

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC025695
Inspector	Seka Graovac
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	St Christophers Fellowship
Registered person address	1 Putney High Street London SW15 1SZ

Responsible individual	Jonathan Joseph Michael Farrow
Registered manager	Steven Munn
Date of last inspection	16/06/2014

Inspection date	29/12/2014
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

The main changes within the home relate to the composition of the management team and of the home's community. This visit explored the impact of these changes on the overall effectiveness of the service.

A new deputy manager and regional manager have been appointed from outside the organisation. They joined the manager who registered with Ofsted in May 2014, after many years of being the deputy manager in this home. The management team is experienced in children's social care, but quite new in their current roles. The new managers have started contributing their knowledge, enthusiasm and ideas for improvement to the service.

In terms of the changes to the home's community, some young people have left the home and others have moved in. Since the last inspection, a number of placements have successfully ended. The endings were planned and were sensitively managed. The young people have either returned to the care of their family or moved onto semi-independent living, where they have continued to make good progress.

The recently admitted young people have settled well. This includes some young people who previously experienced multiple placement-breakdowns. Those young people, who intensively 'tested' what was for them a new environment, have become appreciative of the staff's patience and persistently caring attitudes. Staff are highly skilled at forming and maintaining positive relationships with the young people in their care. The home is effective at promoting the stability of the placements.

Good quality support and consistent boundaries have enabled young people to make significant progress across different aspects of their welfare and development. The young people have become more willing to show positive emotions. This has had a

positive impact on their ability to develop close relationships and to begin to form healthy attachments. They have become better at managing their anger. This has contributed to their behaviour being more constructive. Their increased social awareness, skills and engagement have led to closer social integration.

Young people have also developed more understanding of the risks of the sexual exploitation. They recognise the possible signs and take appropriate actions to protect themselves and other young people. This includes sharing their suspicions with the staff members and contributing openly to the investigations. Their confidence, emotional resilience and safer behaviours have increased. This month, there has been a significant reduction in the frequency of the young people being absent with no missing episodes from the home. Some young people, who used to be negatively influenced by others in the past, have learnt to avoid these people; instead, they seek to develop more constructive friendships. The home's summer holiday was a great success. The young people enjoyed relaxing and having a fun time together.

Young people's engagement with learning is varied, but overall, they are making positive steps towards having better educational achievements. Some young people have made great strides at acquiring practical life-skills, working towards obtaining qualifications and preparing to successfully contribute to the society, as adult citizens.

The impact of the changes within the placing authority that funds this home has been managed well. Bringing young people back to the locality from out-of-borough placements has brought new challenges to the service provision, but also increased opportunities for building further on the close relationships between partner-agencies. This in particular relates to working more closely together with the virtual head-teacher and the behaviour management specialist, in order to promote positive educational outcomes for young people and especially those who receive out-of-borough education or have moved schools.

The Registered Manager has remained proactive at initiating multi-professional meetings. The home has continued to make significant contributions to those meetings and to the effectiveness of the care planning and review process and to the safeguarding of children and young people.

The monitoring of the service provision by an independent visitor to the home is robust. Their monthly monitoring reports are complemented by the Registered Manager's monthly reports on the review of the quality of care. Where weaknesses in the service provision are identified, appropriate actions are taken to introduce and embed better practice. The organisation has a clear development plan for the service that focuses on increasing staff's capacity and resilience for working with children and young people who have mental health needs and present with challenging behaviour.

However, the management reports on the quarterly review of quality care are not sent to Ofsted in a timely manner, as required. The last report received is for the period February 2014 to April 2014. This means that two quarterly reports are now overdue. Getting these reports late compromises the role Ofsted has in monitoring the service in this home.

At the last inspection, Ofsted recommended improvement in the record-keeping relating to the complaints and the staff supervision and training. Records of complaints are much improved. There have been three complaints and the records clearly evidence that those have been appropriately investigated and resolved. The outcomes and the complainant's satisfaction with the process have been clearly recorded.

The manager now has easy access to the staff training matrix. The available information clearly evidences that the staff members receive regular and comprehensive training on a number of relevant subjects.

Record-keeping in respect of staff supervision has also improved. However, more consistency is needed to enable the management to demonstrate that all staff receive regular supervision. For example, one of the staff files examined contained records of only two supervision meetings held in a six month period. The home's supervision log confirmed that this was correct. The recommendation regarding staff supervision has been repeated. The areas of weakness identified at this inspection have not had a negative impact on young people.

Through the challenges that the significant changes in the management team and in the home's community have brought, the service has sustained a good quality provision. Working in effective partnership with others, staff have continued to successfully promote positive outcomes for the young people in their care. The young people have achieved good progress across different aspects of their welfare and development.

Information about this children's home

The provider is a registered childcare charity and housing association that has a number of different services registered with Ofsted. This home is exclusively funded by one placing authority to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/06/2014	Full	good
02/12/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
14/05/2013	Full	good
10/01/2013	Interim	good progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
34 (2001)	supply a report in respect of any review of care conducted in line with the Regulation 34 to Ofsted, in a more timely manner and at least, every three months. (Regulation 34 (1)(2))	31/03/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- provide each staff member with recorded supervision on a more frequent basis. (NMS 19.4)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.