

# **St**CHRISTOPHER'S CREATING BRIGHTER FUTURES

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## Creating brighter futures: St Christopher's Isle of Man children's homes



St Christopher's is a registered Manx charity, working in partnership with the Isle of Man Government since 2004 to deliver high quality services for looked-after children that help them to achieve their potential.

**Caring for children and young people since 1870**

## Our approach

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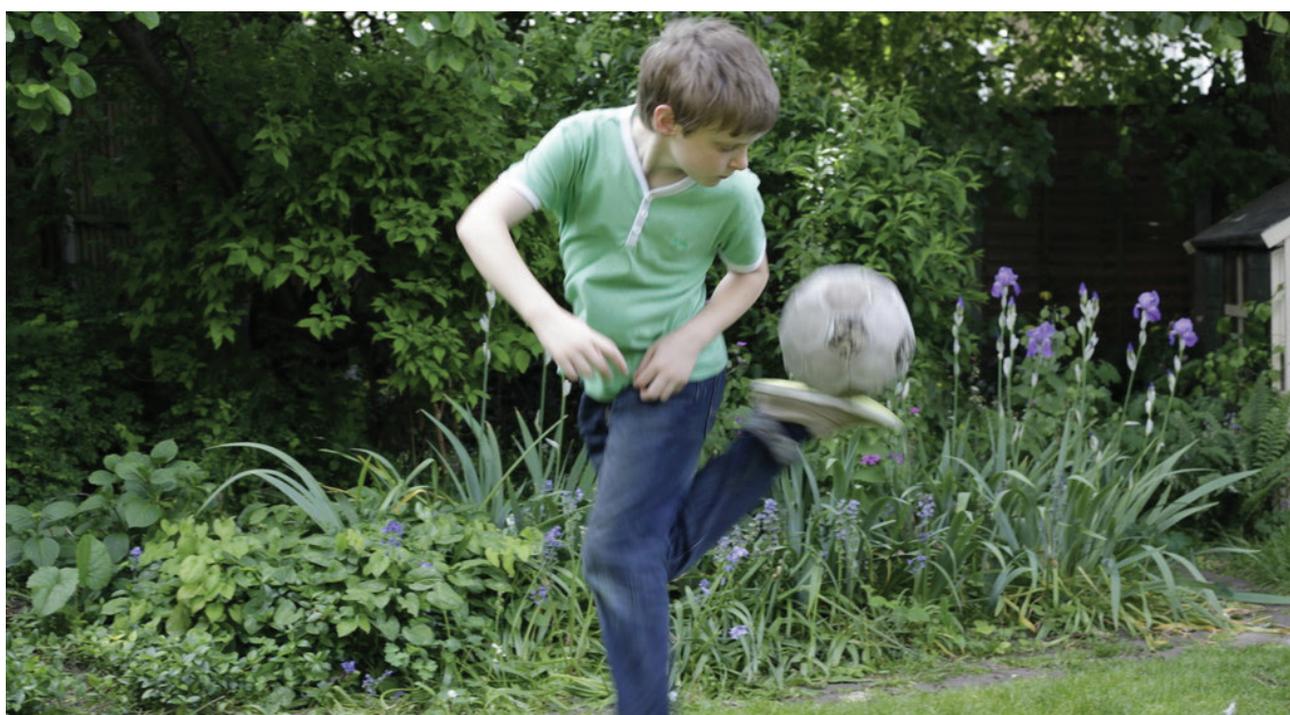
**We pride ourselves on providing the highest quality services for vulnerable children and young people on the Isle of Man that deliver the best possible outcomes.**

We understand that when children first come into care, many have had chaotic and traumatic lives. They can often feel angry and confused and have very complex and challenging behaviours. For these children, coming to live in a children's home is a turning point.

Our caring, professional team use their experience and knowledge to help young people to overcome complex emotional and behavioural problems. Our friendly and welcoming approach allow children to develop positive attachments, have happy memories and feel supported in their transition towards adulthood and independence.

Our child-centred approach allows us to develop flexible and adaptable services that help children and young people to:

- Re-engage with school and stay in education
- Develop healthy relationships
- Improve their self-esteem
- Learn how to take care of themselves and be healthy
- Develop ambitions
- Return home
- Prepare to move on to fostering or aftercare services pay rent, manage their budgets and agree to our housing contract terms.





## Our methods

**Working with academic and commissioning partners, we develop new and innovative approaches to support young people with complex needs achieve their potential.**

Using learning from attachment theory, education and behaviour management, we've worked with academics at the Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies (CATS) to develop a package of attachment assessment tools - the Attachment Style Interview (ASI) and Q Pack assessment - that are delivering a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people.

When children and young people come into our care, we carry out an initial assessment to establish the best ways to support their needs and help monitor the impact of our interventions.

Our assessment involves:

- Asking children and young people, teachers and carers for their views and opinions about their development every three to six months in Q Pack assessments and attachment style interviews (ASIs). This helps us measure attachment styles, strengths and weaknesses and significant life events
- Working with young people to plan and make decisions about their care
- Staff keeping an electronic record of the young person's daily behaviour and Care Support Plan, reflecting on agreed goals
- Close partnership working with aftercare services, the education team and other agencies

A recent evaluation of outcomes data for the children and young people supported by St Christopher's Isle of Man revealed that those in our care for at least three to six months experience positive change across all Every Child Matters outcomes.

We also have an excellent track record of supporting children and young people with complex and special behavioural and educational needs, including those with ADHD, Dyslexia and with an autistic spectrum condition.



## Our impact: Where young people can achieve their potential

All of our services provide a stable, safe and friendly environment in which young people can overcome childhood trauma and have a more positive future.

- ▶ **Enjoying and achieving:** We support young people to remain in full time education, reintegrate those on reduced time tables back into school and help them to achieve their goals.
- ▶ **Making a positive contribution.** In 2012, children and young people living in St Christopher's homes raised over £3,000 for the Isle of Man charity Crossroads Caring for Carers.
- ▶ **Being healthy.** Care staff and our education team run a wide range of activities, from Zumba to camping, to meet all ages and abilities.
- ▶ **Staying safe.** Our experienced staff are experts in caring for vulnerable children and empower young people to make decisions that make them feel safe and secure in our homes.

## Supporting young people to prosper: Sam's\* story

When Sam first went to Whitehoe children's home, he only went to school for 45 minutes a day. His confidence was low and he didn't feel in control of his own future.

"He was nearly at the end of year nine so it was essential for his future that this increased so he could achieve some GCSEs," says a Whitehoe support worker. "We supported Sam by encouraging him with his homework and helping him to understand that doing well at school would be the way he could achieve his dreams for the future. We also worked closely

with the school to identify a structured plan that would slowly increase Sam's attendance at a pace he could cope with. We met his teachers regularly to assess progress and amend the plan as necessary. After one year, Sam now attends an almost complete school day. "He is now attending three hours short of a full-time table and is on track to sit and achieve seven GCSEs," says the support worker. "Sam's more confident and is thinking about what he wants to do with his life."

\*name has been changed

## Involving young people

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**Our services are focused around what young people want, choose and tell us. We encourage them to have a voice.**

We are young person-centred. Fundamental to our approach is young people's involvement in their **care planning and pathway plans**. We are active supporters of the voices and participation project.

**House meetings** give our young people an open forum to express and discuss their views on everything from rules to issues they have with each other. At these meetings, they also choose their weekly food menu and plan and organise activities and trips on or off the Island.

We encourage young people to attend **review meetings** with their social worker, key worker, the home manager, and parents (where appropriate) to express their feelings and wishes. Their key worker shares their report with them ahead of the meeting to ensure they're prepared.

We support young people to make their own **choices** with everything from how they decorate their room to registering with a GP.

With our encouragement, our young people play an active role in the **VIP council**. They represent other young people in the care system who are not confident enough to take part themselves.

## Referral and partnership working

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When young people are referred to us, we carry out an initial baseline assessment using Q Pack and the Attachment Style Interview (ASI). We also consider cultural and demographic issues and the availability of family support. This is because we also offer parents the opportunity to be involved in their child's care and to enrol in parenting courses.

We request their medical information to identify special healthcare needs and support young people to register with a doctor, dentist and to have an eye test. We can take them to appointments or attend check-ups with them.

Our children's home staff work closely with social workers, sharing information on how we intend to care for their young person and the assessment models we use to monitor care. We also set goals together and share and involve social workers in our Q Pack assessment and ASI work.

Our key workers keep a detailed and up-to-date Healthcare Plan and make sure young people have access to the looked after children health adviser. We also use Q Pack to monitor young people's progress and help us make referrals to mental health services, GUM clinics or drug and alcohol teams, if necessary.

Where we are unable to prevent instances of children going missing, we work with partners to respond appropriately. We ensure that our teams are aware of joint protocols and work closely with other providers, the police and the Department of Social Care to follow agreed policies and procedures in relation to missing persons, absent without authority and running away.

## Education Support

The Day Support Unit, based at Cronk Sollysh, is an integrated service that gives all children and young people in our care the support they need to engage with education.

Our five-strong team includes three qualified teachers who work closely with the child's school to offer a range of support to best meet their needs.

We might help one person with their homework and provide another who has

been suspended from school with a complete programme of education, including sitting GCSEs and other exams.

We also offer college and career guidance and help young people develop accredited life skill qualifications, everything from time management to cooking.

Out of school, we offer homework clubs and revision sessions and holiday activities, ranging from art workshops to Zumba.

## Our residential homes

**From short term crisis support to long term homes, we offer a range of services for looked-after children on the Isle of Man. Each focuses on improving the lives of children and young people and is based around the five Every Child Matters outcomes**



## Tromode House

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**Tromode House is a large and welcoming home situated in a residential village on the outskirts of Douglas. All children and young people coming into the care system initially live at Tromode while their needs are assessed.**

Our supportive, friendly and welcoming children's home helps young people deal with painful experiences of family life and cope with the challenging behaviours these experiences leave behind.

Our experienced staff team give looked-after children and young people a safe, caring community in which they can overcome their difficulties and learn to build positive relationships.

### Facilities

- The home has six homely bedrooms for children, plus one emergency bed, and two bedrooms for night staff.
- Two shower rooms, two bathrooms and two ensuite bathrooms for the staff bedrooms.
- Downstairs, a large kitchen and dining room with an adjoining TV area, another large lounge with TV and DVD player, a craft room and a chill out room that can be used for reading and listening to music.
- A games room with a pool table, table tennis, table and seating area and a separate space for people who want to use our Nintendo Wii games console, X-box and internet facilities.
- Outdoor space includes a quarter acre of private gardens, with an enclosed patio area that can be used for summer evening BBQs.

### Extra support

- Social workers receive copies of the young person's weekly journals every Monday morning.
- Staff liaise closely with child and adolescent mental health services and managers are able to make referrals to them. They also have good relationships with the looked after children nurse team.
- Key workers and young people complete a monthly health assessment.
- Young people work with our team at Tromode House to develop a care plan to suit their individual needs.

### Our people

Tromode House has one manager, three team leaders, seven residential care workers and three night support workers. They make up a diverse team in terms of age, gender, culture and experience.

“My key worker was brilliant, I have left my favourite cup for her to use and remember me.”

Young person who used to live at Tromode

## Whitehoe

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**Up to six people between the ages of 10 and 17 live at Whitehoe. Our experienced team offer both short and long term care and focus on helping young people to achieve their potential.**

Whitehoe is on the south side of Douglas on a shared campus with Cronk Sollysh and provides a homely, safe and accepting environment for looked-after children. Our team at Whitehoe work with children to help them identify and achieve their goals, whether that's getting back into education or preparing to move on to semi-independent living.

### Facilities

- Whitehoe is a spacious two-storey home set in a landscaped garden, with a small playing area.
- Recently decorated, the first floor has six bedrooms for children plus a sleep in room for night staff.
- There are two bathrooms, both with toilets.
- On the ground floor there is a kitchen, dining room, a living room where young people can watch TV and chat, plus a games room for pool, games and use of our Xbox or computer.

### Extra support

- We work closely with schools to provide young people with support for their education including with revision, attending school or getting work experience.
- Each Whitehoe resident has a key worker who offers support and advice.
- We implement social worker Placement Plans on a day to day basis, sending them weekly updates on how young people are doing and about their health and education needs.
- We provide opportunities for young people to participate in a range of leisure activities from swimming to trips around the Islands glen's and beaches.

### Our people

The Whitehoe team consists of one manager, three team leaders, seven residential care workers and two night staff.

“Teams are working well together. The young people are all very settled; they have clear routines and plans in place. Visitor very impressed by clearly evidenced hard work from the staff team to ensure the delivery of care to the young people is of the highest standard.”

## Long term care: our smaller homes

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**Alongside Tromode and Whitehoe, we offer individual or groups of young people safe, warm and loving homes that are tailored to their long term needs.**

We recognise that to have the best possible long term outcome, support needs to be tailored to meet a young person's needs. This child-centred approach has allowed us to develop flexible and adaptable services in smaller homes that meet the specific needs of individual children and young people.

In consultation with social workers and CAMHS, as needed, our smaller homes can be set up in a range of ways, for example offering:

- Individual or group living for one, two, three or four young people.
- Semi-independent living to help older young people with the transition to adulthood.
- Focussed therapeutic support to overcome issues such as self-harm, challenging behaviours or special educational needs.
- Specialist packages of care as an alternative to off-island placements, developed in partnership with the Department of Social Care, CAMHS and other specialist services.

### **All our smaller homes:**

- Offer homely environments with experienced and caring staff teams.
- Work in partnership with social workers, CAMHS, schools, health and youth justice teams to offer consistent and coordinated care for young people.
- Regularly monitor young people's progress through key working sessions, bi-weekly team meetings, staff supervisions, and monthly reports to their social worker.
- Support young people to have open and effective communication with their social worker.
- Help young people to achieve and meet their potential. That could be learning to play, socialise, control their anger, or get the most out of education.

“The team maintain a calm, rational and positive disposition, enabling the young person to work through conflicts within relationships, appropriately and confidently. Avoiding coercive interchanges and power struggles.”

CAMHS professional commenting on Westminster Terrace

## Qualifications and training

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Our recruitment and staff development policy means that our people are able to give the children in our care the best possible support.

Our home managers hold NVQ Level 4/5 qualifications in working with children and young people and our team members hold NVQ Level 3. All staff are trained in a range of areas such as attachment theory, CALM (Crisis Aggression, Limitation and Management), child protection, first aid and transitions.

Where possible, we have a “grow our own” policy to staff recruitment and run an intensive induction, training and support programme for Manx staff with no previous experience in residential care.

## Dealing with complaints

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We ensure that every child and young person supported by our services is made aware of our policy and procedures for dealing with complaints. We have a clear policy that is shared with them on admission and on a regular basis through key work sessions, review meetings, resident house meetings or when a young person wishes to make a complaint. All complaints are recorded, including the outcome, and we make sure that staff are supported to follow complaint guidelines and follow strict timescales.

## About us

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St Christopher’s is a charity that has provided care for vulnerable children and young people for over 140 years. Drawing on our broad experience, we help build brighter futures for young people.

St Christopher` s has been on the Isle of Man since 2004 and is a registered Manx charity with three island-based trustees.

“The family explained to me how impressed they have been with the care and support the staff team have shown in relation to managing self-harm. I know that the school have also found the weekly risk assessment meetings with your valued participation really helpful, which again has enabled the transition back into education.”

CAMHS professional commenting on Mount Bradda

“The home presents as a well-run, warm and welcoming environment. The staff team are experienced and established, they have a mature confident approach and a caring attitude towards the young people.”

FoGhlion inspection report, Registration and Inspections Unit, December 2012

“Thank you all for your help and advice, I find leaving quite hard”

Former young person who lived in one of St Christopher's (Isle of Man) children's home



# **St**CHRISTOPHER'S CREATING BRIGHTER FUTURES

St Christopher's is registered Manx charity, working in partnership with the Isle of Man government since 2004.

We deliver a broad range of services for vulnerable children and young people on the Isle of Man, including children's residential care, supported housing, aftercare services, secure care, community support and educational opportunities.

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**For more information**

**Visit** [www.stchris.org.im](http://www.stchris.org.im)

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