

The image shows the exterior of a building with a brick wall and a green door. A black sign with white text and an arrow points to the right. A green bench is visible next to the door. In the foreground, there is a planter box with pink and red flowers. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

CHRISTOPHER'S COTTAGE
MOUNTDALE GARDENS
LEIGH-ON-SEA,
ESSEX,
SS9 4AW
01702 507 602

Brochure 2026

INTRODUCTION

Christopher's Cottage is a purpose-built respite home for Children and young people with learning disabilities aged 5 – 18 years, and in full time education. It first opened in April 2004, and was initially intended to be used for Children and young people who attended the St. Christopher school. However, over the years, the need for respite care increased, and eventually the home was opened up for Children and young people from across Southend, Essex and the South East.

The Cottage, as it's affectionately known as, has 6 bedrooms for the Children and young people, which each have their own en suite facilities. All bathrooms have waterfall and standard showers. The bedrooms have bespoke bedroom furniture, with anti ligature fittings and a lockable bedside table, for valuables and personal belongings to be kept.

ADMISSIONS

The length of overnight stays can vary, depending on the allocation awarded by the child or young person's local authority. A stay can last no longer than 17 nights, as stipulated in the Children's Home regulations 2015, Regulation 52 ((2) (b) (i)).

A referral will need to be sent directly to the management team on their emails (See end of brochure).

A copy of our referral request form to be sent out for completion upon request. We then carry out a visit to the Child or young person's school, to meet them, speak to staff who work with them and gather as much information as we can. We then invite parents / carers in to have a chat with us, have a look around and gather information from them.

We then use all the information gathered to make an informed decision as to whether or not we will be able to accept the referral or not. Once a decision is made, we inform social workers and parents / carers with explanation. If the referral has been accepted, we then create a care plan for the child or young person, before booking in a tea visit.

This is where they can come in, familiarise themselves with the home, staff and some of the young people that already access overnight respite. Depending on how the tea visit goes, we will then determine the step, whether that will be another tea visit or book their first overnight stay. This will be discussed with parents / carers. In some circumstances, emergency placements may be accepted. However, all relevant paperwork must be completed within 72 hours. A planned placement is preferable

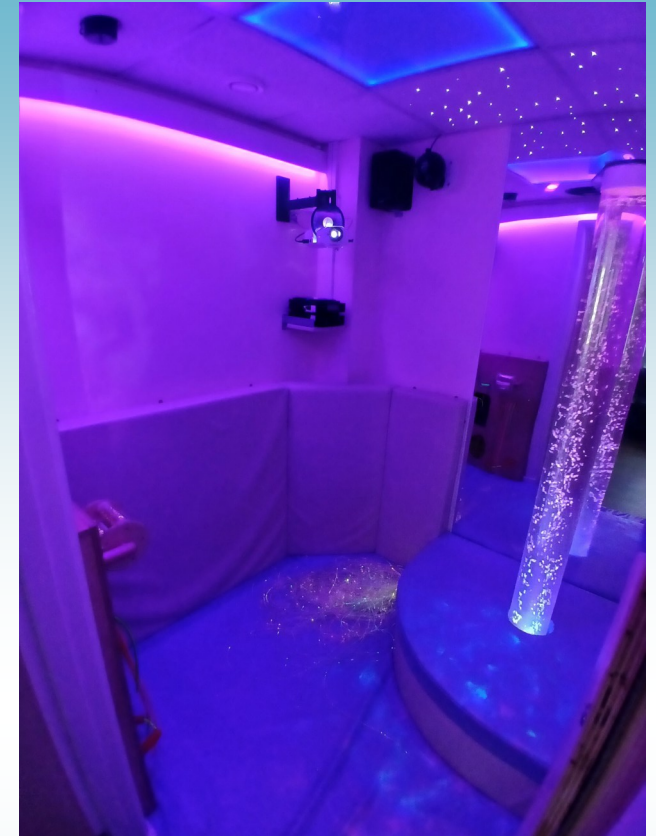
COSTINGS

From April 2026 the cost is £26 per hour, for the length of the stay. An additional fee of £10 will be charged to cover pre and post administrative costs. Some local authorities prefer to incorporate all their children and young people's annual allocation have a total figure that is agreed and payment terms agreed. This can either be monthly or quarterly.

Our costings are constantly reviewed and kept in line with the cost of living, but also kept as low as possible, as we operate as a 'non-profit' organisation.

AROUND THE HOME

Our Large lounge room has 1 large 3 seater sofa and 2 large 2 seater sofas, as well as a large bean bag chair. It also has a large interactive TV to watch films and TV, as well as being able to play games on. The room also has a PC to play games and watch videos



This is our smaller lounge with a TV, and computer consoles (PlayStation, Xbox, Nintendo Wii) for the young people to play or watch TV or movies.

Also, attached to the smaller lounge, is a small sensory room for the young people to use.

Our bedrooms with fitted bed, wardrobe and bedside table. We supply bedding, but the children & young people may bring in their own from home, if this makes them feel comfortable and safe

They may also bring in toys and other comfort items from home too should they wish.



All of our bedrooms are en-suite, fitted with a waterfall shower and standard shower. Towels and flannels are provided, but parents / carers are required to send in personal wash items, such as; shampoo, shower gel, deodorant, toothbrush and tooth paste etc

One of our bedrooms is adapted with a rise and fall bed. We also have a Safe space bed for children and young people that may have trouble with sleeping to use, should it be required. This will be stored away if not required.

We have 2 different safe space beds, but they will need to be signed off by Occupational therapists prior to coming into the cottage. Otherwise they are unable to be used

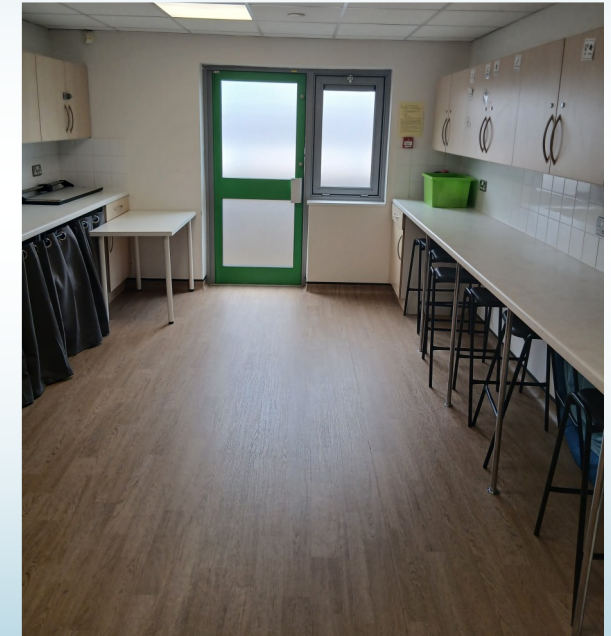


We have a large dining room with 3 separate tables, to create a homely and family style environment. The dining room leads into our kitchen area, where meals are prepared daily.



Our kitchen where home made meals are prepared and cooked. Some of the children & young people will help with this, as well

There is a large, communal lobby, with a large sofa and 2 x Bucket chairs. The lobby leads on to all rooms, and this is where the overnight staff base themselves, so they are available to support the Children and young people throughout the night. The office is has a large viewing window, so that we can see out in to the lobby, and we also have a small soft playroom, which contains a ball pit. There is also a craft room where the children and young people can get creative with paints or pens, as well as being able to have messy play



COMPLAINTS

A copy of our complaint's procedure can be found in our statement of purpose, or sent upon request. A copy of statement of purpose can be found online on the following link [Christopher's Cottage – The St Christopher School](#). A copy will also be made available upon request. Any concerns can be raised with management who can be contacted by telephone or email. 017025707608 Or rshelford@scs.southend.sch.uk or LPartlett@scs.southend.sch.uk