

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. The home provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

Since the last inspection, a new manager has been managing the home. The manager is appropriately qualified and experienced, and has submitted their application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 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: 19 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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

Three children were living at the home at the time of this inspection. Since the last inspection, seven children have moved out of the home. Of these, three children moved on from the home in a planned way. Children who experienced unplanned endings were not settling in the home, and some lived at the home for only a short time as their needs could not be met by the manager and staff. Unplanned endings do not have a positive impact on children's care experiences.

For children not in full-time education, staff have explored different educational pathways and this has led to children receiving an offer of a school place. However, children are not being well prepared to return to school. For example, children do not have good daily routines, and they often stay in bed and do little throughout the day. Managers and staff have not addressed this. Although children sometimes take part in structured activities with the staff, this is not done consistently.

Staff work with children to plan independence and develop life-skills. While children had made a good start with this, progress is not being sustained in this area.

Children are provided with opportunities to meet and spend time with the organisation's participation officer, who seeks their views on how to improve the service. Although this work is in its early stages, it provides a platform for children to share their views and shape the service they receive.

Children's health needs are met. Generally, children attend their routine appointments with the dentist and optician. In addition, children access external support from agencies such as the child and adolescent mental health service.

Children know how to make a complaint. The manager has received complaints from children and responded to these appropriately. Two children spoke with the inspector and said that they could identify staff they could speak to if they had any worries, and that staff listened.

There have been times when children have not got on with each other. Staff have spoken to children about this to help them to reflect on how this can be improved. Children are now more settled and getting on with each other better.

Children spend time with people who are important to them. This includes children having overnight stays with family members, and family members coming to the home to spend time with children. Children enjoy some positive activities with staff, such as going swimming and for walks.

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

Children sometimes go missing from home. When they do, staff do not always look for children. In addition, staff do not routinely talk with children to understand more

about why they go missing from home and what happened to them while they were away. This lack of consistency does not fully promote children's safety and welfare.

Children vulnerable to exploitation have not received consistently good support. Staff have not worked with children to help them understand how some relationships can be harmful. In addition, staff are not helping children to understand how to keep themselves safe when they spend time out in the community with friends.

Restraint incidents rarely happen. However, when they do, children do not always receive a debrief to talk about what happened. The inspector also noted an additional incident when a child was held for their own safety, which had not been recorded as a restraint. This had not been identified through the manager's or independent visitor's monitoring of the service.

Children receive consequences for unwanted behaviour that are proportionate. These consequences enable children to understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others. However, staff do not always work effectively with children to address behaviours of concern. For example, when a child recorded a video on their phone of their peer misbehaving, without their peer's consent, this was not followed up by staff. In addition, staff are not regularly giving children rewards or celebrating their achievements. This does not promote positive behaviours and help children develop a sense of achievement.

The fire risk assessment has been completed and recommendations made have been addressed. Staff undertake regular fire evacuation drills and they know what to do in the event of such an emergency. Sometimes, children refuse to participate in fire evacuation drills and staff do not follow this up to help children increase their fire safety awareness.

When children ask for something and are refused, staff explain to them the reason. This enables children to understand more about decisions being made relating to their day-to-day care, and helps them to be more accepting of reasonable boundaries implemented.

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

There have been some changes to the staff team since the last inspection, which have included a deputy manager and the registered manager leaving. In addition, core staff from the home have been supporting another home in the region. This has had an impact on the consistency of care and support offered to children at this home.

The manager has in place some monitoring and reviewing systems; however, these are not consistently effective. For example, the manager was unaware that records had not been completed of the work undertaken with children to address concerns around exploitation and safe use of social media.

Not all staff have completed their mandatory training. In addition, not all staff have completed training specific to the needs of children in their care. Gaps in staff training mean that staff are not equipped with the relevant knowledge they need to care for children.

The manager has completed a review of the quality of care. However, they have not included the views of children and others in the review and so it is not clear how those using the service contribute to its development.

Staff receive regular supervisions. New staff are supported through an induction and probation process, with any issues raised about staff practice being adequately addressed. Staff told the inspector that they feel supported and enjoy working in the home.

The manager is experienced and qualified. They understand the strengths of the home and have made plans to address the shortfalls to develop staff practice and ensure that children are offered consistent care and support.

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))	24 March 2023
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; 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;	24 March 2023

help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful; help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, ensure that staff work with children to help them develop the skills and understanding to use social media safely and withdraw from harmful exploitative relationships.	
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 any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)) In particular, ensure that staff follow children's missing-from-care protocols, which include looking for children when they go missing, and that they work with children to understand why they go missing, to reduce this. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	24 March 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— 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))	24 March 2023
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))	24 March 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff document when children receive rewards to celebrate positive behaviour. This recommendation was made at the

last inspection and is restated. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 46, paragraph 9.39)

- The registered person should ensure that the home only accepts children for whom it can provide care in line with the child's plans, and that children have a positive experience of living in and moving on from the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- 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. This recommendation was made at the last inspection and is restated. ('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: Post vacant

Inspector

Shazana Jamal, Social Care Inspector

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