

SC459857

Registered provider: St Christopher's Fellowship

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a children's charity. The provider states in the statement of purpose that it provides care and accommodation for up to six children who have emotional, social and/or behavioural difficulties. Staff use concepts and theoretical models drawn from social pedagogy and attachment theory in their work.

This children's home has two emergency beds, one of which is used to provide up to 140 nights per year of 'Staying close' accommodation. This is in conjunction with the Department for Education's 'Staying close' initiative. The registered manager has been in post since 2016.

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 October 2019

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: 13 August 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 13/08/2018 | Full | Good |
| 30/08/2017 | Full | Outstanding |
| 25/01/2017 | Interim | Sustained effectiveness |
| 03/10/2016 | Full | Good |

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 education standard</p> <p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff–</p> <p>help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study;</p> <p>help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible.</p> <p>(Regulation 8(1), (2)(a)(i)(ii)(viii))</p> | 01/12/2019 |
| <p>Review of quality of care</p> <p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating–</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for</p> | 01/12/2019 |

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|---|--|
| <p>ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45(1), (2)(c), (5))</p> | |
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Recommendations

- Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (food hygiene). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

In particular, ensure that staff involved in food preparation have food hygiene training.

- Children should be supported to develop understanding and empathy towards each other. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)

In particular, this refers to allowing children the opportunity to increase their awareness of transgender issues.

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

In particular, ensure that risk assessments are updated and include all risks.

- Ensure that the registered person is responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

In particular, ensure that there is a record of the work undertaken following incidents.

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

In particular, this refers to the need to write monthly reports and ensure that the details of sanctions are recorded.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Most children have lived in the home for several years and thrive educationally, emotionally and socially. Children proudly listed the positive aspects of living at the home. Staff help children to maintain positive links with their family and friends.

Children settle and make progress within a nurturing and family-style environment. Leaders, managers and staff place a strong emphasis on creating a sense of belonging, which extends to both children and staff. The 'Staying close' initiative provides valued support for older children who have moved on.

Staff focus on the strengths of children and help them to become the best version of themselves. Staff work hard to improve children's self-worth, resilience and self-esteem. This enables children to enjoy their lives and be aspirational for the future.

Children's achievements include taking their GCSEs, undertaking a work placement in a government department and obtaining full-time employment. Children also excel in the creative arts. This includes acting, writing scripts and making their own music videos.

Children's records do not always evidence the good work being undertaken with them. Staff do not consistently record the informal educational activities that they do with children throughout the day or children's monthly progress.

Staff actively encourage children's talents and interests. Children enjoy a varied social life, going to pop concerts, the seaside and football matches and being taken by staff on holiday. Children also make a positive contribution to society through volunteering and participating in a citizenship programme.

All children are developing their independent-living skills. They enjoy baking and assisting staff with cooking meals, alongside taking responsibility for their own laundry and keeping their bedrooms clean. Children also learn budgeting and personal development skills.

Staff try to help children to appreciate equality and diversity. Staff challenge sexist, racist, homophobic and transphobic language. Staff have benefited from training to raise their awareness of transgender issues. However, children have not had this opportunity.

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

Children spoken with said that they feel safe and that the home provides them with a stable base. Since living at the home, children's behaviour and their emotional well-being have improved significantly. Children develop meaningful and trusting relationships with staff.

Children are learning to manage their anger and positively direct their feelings into

poetry and making music. Children feel comfortable enough to disclose past histories of abuse, which enables staff to get children the professional help that they need.

Staff respond calmly when children display challenging behaviours. This helps staff to de-escalate potential incidents. Staff prefer not to sanction children, favouring a positive reinforcement model. There is a personalised incentive system which rewards children's achievements and good behaviour.

When given, sanctions are appropriate and teach children the importance of taking responsibility for their own actions. Children described the sanctions as fair. The only issue was that, on one occasion, the staff had not recorded the actual sanction imposed

Children receive clear guidance from staff regarding the dangers that can be encountered on social media. No children are involved in sexually exploitative relationships. Also, children are no longer involved in gangs or criminal activity.

The location risk assessment includes local intelligence and details the potential concerns. Children's risk assessments consider their vulnerabilities and the measures that staff should take to keep children safe and reduce any risk. However, one risk assessment was not updated after an incident and did not include all the identified risks.

There have been no incidents when children have gone missing from the home.

Leaders and managers acknowledge that there are occasions when they are unable to meet children's complex needs. When this is the case, they work with placing authorities to ensure that children move to their new home in a planned and smooth manner.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Children benefit from a consistently high-quality service. A strength of the service is the organisation's commitment to providing long-term care to children and helping them to maximise their potential.

A wraparound therapeutic service is due to commence in November to provide clinical guidance to staff and children. Staff undertake specialist training, which enables them to incorporate psychological theories and research-informed practice into their day-to-day care.

The experienced, registered manager leads by example, and there is a clear vision for the future. Strong deputy- and team-leader arrangements strengthen the management structure. The registered manager brings a great passion to her role and is focused on providing positive childhood experiences for children.

The registered manager completes an evaluation of the quality of care. However, the report does not include the extensive plans to further improve the service. This information is gathered elsewhere and influences service development and practice.

Children receive care from a competent, enthusiastic, culturally diverse and gender-

balanced staff team. Staff say that they feel valued, and they demonstrate a commitment to their role. Staff receive good support through regular individual supervision, team meetings and annual appraisals.

Leaders and managers have addressed the recommendations from the last inspection.

Constructive monthly monitoring reports assist with the home's ongoing development. The only issue was in relation to an incident where the lessons learned had not been fully recorded.

The cook's post is currently vacant, which means that staff assist in preparing meals. During the inspection, it was noted that the staff member preparing lunch had not received food hygiene training. Staff have access to a wide range of training which includes an online food-safety course.

Children live in a spacious house which has recently been refurbished. Inspirational quotes and photos of children are on display. Children are currently liaising with an artist to create a graffiti-inspired mural for the games room.

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 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 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: SC459857

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: St Christopher's Fellowship

Registered provider address: 1 Putney High Street, London, Wandsworth SW15 1SZ

Responsible individual: Philip Townsend

Registered manager: Jennifer Hiskey

Inspector

Sharon Payne, social care inspector

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