

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 registered with Ofsted in October 2015 and is owned and managed by a private provider. It offers care for up to four children of the same gender who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home.

The registered manager has been in post since September 2020.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

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: 14 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
26/01/2022	Full	Outstanding
26/11/2019	Full	Outstanding
08/05/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Staff consistently provide outstanding care to children, who make exceptional progress while living at the home. The care provided to children is of a high standard. Leaders and staff care about the children and want the best outcomes for them.

Children's health needs are excellently supported by staff, who advocate for their interests and work with professionals to promote positive outcomes. One child has experienced significant health improvements since moving into the home. The child was initially reluctant to access medical treatment for a long-standing and serious condition. Staff advocated for the child to receive a specialised treatment option, which has empowered the child to lead in the management of their own care, and they are now able to show staff how best to meet their needs.

Children make educational progress at the home. Staff help children to stick to their routine of daily education and use creative ways to encourage children to learn in formal and informal settings. Staff creatively help children to learn about the world. Children use an interactive globe each week to choose an area of the world to learn about. Staff support children to carry out research and learn about the culture of the chosen country. Children are also encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities. For example, they participate in community groups and work with professionals in the community to better understand how to keep themselves safe.

The atmosphere in the home is warm, lively and joyous. Staff and children choose to congregate together in the kitchen, and children appear happy and relaxed in the company of staff. Children bake, socialise, play games and converse with staff throughout the day. Staff have created a family feel to the home, which has resulted in the children building trusting and open relationships with them.

Staff celebrate children's achievements and write thoughtful messages to them when they are having a difficult day. This makes the children feel cared for, and the children have used the messages to decorate their bedroom doors.

Children and professionals speak positively about the home and the care that staff provide. One professional said that the home developed a child-focused report which has been used in review meetings. The professional said that the report was a good idea and that they would use the innovative approach in their subsequent work with children.

Children say and show through their behaviour that they experience feeling loved by the staff. Children who have moved out of the home continue to visit and spend time with the staff, and their reflections on living in the home are highly positive.

The kitchen is the hub of the home. However, children's access to the kitchen is restricted for short periods when it is being cleaned, which is inconsistent with the ethos of the home. There are no identified reasons why children should not further develop their learning of health and safety and their independence skills in the kitchen.

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

The children know that their safety is a priority, and they proactively seek help from staff to keep themselves safe. One child said, 'The staff are brilliant, they worry about me because they care. Living here is wonderful.' The registered manager pays close attention to the risks that children face and decisively directs staff to focus their attention on supporting children to become safer. This has led to a reduction in risks to the children in the home.

Children rarely go missing from the home. When this does occur, staff make persistent attempts to locate children. Staff talk to children and stress the importance of their safety. Staff are willing to express their emotions to show children that there is a real effect on them when the children's safety is threatened, which is a powerful reminder to the children of the genuine care and affection that staff have for them.

Leaders and managers ensure that staff are appropriately vetted to work with children. Safer recruitment procedures provide assurances that staff have been appropriately vetted before they provide care for the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager uses innovative approaches to ensuring that staff meet children's needs. Creative resources help children to explore their emotions and to talk about the issues that they face. This further strengthens the relationships that children have with staff and enables them to be receptive to accepting guidance and advice.

The manager ensures that staff are consistently aware of children's needs, and they work together as a team to help children to progress towards their targets. Children's records are a warm reflection of the time spent with staff and one of the ways that it is evident that staff treat the children with the utmost respect.

Leaders and managers supportively challenge staff to adjust their practice when they identify that this is in children's best interests. For example, the manager discussed with a new member of staff the benefits of softening their approach to working with children and how they could do this. Leaders and managers help to instil a child-focused culture with new staff and ensure that there is a high expectation for staff's practice to be child centred.

Regular team meetings comprehensively include the children. In addition to staff discussing each child in detail, children are invited to contribute themselves, where

appropriate. Staff are encouraged to reflect on their practice and to help each other to consider how they could respond differently to situations, continually striving to improve their practice.

The manager continually invests in staff's learning and development and swiftly arranges training so that staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet children's needs, for example training in financial competency. Staff are expected and supported to learn the role of the post directly senior to them, not only to support their own development, but to ensure that staffing contingency arrangements provide children with consistency.

The manager consistently involves staff in work with external professionals so that meeting children's needs is extended beyond a whole team effort. One professional said, 'The staff are very compassionate, reflective and willing to try different approaches so that they incorporate the expertise of others, which is very reassuring.' This approach has led to children developing vital life skills and knowledge, which has promoted their safety and well-being.

What does the children's home need to do to improve? Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children develop independence skills in the supportive environment of the home, including through encouraging independent use of the kitchen. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.21)

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: Laverne Cole

Registered manager: Michelle de Souza

Inspectors

Natalie Marshall, Social Care Inspector

Paula Kelly, Social Care Inspector

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