

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 owned by a national charity. It provides care and accommodation for four children. The home's statement of purpose states that it provides care for children with social and emotional difficulties. The home's approach to working with children is trauma-informed and attachment based, and there is a commitment to social pedagogy.

The home was registered with Ofsted in September 2015. The manager was registered with Ofsted in May 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 17 February 2020 to carry out an interim inspection. The report is published on our website.

There are currently three children living at the home.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 May 2021

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: 17 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/02/2020	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
22/07/2019	Full	Good
05/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/06/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making a good level of progress, based on their initial starting points. A social worker described the support as 'brilliant' and a parent felt the home was 'perfect' for her child.

All children are in full time education, which is an achievement as some children had not attended school for several years. Children have passed exams, are enrolling in college and have aspirations that are best met to their interests.

Children have increased maturity and resilience and have improved their confidence and self-esteem. A child praised the staff team's problem-solving skills and stated, 'They make time to listen to me.' Children benefit from weekly reflection sessions and they are actively supported to achieve their goals.

Children have an influential voice within the home and they contribute to staff recruitment, staff appraisals and activity and menu planning. The restrictions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic have given children and staff an opportunity to bond through joint social activities and competitive challenges.

Children are leading a healthier lifestyle due to improved diets and regular exercise. There are examples of children losing weight, exploring veganism, making healthy juices, and some children have found chamomile tea relaxing. The planting of fruits, vegetables and herbs also helps children to learn the value of growing their own produce.

Staff respectfully support and work together with children's relatives, which helps with maintaining family relationships. For example, children regularly visit family members in a planned way. Children can also entertain their friends and family at the home.

Children enjoy new experiences, such as paintballing and going on holiday. For some children, this was their first holiday away and they enjoyed creating fun memories. Staff also help children to apply for funding for specific items of their choice, such as a bicycle.

Children are developing their independent living skills. Alongside practical skills, they are learning how to budget and be aspirational about their futures. Older children who formerly lived at the home have successfully moved in to semi-independent accommodation.

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

Children benefit from effective safeguarding arrangements. An independent reviewing officer described staff management of safeguarding issues as being 'on the ball'. The home provides a stable, nurturing long-term base for children.

Since living at the home, children's emotional well-being has improved. Children are requesting help with their emotions and angry feelings and they are engaging with mental health services. Children trust staff and they feel able to disclose their past experiences.

The organisation has a safeguarding sub-committee that ensures robust oversight of safeguarding practices. Leaders and managers refer to the appropriate agencies who initiate strategy meetings. Leaders and managers also actively seek out specialist support to safeguard children.

Children are continuously encouraged to make positive choices. Staff sensitively discuss concerning issues with children and the potential consequences of their actions. Children benefit from work with mentors, who are culturally reflective role models and offer children an additional source of support.

Children learn about their rights and staying safe online and in the wider community. Staff teach children how to appropriately respond to those in authority, for example, the police 'stop and search' powers. Children also learn to appreciate others and staff actively challenge discriminatory views, such as homophobia.

Staff work positively with children who are at risk of criminal exploitation. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of child protection, contextual safeguarding, knife crime and criminal exploitation. Practical measures are being taken to protect children. However, these were not fully detailed in the risk management documentation.

Staff are focused on the consistent encouragement of positive behaviour. They respond constructively to children's trauma, which helps them to de-escalate potential incidents. Any sanctions are appropriate and help children to learn accountability.

Staff rarely have to use physical interventions. On one occasion where a restraint was used, the duration was not recorded. Debriefings with the child and staff, however, did not highlight any cause for concern.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has been through a hard time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Children have found the situation challenging. They have benefited throughout from the strong and flexible leadership and a caring and resilient staff team.

Professionals praise the good communication, dedication of staff, and the fact that staff genuinely want the best for children. A grandparent described staff as 'very special people'. A parent described them as 'fabulous'.

The highly experienced registered manager is supported by a deputy manager and team leaders. Children receive care from a competent, committed and culturally diverse staff team. Staff say that they feel valued and they take pride in children's achievements.

The management team lead with confidence and a heart-felt tenacity, all centred on their central purpose to provide a quality service for children. Senior leaders are supportive and staff have appreciated their thoughtful approach throughout the pandemic.

The home has a good-quality assurance system, which is focused on enhancing children's quality of life. Constructive monthly monitoring reports highlight the home's strengths and identify areas for further improvement. Individual staff also take responsibility for specific areas in their champion roles.

Staff benefit from regular and reflective individual supervision, ongoing training, team meetings and annual appraisals. In addition, all staff hold the relevant and required level 3 qualification. This is complemented by therapeutic support, which helps them both personally and professionally. This enables staff to better understand children and ensure the home provides therapeutically informed care.

Children benefit from the ongoing refurbishment of their home. The dining area is currently being painted. However, the paintwork on the hallway bannisters is scuffed and requires attention.

Leaders and managers have effectively addressed the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection. The development of the home's music studio is a notable achievement. This will enable children to creatively express themselves and showcase their talents.

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 registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>its duration. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iv))</p>	<p>1 July 2021</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure there is a homely, domestic environment. In particular, address the scuffed paintwork on the bannisters. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure staff detail the full range of steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. In particular, detail the types of searches undertaken in the risk assessments and eco maps and further address contextual safeguarding. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 1 Putney High Street, London SW15 1SZ

Responsible individual: Philip Townsend

Registered manager: Jennifer Reade

Inspector

Sharon Payne, Social Care Inspector

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