

2510199

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 operated by a registered charity. It can accommodate up to four children who have social and emotional difficulties.

There is a registered manager who is qualified and experienced.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 May 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

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: 24 January 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
24/01/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/07/2021	Full	Good
26/02/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

A serious incident occurred the day before the inspection that involved the police being called to the home. This incident is being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the incident were considered alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform the inspector's judgements.

Three children lived at the home at the time of the inspection. One child moved on from the home the day before the inspection in an unplanned way. The needs of the child were considered well before they moved into the home and the circumstances in which they left were unanticipated. During the inspection, the manager was liaising with relevant people to ensure that all necessary information was being shared and that suitable plans for the child were being discussed.

Children's educational progress is mixed. One child is regularly attending a training centre and is completing voluntary work alongside this. Two children are not receiving education in line with their plans. Some work has been completed with the children to help them understand the importance of education, but this does not go far enough. Staff and managers struggle to motivate the two children, and they are not in good daily routines to support their return to learning. The organisation has recently appointed a senior learning mentor who will work with the children and staff to address this issue. This work is still in its early stages and yet to be full embedded.

One child is making plans to move on from the home when they turn 18. Staff have done some work with the child with things like cooking and shopping. However, the child often lacks motivation and does not always complete key tasks as agreed. This means that when they are due to move on, which is soon, they may not have the skills they need to look after themselves well.

Children are more engaged in leisure activities than previously. They have been to a trampoline park, ice skating and to an escape room, which they enjoyed.

Children have positive relationships with staff. Children informed the inspector they can talk to staff about how they feel.

Children see people who are important to them. Staff and managers encourage children to spend time with and talk to family members. Some children have overnight stays with family members. One parent spoke to the inspector and reported that staff keep them regularly informed and facilitate additional family time on special occasions like birthdays.

Children meet with staff weekly to share their views about things they like and how they are feeling. Children also discuss activities and meal plans for the week. Staff use the meetings as opportunities to talk to children about things like bullying and fire safety.

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

Staff only use physical intervention as a last resort. There have been two incidents of this nature since the last inspection. The manager has not reviewed one of these incidents, and the child was not spoken to following both incidents. This does not provide the opportunity for children to talk with someone about what happened.

Children's risk assessments are not always updated with relevant information following incidents that happen. They do not contain clear guidance for staff to manage behaviours from children that cause concern. For example, when children stayed up throughout the night, there was no review of what happened to help staff understand how to respond to this should it happen again. When it did, there was no advice for staff to follow.

When one child raised a concern about a staff member, staff did not use the on-call service to seek advice about next steps. Instead, they waited until the following day. On being alerted to the concern, the manager followed due process and contacted the local authority designated officer and the child's placing authority. The matter was looked into and resolved. The manager did not notify Ofsted of the allegation in line with regulation.

Children know how to make a complaint. There has been one complaint from a child and one from a neighbour since the last inspection. Complaints are managed sensitively and restorative work is completed with children to help them understand the impact of their behaviours on themselves and others.

There have been no missing-from-care incidents since the last inspection. Managers have undertaken work with staff to revisit agreed missing-from-care procedures during staff meetings so that they know what to do in the event that such an incident occurs. At times, one child can walk off from the home for a short period when they are struggling to manage their feelings. Procedures around this are clear, with staff following the child at a safe distance and encouraging them to return to the home. Staff have completed follow-up work with the child to help them learn different ways to manage their feelings.

Staff and the manager give praise and rewards to promote positive behaviours. Negative sanctions are rarely implemented. When they are, these are restorative in nature and aimed at helping children learn.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

There is a registered manager who is qualified and experienced. The manager's plans to develop the home and staff team are in their early stages, and the impact of these plans has not yet been realised.

Staff working in the home informed the inspector that they feel supported by the manager. Staff in the home have been working in the provider's other home, which was struggling with staff sufficiency issues. The staff team has recently returned to their respective roles in the home. This period has been challenging and has had an impact on the consistency of care and support offered to children. The manager is keen to ensure that moving forward, the staff team works consistently together in the care and support they provide to the children and has plans to develop this.

The manager has some monitoring and review systems in place, which allows her to have some oversight. However, these systems are not used consistently and effectively. For example, the manager was not aware that children's risk assessments had not been updated and lacked guidance for staff to manage specific behaviours. Furthermore, not all staff have had regular supervision.

There continues to be gaps in staff training, with some staff having not completed mandatory courses. In addition, staff have not had training to help them understand the specific needs of children in their care. This does not ensure that staff have all the relevant knowledge they need to care for each child well.

Staff working in the home have been safely recruited. This helps to ensure that only adults who are safe, work in the home.

One parent and two social workers shared positive feedback with the inspector about the care provided by staff. Family members and professionals reported that managers and staff communicate well with them. In addition, they said that staff have worked hard with children to help them settle in the home and that children have positive relationships with staff.

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(iv)(ix)) In particular, help children to develop good routines and engage in constructive activities during the school day to support their return to education, training or employment. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	26 June 2023
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—	10 July 2023

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(h)) In particular, ensure that staff receive regular supervision and complete training relevant to their role and relevant to children they care for. In addition, ensure that the manager submits serious incident notifications in a timely way and that their monitoring and review systems ensure that children's plans and assessments are accurate and up to date. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1) (a)(b) (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	10 July 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff consistently work with children to help them develop age-appropriate, independence life skills in line with their plans so that when children are prepared for when they move on from the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 17, paragraph 3.27)

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: 2510199

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: Paula Williams

Inspector

Shazana Jamal, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023