

Jamma Umoja

Inspection report for residential family centre

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Inspector	Sophie Wood
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Date of last inspection	18 June 2007

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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.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

Jamma Umoja is a residential family centre, which offers assessment and treatment services to a maximum of eight families at any one time. The house itself is situated within a residential area, close to the town centre of Croydon and offers individual family rooms, which are complemented by communal kitchens, bathrooms, a conservatory and large garden, equipped with good play materials for the children resident. Accommodation is provided over three floors and is furnished and maintained to a good standard. The building is safe and secure, with good staffing levels offering additional safety and security to the occupants. A well qualified staff team receives referrals from local authorities and the courts across the country to provide assessments on parents, (usually over a 12 week period), on their parenting skills. Such reports are subsequently used within court proceedings and may also contain input from other associated professionals and departments, such as psychiatry, counselling and play therapy services. Due to the very complex and specific nature of the work conducted, the organisation continues to have a waiting list and its costs to placing authorities varies to reflect the very different and wide ranging needs of the individual families referred.

Summary

This unannounced inspection was conducted by two inspectors over the course of two days. All of the key standards were inspected, previous actions and recommendations were followed up and a number of additional standards, under the economic wellbeing outcome group were also explored. The service is judged to provide good outcomes for service users and there are areas of outstanding practice in place. The centre is staffed by a well-qualified, competent team, who are led by a dynamic manager. Robust recruitment systems offer good protection to all involved and the needs of the children accommodated take precedent. The organisation has worked hard to meet all of the actions and recommendations made from last year's visit, hence, fewer have been necessary this time around. In order to continue with such good progress, the organisation has been required to liaise with the local safeguarding board in terms of child protection training and ensure that written minutes of staff supervision meetings are up-to-date. It is further recommended that the organisation secures fire training from a reputable external source and also ensures that monitoring visits fully comply with the guidance as prescribed under the National Minimum Standard for residential family centres.

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

There are six actions that were made from the previous inspection visit and all have been fully implemented. These were concerned with the organisation providing external accredited medication training and ensuring that care files held explicit authorisation for staff to administer emergency first aid, where necessary. The child protection policy and procedure has been updated, however, a recommendation has been made from this visit to liaise with the local safeguarding board in terms of ongoing training provision. The staff recruitment policy has been updated and window restrictors have been fitted to all first floor windows; risk assessments have been completed in terms of all hazardous substances held on the premises. All staff are now in receipt of regular, ongoing formal supervision meetings, albeit the notes of these are not up-to-date in all cases. Recommendations pertaining to paediatric first aid training, linking

whistle blowing guidance to child protection policies and reviewing the health and medication protocols have all been implemented. Personnel files have been restructured and there is a clear training plan for all staff in place.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Parents and children benefit by having their health needs thoroughly assessed at the beginning of a placement. The centre provides excellent support through its own range of qualified personnel, as well as by accessing appropriate external health professionals. Families are immediately registered with local health services and additional input may include psychiatric and psychological assessments, play therapy, counselling, family therapy, drug and alcohol awareness and family planning. Sound arrangements are in place for weekly health visitor clinics being held on the premises whereby babies and younger children are being accommodated. The service has updated and revised all of its medication policies and procedures. These now contain all of the required information. All staff have received updated training in the safe storage and administration of medication and demonstrate competence to administer correctly, when this is necessary. All staff working on shift have received emergency first aid training. Records of administered medication show no errors and parents are encouraged to take responsibility for giving medicines to their own children, unless risk assessments dictate the contrary. Hence, the staff have a clear understanding of their own roles and responsibilities, but also where parental responsibility lies. Such good practice protects everyone concerned and promotes the role of the parent. Regular key working sessions address areas of health care and those staff who have received food hygiene training are available to give advice on meal preparation. This is particularly valuable in terms of learning to budget for healthy meals whilst having a limited income, as is the case for the majority of families when they leave.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Resident families benefit by being afforded excellent levels of privacy. Each has their own room with a key and house rules are explicitly clear about respecting each others' space. Everyone understands the need for staff to conduct observations and these are executed in a manner which is respectful to the families. Clear policy and procedural guidance on confidentiality is implemented in practice. Information is appropriately shared with external agencies, in the best interests of safeguarding the children in residence. Parents know they can access their own files and they are encouraged to write their own comments. Areas of dissent are clearly recorded and all files are securely held. The centre has a large communal lounge and shared kitchen and bathroom facilities on each floor. Administrative office areas do not interfere with the day to day operation of the centre. The home does sometimes use monitoring equipment, such as cameras and listening devices; such use is clearly explained and agreed by all relevant parties before it is implemented. The families have access to a private phone when required. Families understand how to use the complaints procedure. This is displayed throughout the centre and is further explained verbally by key workers. Records of complaints are confidentially held; the two recorded since the last inspection have been investigated and concluded in accordance with the centre's procedures. Service users say they feel comfortable in approaching the staff team with any concerns they have. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the centre's adult and child protection procedures. These have been updated since the last inspection. Written records show that appropriate and timely referrals are made to external departments

whenever a concern becomes apparent. The welfare of service users and staff is protected as a result. Ongoing refresher training is in place, however, there is no obvious link made towards the local safeguarding board and all such training is currently 'in-house' provision. Robust recruitment practice further protects service users from potential sources of harm and abuse. Prospective employees are thoroughly vetted and the procedures in place fully comply with regulatory requirements. This is a safe environment. Service users benefit by staying in secure, comfortable and well-maintained accommodation. A recent programme of refurbishment and redecoration has further enhanced the provision. There is a sufficient amount of communal space and service users are fully aware of their own responsibilities to keep areas clean and tidy. Weekly health and safety checks to all rooms swiftly identify any need for repairs and renewals; electrical checks are up-to-date, as are gas appliances and there is sufficient insurance cover in place. All bedrooms are furnished and equipped to a good standard. They all have fridges, the temperatures of which are not currently being monitored. Fire fighting equipment is in good order. Staff and service users know the evacuation drill and this is routinely practised. Despite sound awareness, not all related records are being accurately completed and external fire safety training has not been delivered for some time.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The majority of families arrive at the centre in a planned manner; however; emergency admissions do sometimes occur. These are sensitively and appropriately handled. Clear and relevant information is obtained in order to reliably inform placement plans, which are clearly explained to the service users. All of the parents spoken to say they fully understand why they are at the centre. Not all families are in agreement that they need such a service, however, they speak positively about their experiences and treatment by the staff. Care files, including the placement plan, are comprehensive. Such plans set out detailed elements of the family assessment and hold comprehensive records of the supervision and monitoring techniques being implemented. The files clearly evidence how the 12 week comprehensive parenting assessment has used multi-disciplinary groups of staff with a good range of skills and knowledge to inform and enhance the final report. Placement plans hold full details of areas of potential risks and how these are to be managed during the placement. Families are actively encouraged to participate in any decision-making processes and their views are clearly recorded. Parents confirm that the need for any restrictions, monitoring or supervision of children has been fully explained to them. They further state the staff really explain things clearly and encourage them to read their own records and make their own entries. Thus, families feel empowered. A key worker system is in place, however, service users say they feel comfortable in speaking with any staff member. Regular house meetings actively seek the views and opinions of those in residence. These are recorded in writing and agendas are posted in communal areas in advance, in order to encourage service users to put forward their own issues. House rules are explicitly clear. Service users know what is expected of them and their visitors and clear consequences are in place if these are not adhered to. Sound support and guidance is provided to prepare individuals for their own review meetings. Staff encourage parents to take responsibility for their own actions and also advocate appropriately, where this is needed.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Families are assured that they will reside in pleasant accommodation, which is free from hazards and meets their needs. Family rooms offer good levels of privacy and can comfortably accommodate each individual family composition. Mattresses and bedding provided by the centre is changed after each family's stay and the laundry room is sufficiently equipped to meet the needs of those in residence. The large rear garden is safe and secure. It provides ample space for children to play in and offers a range of appropriate toys and equipment. Staff offices and administrative areas have considerably improved. These now provide much improved working conditions and the company offices to the side of the premises do not interfere with the day-to-day operation of the centre. Staff and service users know and respect the areas that are out of bounds. Communal areas have recently been refurbished. These are spacious, clean and well-maintained. There is a dedicated handyman who is working to a clear schedule of routine maintenance, redecoration and repairs, hence, the accommodation remains in good decorative order throughout.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The Statement of Purpose clearly sets out the aims and objectives of the service. Written literature for resident families is delivered in a style that is easy to read, however, care is taken to ensure all such documents are clearly verbally explained by the staff. Hence, all stakeholders have a sound understanding. The management culture is open and inclusive. Service users say they can readily approach any staff member, including senior managers with any concern or issue they may have. Families are valued by the staff team and clear attention is paid towards respecting the ethnicity and cultural values of those in placement. There is a good mix of diversity within the staff team and families clearly benefit from this. There is a clear system to cover the manager's absence and staff are confident that they know how and who to contact in specific situations. The current manager has submitted a registration application form to Ofsted and he possesses relevant qualifications and experience for the post. On call arrangements are effective. Staff members placed in charge of the centre and other staff are suitably qualified and experienced for their roles and responsibilities. The staff team is experienced, well-qualified and competent. Daily shift plans ensure adequate cover is continually in place, despite a staffing vacancy being apparent. Those in post possess qualifications and experience above the prescribed National Minimum Standards for residential family centres and a clear system is in place for the practice of teaching student social workers. Thus, families receive excellent quality in terms of ongoing support and guidance. This is further complemented by the organisation's access to its own pool of qualified personnel, including a drugs and alcohol practitioner, psychiatric nurse and a range of other external professionals who can be contracted in for specific pieces of work. Staff confirm they are well-supported. A revised and improved induction programme is currently being implemented and regular supervision is taking place, albeit some of the written notes are not completely up-to-date. The organisation provides continued training and recognises the need for the continued development of its staff group; the manager has recently completed a course in family therapy. Monthly monitoring visits, conducted by the registered provider are occurring, however, some of the findings are not always being fully recorded in writing. These visits are centred on the experiences of parents, children and staff, all of whom are fully involved in this process. Findings are being fully integrated into the quality assurance systems of the organisation and are used to inform the continuing service development plans.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Residential Family Centres Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
11	ensure future child protection training is provided following close liaison with the local safeguarding board (Regulation 12).	29 August 2008
17	ensure staff receive regular and ongoing supervision meetings, that are recorded in writing (Regulation 17(5)(a).	29 August 2008

Recommendations

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

- implement a system for the routine recording of fridge temperature checks (NMS 22)
- consult with the local fire office with regards staff training and ensure all fire records remain accurate and up-to-date (NMS 22).
- ensure formal systems are in place to collate all of the monitoring tasks currently being undertaken (NMS 24).

Annex

Annex A

National Minimum Standards for residential family centre

Being healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- families have access to health care, education, employment and leisure activities which promote their good health and well being, including their mental health, in a safe environment (NMS 4)

Ofsted considers 4 the key standard to be inspected.

Staying safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- parents and children enjoy a level of comfort and security within the centre based on mutual respect and an understanding of what may have an adverse effect on other residents (NMS 8)
- the privacy of parents and children is respected and information about them is handled with appropriate confidentiality (NMS 9)
- parents and children are able to complain if they are unhappy with any aspect of the centre; they are confident that any complaint will be taken seriously, investigated and addressed without delay and they will be kept informed of the progress (NMS 10)
- the welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse (NMS 11)
- families are protected from abuse, neglect and self-harm (NMS 12)
- all significant events relating to the protection of children or vulnerable adults within the centre are notified by the registered person to the appropriate authorities (NMS 13)
- there is careful selection and vetting of all staff and anyone else resident on the premises (NMS 15)
- parents and children stay in accommodation that provides physical safety and security (NMS 22)

Ofsted considers 9, 10, 11, 12, 15 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.

Enjoying and achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

Ofsted considers none of the above to be key standards to be inspected.

Making a positive contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- parents and children are admitted to and leave the centre in a planned and sensitive manner (NMS 2)
- children and their parents have their needs assessed and written plans outline how the assessment will be undertaken (NMS 3)
- parents and children using the centre feel well-informed and party to decisions made (NMS 6)
- parents and children enjoy sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect (NMS 7)

Ofsted considers 3 and 6 the key standards to be inspected.

Annex A

Achieving economic well-being

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- parents and children live in pleasant, well designed and maintained surroundings providing sufficient space and adequate facilities to meet their needs (NMS 19)
- parents and children enjoy homely accommodation, which is decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, and provides adequate facilities for their use (NMS 20)
- shared spaces complement and supplement residents' private rooms (NMS 21)

Ofsted considers none of the above to be key standards to be inspected.

Organisation

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- parents and children who use the centre know what they can expect, how they will be treated, how the centre operates, and have received this information in written form prior to admission (NMS 1)
- parents' progress is recorded to reflect their ability to care for the children in a safe manner, and promote their welfare (NMS 5)
- parents and children receive the care and services they need from competent staff (NMS 14)
- staff are: sufficient in number and experience; qualified to understand the needs of parents and children; able to respond appropriately when required (NMS 16)
- parents and children receive a service from staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare (NMS 17)
- staff are trained and enabled to carry out the role to which they are appointed (NMS 18)
- parents and children enjoy the stability of an efficiently run service and purchasers have confidence that they are getting value for money (NMS 23)
- the service's work with parents and children is continually adapted in the light of information about how it is operating (NMS 24)
- there are adequate records of the staff and families using the service (NMS 25)

Ofsted considers 1, 14 and 24 the key standards to be inspected.