

2566231

Registered provider: St Christopher's Fellowship

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home was registered with Ofsted in May 2020 and is owned and operated by a charity. It is registered to provide care for one child with social and emotional difficulties as a result of their childhood experiences.

A new manager is in post. He has not yet registered with Ofsted.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020.

We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021. We last visited this setting on 24 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 December 2021

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

This is the home's first full inspection since it was registered with Ofsted in May 2020. The home is registered to care for one child. Since opening, three children have lived in the home. Children who live in this home have not been provided with the quality and robust care they require to keep them safe.

Managers do not adequately match children to the home and the skillset of the staff. Staff do not have the experience, skills and qualifications to meet the individual needs of children. As a result, children receive poor-quality care.

Children are not provided with children's guides prior to moving in to the home. This omission does not fully prepare children for where they are going to live. It also means that children are not given an opportunity to express their views and make informed choices about their care.

Staff use restrictive alarms on children's bedroom doors. Managers have not completed a rigorous assessment of children's needs to support any need for this measure. The manager did not view this measure as a restriction on children's liberty.

The manager has implemented an excessive and unreasonable sanction for one child. There is no end date to this sanction. No records are maintained about this sanction and the manager does not review this measure as required.

When children make complaints, staff take these seriously. Children receive good communication about their complaints in a timely manner. They are kept fully informed about the progress and outcome of their complaint.

Staff support children to attend education. When children are not in full-time education staff ensure that there is home tutoring while looking for an appropriate education setting. This provides children with structure to their day and helps them to re-engage with formal education.

Children receive support to help them to develop their independence skills. Staff help children to learn to cook and to open bank accounts. This promotes independence and gives children a sense of pride and achievement.

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

Staff have failed to adequately protect and safeguard the children they are caring for. There have been two significant safeguarding incidents that have resulted in staff not protecting children. As a result, children have been harmed. Following these serious incidents, managers do not take enough action to recognise new risks,

provide staff with information about how to manage them, and update risk assessments accordingly.

Managers do not take enough action to keep children as safe as possible should they go missing from home. They did not work with the placing authority to implement a strategy for a child who is known to go missing. Staff do not have robust plans to follow when the child goes missing. There is a lack of preventative measures with regards missing and poor records, including independent return-home interviews. As a result of this poor care, one child went missing from home and staff were not aware until the police returned them home following a serious incident.

Staff lack the skills and insight into children's behaviours and resort to calling the police to manage behavioural incidents. Managers do not provide staff with sufficient guidance about when to use restraint to keep children safe. This includes poor risk assessments. Children are therefore engaging in unsafe behaviours, with little challenge from staff. This has resulted in children being harmed and spending time in hospital, staff being assaulted, and the potential for children to be criminalised.

Staff do not understand their responsibilities in reporting serious concerns that arise. For example, staff did not report that the key for the home's car was missing. Due to this lapse in information sharing and oversight, a child was able to take the home's car. This put the child at significant risk of harm.

Staff did not support a child to help him understand the risk of smoking in his bedroom, or the negative impact on his health. The risk was further increased due to the child's bedroom door not being compliant with fire safety regulations. The manager had raised this as something to be fixed. However, there was no urgency or plan in place for how to mitigate the risk while waiting for the repair.

When appointing agency staff, the manager has not followed safe recruitment practice. There are omissions in the workers' employment history, and gaps are not explored. As a result, the manager is unable to demonstrate that he knows that the people who work in the home are safe to do so.

The inspector repeatedly requested the recruitment file of the manager. However, this was not provided during the inspection. This has the potential to compromise safeguarding measures when recruiting staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Since the monitoring visit in February 2021, there is a new manager in post. He joined the organisation in September 2021 and has applied to Ofsted to be the registered manager.

The manager does not have a clear vision for the service in line with their current conditions of registration. They spoke about changing their conditions to care for children with a learning disability. However, staff do not have the skills, training or

experience to provide this care. This is demonstrative of his lack of understanding that children need to receive appropriate individualised care to meet their needs.

Staff do not have the training, skills and qualifications to meet the individual needs of children. Children move in to the home when managers have already identified that staff are not skilled to meet their needs. Training is not given to staff to provide them with the skills they require. These significant failings leave staff poorly prepared for their roles, and impact negatively on the care and protection children receive.

The manager does not ensure that the records in the home are accurate. The rota is missing a staff member's surname and does not identify who is sleeping in the home. This means that the records cannot identify staff or be relied upon.

The manager has failed to ensure that there are robust systems in place to help him review the quality of care for children and staff development. For example, despite having a development plan in place, the manager was not aware that the time frame for staff training had lapsed. Additionally, the systems that the home use to record children's information are not being utilised effectively. During the inspection, the manager did not know where important information was stored.

Staff do not receive regular reflective practice-based supervisions and annual appraisals. This is a missed opportunity to formalise and review staff development and improve the quality of care children receive.

The manager's recent review of the location of the home is not effective. It does not sufficiently address potential risks in the immediate local area. This has the potential to impact on children's safety when they are away from the home.

An investigation into the serious safeguarding incident where a child was able to take the home's car has been completed. This review was thorough, independent and clear about the inadequate practice and failing of staff to ensure the child's safety. This robust process has taken into account weaknesses in staff practice and planned to address them through disciplinary procedures.

The previous manager made improvements to the safe storage of medication after a significant incident where a child was harmed.

Due to the findings at the inspection, the responsible individual has notified Ofsted of the home's voluntary cancellation, to take effect on 20 December 2021. In the absence of this, Ofsted would have raised compliance notices under regulation 12, regulation 13 and regulation 14 and considered whether any other enforcement action was necessary.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; protect and promote each child's welfare; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)) The relates to ensuring that children have robust behavioural support plans in place.	19 January 2022
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	9 January 2022

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; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)) This specifically relates to staff fully understanding children's risks, the actions they should take to protect children, and children's plans reflecting known risks and vulnerabilities. It also relates to staff following these plans and taking effective action when there is a serious concern about a child's welfare.	
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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;	9 January 2022

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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(h)) This specifically relates to ensuring that statement of purpose accurately reflects the care children are offered. It also relates to staff working as a team and not in isolation of the manager or each other. Staff must be trained to meet the individual needs of children. This includes, and is not limited to, attachment, missing from home, child exploitation, radicalisation prevention, supporting positive behaviour and substance and alcohol misuse. This also relates to ensuring that there is an effective monitoring system in place to track when staff training is due to expire.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home’s statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) This specifically relates to only accepting children who fit the criteria specified within the home’s statement of purpose. It also relates to the manager trying their best to meet the child prior to them moving in to the home, and sharing important information about the home with them, including the children’s guide.	9 January 2022

It also relates to ensuring that staff have the skills and experience to meet the needs of the child moving in to the home, and discussions take place with the placing authority to plan strategies for children who are known to go missing from home.	
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (5)) The specifically relates to ensuring that the statement of purpose reflects the registration criteria granted by Ofsted, and staff are trained in the methods stated.	19 January 2022
No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. The following measures may not be used to discipline any child— Imposing a financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum (which may be by instalments) by way of reparation. (Regulation 19 (1) (2)(f)) This specifically relates to sanctions being proportionate and having an end date and total amount repayable.	19 January 2022
The registered person must ensure that— any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (c)(i)(ii)(iv)) This specifically relates to bedroom door alarms being subject to rigorous risk assessment and regularly reviewed.	19 January 2022

If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home— the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b)) This specifically relates to fire doors being fit for purpose.	3 December 2021
An individual may only carry on a children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (5). An individual may only carry on a home with another individual or other individuals, otherwise than in a partnership, if that individual and each other individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (5). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2; the individual is mentally and physically fit to carry on the home; and the individual is financially fit to carry on the home. (Regulation 26 (1) (2) (5)(a)(b)(c)(d)) This specifically relates to the recruitment file being available on request to ensure the fitness of the manager.	19 January 2022
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; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that—	19 January 2022

the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d)) This specifically relates to ensuring that agency workers are recruited in line with schedule 2.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to all staff, including bank and agency staff, having regular practice-related supervision and annual appraisals.	19 January 2022
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to the rota having the full names of staff and clearly demonstrating how the home is staffed, including sleep-in staff.	19 January 2022
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each	19 January 2022

calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).

When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))

This specifically relates to ensuring that the steal factory behind the home is considered when reviewing local risks to children.

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: 2566231

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

Jodie Lewis, Social Care Inspector

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