

2495375

Registered provider: St Christopher's Fellowship

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a national charity and provides a therapeutic model of care for up to nine children. One of the nine beds available is in a training flat to support children with their transition to independent living. The home accepts both planned and emergency admissions. It is a commissioned service for children living in the London Borough of Wandsworth.

At the time of the inspection, four children were living at the home.

The home registered with Ofsted in November 2018. The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2021.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 May 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 29 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29 March 2023	Assurance	Not applicable
25/04/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/05/2021	Full	Good
12/12/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Although staff undoubtedly want the best for children, they have not achieved stability for all children in their care. A number of children have moved to the home in an emergency and two children moved out of the home in an unplanned way. For these children, experiences of moving in and on from the home have not been positive.

Children's sleep patterns are disrupted by poor bedtime routines. At times, some children are not going to sleep until the early hours of the morning. Inconsistent routines and boundaries are hindering children's progress.

Staff understand the importance of education and there are some positive examples of collaborative working with schools. However, when children are unable to attend school, staff's efforts to ensure that they study at home are limited. Specialist services are swiftly sourced to help meet children's specific needs, such as independent mentors and local authority support workers.

Children are supported to maintain positive relationships with the people who are important to them. Staff work closely with children and their families to improve the quality of time that they spend together. As a result, family relationships are strengthened.

Staff encourage some children to develop independence skills in line with their age and ability. Children often remain in regular contact with staff when they move on from the home. This demonstrates the staff's ability to build positive and lasting relationships with children.

Children live in a warm and welcoming environment. However, some outstanding repairs, such as damage to wall hangings and photo frames, are undermining the homely ethos of the home.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Since the last inspection in March 2023, there has been an increase in serious incidents at the home. These incidents were largely in relation to safeguarding concerns for one child, who has since left the home. Staffing arrangements and safeguarding strategies to support this child were, at times, unsatisfactory. As a result, children's stability and safety at the home were compromised. Additionally, behaviour management strategies were not always effective, and the police were frequently being called to the home to help staff manage children's behaviour. It is reassuring that leaders and managers had already identified and acted to address these shortfalls prior to this inspection, including escalating these concerns to the

professional network. Further work is needed to ensure that these improvements are embedded and sustained.

Children have positive relationships with staff. They say that they can speak to staff or managers if they have concerns or worries. When children do raise concerns, they are dealt with appropriately.

When children go missing from the home, staff and managers work hard to maintain communication and ensure that children are safe. However, independent return-home interviews do not always take place. Leaders and managers are missing opportunities to obtain increased insight into the reasons why children go missing and make plans to prevent this from happening again.

Safeguarding concerns about staff are appropriately shared with the local authority designated officer. This allows the most-appropriate professional to respond to these concerns.

Room searches are conducted sensitively when there is a cause for concern. Staff remove items that pose a risk to children and talk to them about their concerns and worries. Positive relationships and communication with children are enhancing children's safety.

Staff and managers ensure that children understand the importance of treating others with respect. Children are challenged about their inappropriate language, remarks, and attitude. This demonstrates that children are helped to learn to appreciate equality and diversity and what discrimination means.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The leadership and management of the home is stable. The home is managed by a suitably qualified and registered manager, who is supported by the highly experienced responsible individual.

Staff at the home feel well supported by colleagues and the manager. Regular team meetings and individual supervision provide staff with opportunities to reflect on their practice and share their views and ideas. Managers also share information, which supports staff practice and learning.

The quality of staff training is a strength of the home. There is a comprehensive workforce development plan that provides the manager with a clear overview of the staff team's strengths and areas for development. As a result, children are cared for by a well-trained and knowledgeable team.

Effective and clear communication with key stakeholders is good. Regular discussions take place with a range of stakeholders, including therapists, social workers and health services. The quality-of-care review reflects the positive views and experiences from a range of stakeholders.

The home's statement of purpose has not been updated and a copy provided to Ofsted as required.

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
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— an understanding about acceptable behaviour. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children. (Regulation 11 (1)(b) (2)(a)(i)(v)(ix))	13 June 2023
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into	13 June 2023

account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(vi))	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulations 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f))	13 June 2023
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	13 June 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are only admitted to the home in an emergency if the appropriate support systems are in place and any disruption to the children living at the home is carefully considered and minimised. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.6)
- The registered person should ensure that any damage in the home is swiftly repaired. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person should ensure that when children are unable to attend school, staff support them to continue to learn through independent study at home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)

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: 2495375

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: Tara McCrory

Inspector

Maud Pipim-Addo, Social Care Inspector

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