

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. Staff use concepts and theoretical models drawn from social pedagogy and attachment theory in their work with the young people. 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 2017 and was registered with Ofsted in January 2018. The registered manager is currently on secondment until February 2020.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 May 2019

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: 9 April 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/04/2018	Full	Good
04/07/2017	Full	Good
08/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/04/2016	Full	Good

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
Review of quality of care The system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the quality of care must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45(5))	01/08/2019

Recommendations

- Supervision of staff practice should ensure that individual adults in the home are engaged in the safeguarding culture of the home so that they understand what they need to do if they found other staff misusing or abusing their position to the detriment of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14)

In particular, ensure that staff know the external agencies that they can contact.

- Staff should 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. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

In particular, ensure that risk assessments are appropriately updated.

- 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. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

In particular, make the bathrooms less institutionalised, repair the lighting in the shower room and replace the shower curtain.

- In some cases it is important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

In particular, reparations should be centrally logged and monitored for their effectiveness.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home provides a stable, nurturing base for the young people, who quickly settle into the home and have a sense of belonging. Staff succeed in building trusting relationships with the young people and have an unconditional commitment to them.

Young people make good progress from their starting points. They are more confident, empathetic and resilient, and have aspirations for the future. Young people are learning independent living skills, including in cooking lessons by the home's highly experienced chef. On leaving the home, young people benefit from ongoing support provided through the home's 'staying close' arrangements.

Young people receive support to lead a healthy lifestyle, including taking regular exercise. They enjoy a nutritious, appetising diet which meets their cultural needs. Young people also receive support regarding their sexual health, substance misuse and stopping smoking.

All the young people attend some form of education. A staff member leads on education, and there are a range of resources and opportunities to enhance young people's knowledge. Young people can earn certificates within the home and staff support them to earn a Duke of Edinburgh award.

A strength of the home is the key-work sessions. These are character building for the young people, who work on their goals and learn to better understand themselves and others. They discuss topics such as racism, institutional discrimination, sexism and the reasons why they are in care.

Staff have a good understanding of equality and diversity, which helps the young people to develop a positive identity. Young people receive encouragement to follow their cultural and religious traditions. Young people also receive assistance with their immigration status. One young person has helped to write a guide for those new to the United Kingdom.

Young people have an active social life, which includes socialising with friends and each other. They enjoy trips to the cinema, go-karting sessions, going on holiday and attending football matches. Young people also benefit from the services of an organisational participation officer, who arranges various activities for them.

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

The home generally succeeds in providing a safe base for the young people, who learn about societal dangers such as gangs, knife crime and 'postcode wars'. Young people also learn how to keep themselves safe and how to respond to the police 'stop and search' powers.

Staff have a good understanding of the trauma that the young people have experienced and how this impacts on their behaviour. Young people are given practical techniques to help them to relax and calm down. Young people also meet regularly with mental health professionals to gain the therapeutic assistance that they need.

Staff reinforce, support and encourage positive behaviour. Through the social pedagogy model, poor behaviour is challenged and discussed. Staff endeavour to help young people to become more personally accountable through consequences and reparations. However, social workers observed that there are no real consequences for poor behaviour in the home and that the boundaries are inconsistent. The management of poor behaviour mainly focuses on the emotional and mental well-being of the young people. Leaders and managers confirmed that reparations are made, however these are not centrally logged or monitored for their effectiveness.

Bullying is well managed and young people are learning social norms. No young people are involved in gang activity, sexual or criminal exploitation, radicalisation or extremism. Young people do not generally go missing from the home. However, occasionally they may return late.

The organisation has a safe recruitment policy, which helps to prevent unsuitable people from working in the home. The strong partnership with the local police results in a quick response to issues and, in some cases, preventative work. A police officer praised the 'good relationship' with the home.

The organisation has a person who leads on safeguarding issues, and staff receive appropriate training. Staff know how to report child protection concerns within the organisation, but a new staff member was unaware of all the external agencies that they should notify.

Health and safety arrangements ensure that young people live in a safe environment. Young people's risk assessments consider their vulnerabilities. However, some risk assessments are not routinely updated after incidents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers are ambitious for the young people. Staff take pride in the strong organisational values, which focus on young's people's emotional growth. An independent reviewing officer stated that 'young people's views are championed' and said that they were 'generally impressed by the caring, thoughtful staff'.

The organisation's partnership with Middlesex University has enabled it to develop an evidence-based assessment and outcomes measurement tool. This creatively helps staff in providing individualised care for each young person's needs.

Young people benefit from being able to discuss their views with an independent person during the monthly monitoring visits. The registered manager receives feedback from young people, placing authorities and staff. However, this information is not included in the quality of care review.

The requirements and recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed. Leaders and managers are aware of the home's areas for development and they are striving for continual improvement.

Not all of the staff feel valued and the level 3 qualification requirements are a stress point for some. The organisation is providing a range of additional support to help staff to complete this qualification.

Staff skills are further enhanced by a wide range of training opportunities, reflective supervision and appraisals, which helps them to develop both personally and professionally. New staff benefit from a good induction and a probationary review which highlights their skills and the areas requiring further development.

Young people live in a home which has a range of communal areas, including a music room and a games room. The home is currently being refurbished. The bathrooms are institutional in appearance and require updating.

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 difference 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 address: St Christopher's Fellowship, 1 Putney High Street,
London, Wandsworth SW15 1SZ

Responsible individual: Philip Townsend

Registered manager: Chardelle Margerison

Inspector

Sharon Payne, social care inspector

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