

SC025695

Registered provider: St Christopher's Fellowship

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to eight young people who may have experienced adversity as a result of abuse, neglect, family dysfunction, loss or other trauma. It is run by a national charity and only accepts referrals from Camden's resources team and emergency duty team.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 April 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 4 July 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/07/2017	Full	Good
08/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/04/2016	Full	Good
04/01/2016	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 children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who ensure that each child—has access to the home's children's guide and the home's complaints procedure throughout the child's stay in the home. (Regulation 7(2)(b)(2)) This particularly relates to ensuring that children who arrive at the home with little or no English can fully access these key documents.	11/06/2018
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. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(1)) This particularly relates to protecting children from radicalisation and extremism.	11/06/2018

Recommendations

- Ensure that each child's day-to-day health and well-being needs are met. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3) This particularly relates to ensuring a timely sequence of health appointments for those children who require basic healthcare such as immunisations.
- Ensure that there is agreement with the local police force about procedures and guidance on police involvement in the home, to reduce unnecessary police involvement in managing behaviour and criminalisation of behaviours. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.40)
- Ensure that there is a process of agreement between the home and the placing

authority that a placement in the home is the right one for that child, and that the home will be able to respond effectively to that child's needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.6) This particularly refers to both the home and the placing authority taking responsibility for the placement decision.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people in this home are a particularly diverse group. The majority have arrived from a variety of crisis-torn countries, but others have always lived in England and are familiar with its language and culture. In these circumstances, providing sufficient, highly personalised care is a challenge, but generally staff achieve this.

Staff are particularly successful with young people who arrive with few, if any resources. For example, these young people cannot communicate effectively in English, their physical and emotional health is poor, and they have no cultural or familial links. Young people with this background currently in the home have made huge progress in a few months. Their health is greatly improved, they are making excellent progress at school and they are generally happy.

These good results are achieved by effective partnerships particularly with health and education, and staff understand the importance of maintaining these important links. Although overall the home's impact on young people's health is very positive, there are a small number of occasions when a more timely response is required.

Not all young people make such good progress: some struggle to improve, and others may drop back and seem defeated. Staff, however, maintain their commitment to them and demonstrate a dogged determination to do what is best. Sometimes, this can mean a change of placement for the young person, and staff will advocate for this, help facilitate it and then frequently stay in contact with the young person.

Staff make significant efforts to reflect the cultural preferences of young people particularly through food and through promoting their religious choices. Young people are listened to in this home, and their requests have led to changes in how the home is run, for example letting young people have access to the kitchen later in the evening.

Young people who are not able to communicate in or read English well are at a disadvantage. Key guides to living in the home such as the children's guide and the complaints procedure are not translated, and this risks not hearing these young people's voices. It also impairs their ability to understand the rules and expectations of their new home.

Preparing young people for independent living is a priority. Some young people really enjoy cooking their own food, and others help out with jobs around the house with several young people receiving a certificate to celebrate their budgeting skills. These

skills are crucial in supporting them when they leave the home.

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

Risk assessments are reviewed on a monthly basis, and appropriately individualised. Risks are usually well managed in this home. For example, substance misuse and smoking in the house were major concerns, but a successful strategy was devised that significantly reduced these concerns.

Processes to protect young people who go missing from the home are effective and young people do not generally go missing. But, when this does happen, staff will follow young people if possible and will make strenuous efforts to keep in contact. They also ensure that young people are both welcomed on their return and thoroughly debriefed.

Behaviour management is a strength of this home and restraint techniques are not used. For crisis situations, staff are skilled in de-escalation techniques. These are usually successful, but the police will be called when there is a serious risk of harm to an individual. There is a protocol detailing under what circumstances police should be called into the home; however, this is yet to be shared with the police.

Staff are regularly trained and routinely updated on safeguarding issues. This training is also usefully supplemented by whole-team sessions on key areas such as gangs. However, staff are insufficiently aware of the risks to young people of radicalisation and extremism. This is particularly relevant in this home as some young people originate from areas where extremist ideologies are acceptable.

Recruitment practice is strong in this home and prevents unsuitable people from becoming staff in the home. Managers are clear about when to contact the designated officer for specific safeguarding issues, and do this appropriately. Young people benefit from a physical environment that is safe and well cared for.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, a new registered manager has been appointed who is ambitious for excellence and has clear views on how she wants the home to run. She is particularly interested in getting young people to fully participate in the running of the home. She is encouraging young people to have more ownership of their home by, for example, opening up rooms at certain times and successfully encouraging young people's complaints and other feedback.

The registered manager is also focusing on getting her staff appropriately trained, and has had excellent results in promoting staff completion of their level three qualification and her own level five. She is holding regular team meetings and is using these to help staff discuss and take forward new ideas.

There are sufficient staff, who benefit from regular supervision and routine appraisals. They say they feel supported, and this together with a wide programme of training means that they are well equipped for their task.

The management team is well supported by thorough monthly scrutiny from the independent visitor to the home. This is well-supplemented by more detailed twice-yearly reviews of the quality of care delivered by the home. This analysis demonstrates that the registered manager is appropriately aware of the strengths and weaknesses of her home, and has a clear plan to address these.

The registered manager has a strong sense of how each young person is progressing, and is a strong advocate for them as necessary. She is able to make strong decisions about the unusual step of terminating placements to keep individuals safe, and also to see through these decisions.

An inappropriate admission was made to the home, and this subsequently resulted in an external complaint. The outcome of this complaint has positively informed future practice, but a meeting with the placing authority over the admission is still outstanding although efforts have been made by the home to arrange this.

Notifications about serious incidents are timely and appropriate. Case recording is up to date, clear and routinely audited. The statement of purpose is regularly reviewed and accurately reflects the service offered.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC025695

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: St Christopher's Fellowship

Registered provider address: St Christophers Fellowship, 1 Putney High Street,
London SW15 1SZ

Responsible individual: Philip Townsend

Registered manager: Chardelle Margerison

Inspector

Bridget Goddard, social care inspector

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