommendations

- Ensure the centre provides a comfortable and homely environment. (NMS 11.2)  
Address the mice issue to alleviate parental anxiety.
- Ensure the registered person can demonstrate, including from written and electronic records, that it consistently follows good recruitment practice. (NMS 14.2)  
In particular, record any gaps in employment.

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and parents: good**

Families benefit from an effective assessment process. Final reports clearly detail relevant theories and research, parenting strengths, areas for further development and capacity to change. A social worker described the final report as 'excellent'.

Families receive a broad level of support which holistically addresses their needs. Staff are highly creative in the way that they work with families, continually encouraging and motivating them. This provides parents with the opportunity to maximise their potential.

Parents actively share their views regarding their assessment, and they receive regular feedback from staff. Parents can influence day-to-day decisions about them and contribute to life at the centre. Parents appropriately use the complaints procedure to express any concerns.

Not all parents want to be at the centre, so the feedback during the inspection was generally negative. An ongoing issue for parents is the mice infestation. Although leaders and managers are addressing this issue, parents are very anxious and this is causing them additional stress.

Staff successfully work with parents who have a wide range of needs. These include learning disabilities, a variety of cultural and linguistic needs and the needs of young parents. One example is the support given to a Muslim mother to help her to practise her faith.

Parenting programmes focus on the unique needs of each family. This helps parents to become more confident in their role and improves their self-esteem and self-awareness. Teaching includes individual sessions, group workshops, attending community groups and expert advice from a wide range of health professionals.

Parents learn essential life and parenting skills, such as budgeting and cooking. Parents can develop as a person by improving their literacy and debating skills. Staff also arrange fun activities and new experiences for families, such as going to museums, parks and farms and going out for brunch.

Staff have a compassionate understanding of the emotional aspects of the assessment process. On admission, parents receive a welcome pack that includes food, toiletries and a toy for their child. Staff also help parents to create life-story books for their children, which include photographs of meaningful memories.

### **How well children and parents are helped and protected: good**

Safeguarding practice helps to protect the children, and decision-making focuses on their best interests. Staff are not afraid to make difficult decisions. Most of the final

assessment recommendations in the last year have been for separation, due to the parents being unable or unwilling to make the necessary changes.

Parents receive help to understand the impact on their parenting of domestic violence, their vulnerability, exploitation and grooming. Parents also increase their knowledge of the dangers of gang and knife crime and joint enterprise. Parents also learn how to perform paediatric first aid.

The voice of the child is emphasised in records, helping parents to develop empathy towards their child's feelings. Staff take the necessary action to safeguard children, irrespective of whether there is local authority funding in place. An example of this is providing additional staffing to escort a parent in the community.

Emotional resilience work helps parents to manage their anger and stress. Parents enjoy activities which help them to relax, such as massage and pampering sessions, arts and crafts and mindfulness sessions. Staff would like to introduce more activities to promote parents' emotional well-being, such as yoga.

Families live in a centre which has appropriate security and regular health and safety checks. However, the centre's electrical installation certificate states that the premises are unsatisfactory. An engineer has confirmed that the specific issue does not require immediate attention, however it is a potential hazard.

Staff benefit from an extensive range of safeguarding training, including learning from serious case reviews. There is a satisfactory approach to risk management and risk assessments are regularly updated. Staff appropriately notify all parties of significant events, in accordance with the regulations.

Families receive assistance from a well-qualified and suitably vetted staff team. Parents' views influence the recruitment of new staff. The organisation has a good recruitment procedure. The only shortfall was a small gap in one employment record.

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

Children and their parents benefit from a service which is continually evolving to meet their needs. The organisation is forward-thinking and has a commendable reputation within the social care field, both nationally and internationally. In recognition of her work with families, the responsible individual has been awarded an honour by the Queen.

The centre has a dynamic, highly experienced and well-qualified registered manager who leads by example. This individual's ongoing training ensures that she is kept updated on the latest research into child development. The registered manager also leads on the assessed and supported year in employment programme for newly qualified social workers.

Children and their parents receive assistance from highly skilled staff, whose diverse experience includes social work, teaching, mentoring, nursery management and youth offending work. The competent, committed and creative staff enjoy their work and praise their excellent support.

The extensive training opportunities ensure that the staff are highly skilled and kept updated on the latest developments. An outstanding example is the excellent court preparation training. Managers and staff receive substantial support from regular reflective supervision, appraisals and practice-enhancing team meetings.

Staff are strong advocates for parents. Leaders and managers challenge local authorities, particularly on drift within placements. Another example is requesting psychiatric and cognitive assessments to ensure that parents receive a fair assessment.

The centre is known for its innovation and the development of new ways of working and ideas. An example is using electronic tablets during video interaction guidance with parents. The centre has a strengths-based ethos and is highly aspirational for children and their parents.

Leaders and managers are actively aware of the centre's strengths and areas for development. There are ambitious plans for the future, and a highly effective quality assurance system is in place. The registered manager additionally carries out an annual audit, mapping compliance against the national minimum standards.

The centre excels in its strong partnership arrangements. The partnership with Middlesex University demonstrates its commitment to innovative practice and research. When parents leave the centre without their children, they are offered free outreach support through the 'Securing change' project.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and parents. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and parents. They watched how professional staff work with children and parents and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and parents. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the residential family centre knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and parents whom 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 Residential Family Centre Regulations 2002 and the national minimum standards.

## **Residential family centre details**

**Unique reference number:** SC047206

**Registered provider:** St Michael's Fellowship

**Registered provider address:** 136 Streatham High Road, London SW16 1BW

**Responsible individual:** Susan Pettigrew

**Registered manager:** Elizabeth Mitchell

**Telephone number:** 020 8671 1252

**Email address:** fifty.two@stmichaelsfellowship.org.uk

### **Inspector(s)**

Sharon Payne, social care inspector

Juanita Mayers, social care inspector



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