

SC025695

St Christopher's Fellowship

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to eight children who may have experienced harm as a result of abuse, neglect, family dysfunction, loss or other trauma. Staff use concepts and theoretical models drawn from social pedagogy and attachment theory in their work with the children. The home is run by a national charity and accepts referrals only from the host local authority.

The manager started working at the home in October 2020 and is awaiting registration with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 2 March 2021

This monitoring visit

This visit was undertaken both on- and off-site. The inspector examined documents and spoke to children, the acting manager and staff members. Feedback was also received from two of the children's social workers and a safeguarding professional. There was also a tour of the premises. This visit was prompted by an anonymous complaint relating to assaults to staff, and the Ofsted survey which highlighted a lack of management support.

It has been a challenging time for the home due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic and the departure of the registered manager and several staff members. Staff are also endeavouring to support and manage a child with highly complex needs attributed to his deteriorating mental health. The culmination of these factors has resulted in a difficult management transition.

This is presenting significant challenges to staff due to the child's lack of engagement and aggressive behaviours to staff. This has led to assaults of a physical and sexual nature. Difficulties have been compounded by poor risk management.

Recognising that the needs of this child cannot be met in this setting leaders and managers are working in partnership with the placing authority to safely move the child to a more appropriate placement.

The management of children's mental and emotional health is a concern that was highlighted by a child and by a staff member. A child stated: 'Staff need to know how to nurture and have empathy, not just sympathy, there has to be action.' Children highlighted their wish for more activities and for staff to spend more time with them.

The home is short staffed and the recruitment of suitable staff is in progress. There has been an issue with the night staff's supervision at the home and the management of incidents. This has resulted in a child's friend entering the house on three occasions. A child stated that this had made them feel 'unsafe'.

A log is kept of concerns, which helps with monitoring trends and patterns and the effectiveness of consequences. Ofsted is usually informed of significant events, but there was one occasion when this did not happen. This incident related to a child being involved in an attempted abduction of a young child.

Staff benefit from reflective supervision which enhances their knowledge of therapeutic practice. The majority of staff say that they feel well supported. Those who do not feel supported would like more regular team meetings as well as continued checks on their welfare after incidents and for their views to influence decision-making.

The communal areas of the home are clean and comfortable. However, children complained about the uncleanliness of the bathrooms. The children's bathroom floors, toilets and showers were noted to be unclean and unhygienic. This is of concern due to the need for increased sanitation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The requirement from the last inspection and most of the recommendations have been met. The recommendations in relation to risk assessments and the bathrooms have been repeated. Leaders and managers are aware of the shortfalls and they have a strong desire to improve the home's quality of care.

Feedback from professionals is also generally positive.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/05/2019	Full	Good
09/04/2018	Full	Good

04/07/2017

Full

Good

08/11/2016

Interim

Sustained effectiveness

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 enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— develop the child's interests and hobbies; participate in activities that the child enjoys, and which meet and expand the child's interests and preferences. (Regulation 9 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii))	30 April 2021
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b))	30 April 2021
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 skills to meet the needs of each child;	30 April 2021

ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(d))	
The registered person must notify HMCI without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))	30 April 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. In particular, ensure that risk assessments fully detail risks and the strategies to manage risks. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that, for children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. In particular, ensure that bathrooms are clean and less institutionalised. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure responsibility for maintaining good employment practice. In particular, ensure that staff are reminded continually of the emotional support available to them, and hold regular team meetings. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC025695

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

Sharon Payne, Social Care Inspector

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