

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 with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The manager is registered with Ofsted and is appropriately experienced. The registered manager is currently completing the level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

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

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 July 2021

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be 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: 26 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/02/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress from their starting points. Two children have moved on from the home to return to live with family and one child is currently making plans to move into supported accommodation as part of her move to independence. Children receive good support from staff to achieve these excellent outcomes.

Staff help children to learn important life skills and independence skills which help them to prepare for adulthood. These skills range from learning how to change a light bulb to shopping, budgeting and using the washing machine.

Children are supported to see family and friends. Staff and the registered manager have worked hard to ensure that children are able to see people who are important to them. This helps children to maintain their sense of identity and belonging.

Staff consider children's views in relation to things that matter to them, such as education and family-related issues. Children also have their say about what they like to eat and what activities they would like to do. This helps children feel listened to and valued.

The registered manager and staff have worked hard to ensure that children access education. Two children have sat exams and one child attended a college interview on her own to secure a college place for the next academic year. This good support builds children's confidence in their learning abilities and helps children to work towards educational and employment goals.

Staff undertake some good direct work with children to discuss behaviours that cause concern. However, this direct work is not undertaken consistently and does not always help children to gain insight into concerns around some behaviours and the impact of their actions on others. For example, one child continues to smoke and sometimes does so in his room, and this issue is not adequately addressed with him.

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

Staff and the registered manager do not always respond consistently well when children experience crisis. The inspector saw excellent partnership working for one child when there were concerns around her health and well-being. This led to the development of a safety plan and clear strategies for staff to follow to keep a child safe. However, on another occasion, staff did not seek medical advice when information shared by family members suggested a child wanted to cause harm to himself. In addition, this information was not shared with the child and adult mental health service to see if they could bring forward his access to their support. On this occasion, staff actions did not fully promote this child's health and wellbeing.

Staff work with children to develop incentives to help them reach certain goals. However, the registered manager does not have a clear system of recording rewards and praise. This makes it difficult to see when children are rewarded for positive behaviour.

Children do not go missing often and missing-from-home incidents have reduced since children have come to live at the home. When children do go missing, staff follow missing-from-care protocols by maintaining contact with children, searching the local area and contacting the police. However, when children return home, the registered manager has not ensured that children are always offered an independent return-home interview. In addition, staff do not always undertake direct work with children to explore the missing-from-care incident. This is a missed opportunity to understand why children go missing.

Children receive some good support and information to help them to understand why illegal substances are harmful. This provides them with the knowledge to make better and more informed choices relating to the dangers of smoking cannabis.

Staff are safely recruited to work in the home. This helps to ensure that safe adults work with children in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and is currently completing her level 5 qualification. She has good insight into the strengths and needs of the home, has aspirations for children and is keen to continue improving the service.

There have been some changes to the staff team. New staff are well supported by experienced managers and this provides the team with stability and guidance. A newly appointed regional manager strengthens the support that is offered to children and staff at the home.

Two parents and one social worker gave positive feedback to the inspector, sharing that staff and the registered manager involve them regularly and have helped children make progress. Overall, good communication supports children's development.

Staff have regular supervision which is reflective. New staff are supported through an induction and probation process. Experienced staff have appraisals which help them progress. Staff shared with the inspector that they feel valued, supported and enjoy working in the home.

Some statutory documentation is missing from children's case records for example, the local authority placement plan was not on file for two children. Managers complete regular file audits and have a plan to address their internal monitoring systems to make them more effective.

Staff have completed relevant training to help them understand the needs of children they care for. More than half the team are qualified to level 3. However, one member of staff is out of timescale to complete his level 3 qualification in caring for children and young people.

The manager has completed a review of the quality of care and submitted this to Ofsted within the required timescales. The report gives a good overview of children's outcomes, including information about two children who moved back to live with family in a planned way and a reduction in missing-from-care incidents. However, the manager has not included the views of children and others, and has not evaluated how this has contributed to the review in improving the service.

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— 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. (Regulation 11 (1)(b) (2)(a)(v)) In particular, ensure that work is undertaken around a young person smoking and sometimes doing so in his bedroom.	5 September 2021
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 account information in the child's relevant plans, and if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) In particular, undertake direct work with children more consistently regarding behaviours that cause concern, seek medical advice when necessary and share information with relevant professionals as needed.	5 September 2021
This regulation applies to a child who is looked after by a local authority.	5 September 2021

The registered person must co-operate with the child's placing authority in agreeing and signing the child's placement plan. (Regulation 17 (1) (2)) In particular, ensure that a copy of each child's local authority placement plan is available at the home.	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualifications and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32(1) (2)(a) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b)) Ensure that there is a clear plan in place for the one member of staff to complete the level 3 qualification as soon as possible.	31 December 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are offered an independent home interview by the local authority when a child returns home after being missing from care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure that staff document when children receive rewards to celebrate positive behaviour. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.39)
- The registered person should ensure that the review of the quality of care includes the views of children and others, and their feedback contributes to the development of the service. ('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: 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: Philip Townsend

Registered manager: Lisa-Kay Waite

Inspector

Shazana Jamal, Social Care Inspector

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