

# 1159755

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 privately owned. It provides care for up to four girls who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home and a young person was being supported to move on to adult provision.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2021 and is suitably qualified.

### Inspection dates: 14 and 15 March 2023

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 26 January 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/01/2022	Full	Outstanding
26/11/2019	Full	Outstanding
08/05/2018	Full	Outstanding
11/07/2017	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

This home continues to provide outstanding care to children, who make measurable progress from their starting points. Staff work tirelessly to help children overcome any barriers to their learning, development and achievements. This is reflected in comments from a social worker who said:

'I am extremely impressed with the level of support provided in this home. Children are provided with everything that they need, and a sense of community. In all my experience, I have never seen a home like this before.'

Children access additional educational support through the company's education provision, which is helping to build children's confidence to re-engage with their learning after long periods of being absent from school. Staff encourage children to be aspirational about their future. They take advantage of valuable opportunities to improve future outcomes. For example, children participate in community groups, such as police cadets and voluntary work. The manager proudly spoke about a child winning a writing competition.

Excellent partnership working with health professionals is ensuring that children's medical and emotional needs are thoroughly understood and addressed. Staff work collaboratively with specialist health professionals in areas such as diabetes, sexual health and substance misuse. Additionally, the in-house therapeutic service provides direct support to children and clinical supervision and guidance to staff. Children enjoy good health. Staff consistently support them to make healthier life choices. Children and staff were observed cooking healthy meals together during the inspection.

Children enjoy a variety of activities where they learn new skills and have different experiences, such as horse riding and going on holiday with staff. These opportunities build the children's confidence and self-worth. As a result, children are better prepared to cope with inevitable life changes as they progress towards adulthood and independence.

Children's voices are strong and heard at this home. Staff proactively seek the children's views and ensure that they genuinely influence the running of the home. There is a culture of mutual respect and tolerance in the home and a feeling of genuine warmth. Staff foster excellent relationships through listening, showing empathy and being consistent with their care. Consequently, children meaningfully engage with staff, who then support them to better understand risks such as child sexual exploitation, substance misuse and going missing from home.

Children feel respected and therefore respect others. Staff's proactive approach to promoting equality, difference and diversity makes the home safe, inclusive and welcoming.

**How well children and young people are helped and protected:  
outstanding**

Children feel happy, content and safe at this home. A child said, 'I have never felt so loved since moving here.'

Children are protected by a highly trained, knowledgeable and competent staff team. Specialist resources, such as child sexual exploitation and substance misuse services, are commissioned to work with children at risk of harm and abuse. The very high level of support the home provides for children increases their resilience and awareness of risk. As a result, children are safer when they move to this home.

Staff are aware of the risks presented to children through digital technology, such as the internet and mobile phones. Some strong practice and protective strategies help to minimise these risks. For example, parental controls are installed on the home's and children's devices, which are monitored closely and risk assessed in discussion with children, their social workers and, when appropriate, their families.

Staff understand and follow missing-from-home procedures consistently. Staff are vigilant and take proactive measures to deter children from going missing from home. For example, when they suspect that a child is planning to go missing, they follow them and encourage them to return. This prevents a dangerous situation occurring and shows the child that staff genuinely care and want to protect them.

Restraint is only used as a last resort to safeguard children. The use of physical intervention is proportionate and recorded appropriately, and statutory procedures are consistently followed. Positive behaviour is encouraged through effective reward and praise. The trusting relationships that staff build with children are a key protective factor for them.

Staff report safeguarding concerns and allegations appropriately and swiftly to children's social workers, and, when necessary, the police and the local authority designated officer (LADO). Staff's quick response and sharing of information enable the relevant professionals to promptly investigate any concerns. However, on one occasion, the manager did not notify Ofsted of an allegation made against a member of staff, neither did she challenge the LADO when they delayed feeding back the outcome of their involvement.

The use of door sensors and a closed-circuit television camera inside the home have provided additional safeguarding measures to some children at risk of serious harm, such as child sexual exploitation. However, the blanket use of these measures for all children undermines the promotion of children's privacy and independence.

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

Children live in a highly effective and well-run home. Every effort is made to ensure that they receive the best possible care, support and protection. The suitably qualified and experienced registered manager and deputy are aspirational and enthusiastic leaders.

Children receive outstanding care, support and guidance from a highly committed, competent and nurturing staff team. The stable and settled staff team promotes continuity of care and strong attachments for children.

The skills of the staff team match the children's needs exceptionally well. Staff have a very detailed knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities and the children they care for.

Staff receive ongoing support, professional supervision and constant guidance from the registered manager and deputy. Additionally, they receive high-quality training to build their individual skills and knowledge relevant to the children's needs. Staff apply their learning effectively in their day-to-day work with children.

Joint working with professionals, parents and children is consistently strong. Social workers, teachers and health professionals praise the manager and the care the staff provide, as well as their commitment to the children.

In the main, the home is maintained to a high standard and is welcoming and homely. However, some areas of the home, including a child's bedroom and bathroom, have not been maintained to the same standard. This detracts from the homely ethos that managers, staff and children work hard to achieve.

Internal and external monitoring of the home are effective. The manager and staff constantly seek the views of children, and they demonstrate an in-depth understanding of children's experiences. The manager's quality of care review report could be further enhanced by reflecting children's views and feedback.

Children's records are well organised, up to date and detailed. However, the manager and staff do not sufficiently challenge placing authorities to ensure that they provide them with up-to-date care and placement plans.

## **What does the children's home need to do to improve? Recommendations**

- The registered person should challenge children's placing authorities and other relevant professionals when they do not provide information and documents in relation to the children living at the home in a timely way, such as care plans and responses to safeguarding concerns. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8)
- The registered person should ensure that all areas of the home, particularly children's bedrooms and bathrooms, are kept clean and well maintained. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that any limits or restrictions on children's privacy are only put in place to safeguard each child in the home (regulation 21(c)(i)). All decisions about the use of restrictive measures in the home should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and kept under regular review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should notify Ofsted of all allegations made against staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)
- The registered person should have a system in place which allows them to monitor and report on the matters set out in regulation 45 at least once every six months. The reports should include children's feedback about their views and experiences of living at the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)

## **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:** 1159755

**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:** Michelle de Souza

## Inspector

Marina Tully, Social Care Inspector

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