

Dudley Lodge

Inspection report for residential family centre

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Inspector	Suzanne Young
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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 outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

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

This residential family centre provides family assessments for up to 10 families. It is operated by an established charitable company, which also provides a further residential family centre service in a town 23 miles away.

The service works with a range of families providing family assessments which are tailored to the presenting needs of each individual family. Work involves daily observation and feedback, complemented by individual sessions and group work. The centre also has strong links with external professionals.

The accommodation consists of 10 flats; five two bed-roomed flats and five one bed roomed flats. One of the two-bedroom flats is adapted for use by a person with disabilities. All of the flats are fully furnished and well equipped. The service is staffed around the clock with waking night staff. There is a range of meeting rooms and staff offices and accommodation. Families have use of a central garden, laundry and play room for children.

There are a range of leisure and community resources within easy access of the premises. Six families are currently resident and all contributed to the inspection process.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

The inspection was unannounced and reviewed the care provided against identified key national minimum standards. Outcome area, enjoying and achieving, was not inspected as it has no key standards. The care children and families receive is found to be outstanding across each outcome area.

The service is well managed and the assessment process is led by competent and knowledgeable staff. Robust systems are in place to safeguard children and to promote the general welfare of families. Staff support families to be healthy and to meet their children's health care needs. There is comprehensive pre-placement planning and families are fully engaged in the assessment process and in their care planning.

Improvements since the last inspection

Two recommendations were made at the last inspection. These have both been met by the provider. Medication records show the purpose of medication prescribed and the circumstances which would prompt administration. Robust environmental risk assessments are also being conducted.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children and families receive an excellent service that supports them to be healthy. They have access to effective health care and leisure activities which promote their good health and well-being. Parents are encouraged to pursue hobbies and healthy activities such as swimming and staff organise regular outings whereby families can socialise together.

Staff provide excellent support and guidance to families on a day-to-day basis which supports identified areas for parenting improvement such as bottle feeding and good hygiene. Staff also facilitate educational sessions with parents to promote children's health and well-being. These include child development, healthy eating and dietary needs. Alongside this, staff facilitate educational sessions in such areas as healthy cooking, smoking and cot death prevention.

Individual healthcare needs are clearly identified during both the referral and placement planning processes. All families register with a local doctor's surgery and staff have developed excellent links with a range of health professionals including health visitors, midwives and local doctors. The centre has a dedicated health visitor who visits families on a weekly basis and liaises closely with staff.

A robust medication administration system is in place. Medication is stored securely and detailed records are maintained on each occasion medication is administered. Staff training is provided in relation to the storage and administration of medication and first aid. Three members of staff are also trained and able to prescribe contraception.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Excellent systems are in place to safeguard children and to promote the general welfare of families during a residential assessment. Children's safety is given a high priority by staff who place children at the forefront of their work. Children's care is closely monitored by staff who are able to identify and deal with any concerns quickly and appropriately.

Staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and receive regular inter-agency safeguarding training. There are a range of policies and procedures, including interagency safeguarding policies. These are used to promote the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults. There are comprehensive risk assessments in place for families on admission which are reviewed and updated when necessary. Comments from local authorities using the centre are very positive. Social workers have expressed views that staff are 'very child focused and ensuring the child is kept safe'.

Parents are clear about standards of conduct and consequences of unacceptable behaviour. They are provided with guidelines on admission outlining expectations of behaviour in the centre. All complaints are dealt with appropriately and in a timely fashion. Parents and children are made aware of how to make a complaint when they first arrive at the centre.

Staff respect and are mindful of parents and children's privacy. Families have individual sleeping accommodation and staff are aware of the need to respect privacy while prioritising the wellbeing of children. Although a baby listening device is sometimes used by staff in the office this not used unless absolutely necessary and staff are mindful of privacy issues. Parents understand the reason for agreed observations of parenting tasks within their private accommodation.

All families attend a protection group that covers a range of safety and protection issues. These range from practical safety and supervision in the home, through to more complex issues such as, abuse and domestic violence. This is reinforced through weekly individual sessions on protection. The safety and welfare of children and adults is also promoted by an outside counsellor who attends the centre on a weekly basis to work with adult members of the family. This includes working with victims or perpetrators of domestic violence. Parents can have up to six sessions each during the placement.

Children and adults within the centre are protected by robust staff recruitment procedures. Robust systems are in place to make suitability decisions about staff and records are maintained to a high standard. Parents understand that all visitors must be agreed and appropriate checks undertaken before they are allowed into the centre.

Families stay in accommodation that provides a high level of physical safety and security. Health and safety checks are undertaken and staff are trained in fire safety. Robust environmental risk assessments are conducted and regular fire evacuations are undertaken with staff and families.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

There are no national minimum standards for this outcome group.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children and families are given excellent support to enable them to make a positive contribution to their individual placement plans and to the assessment process. There is robust pre placement planning and families are fully engaged in the assessment process and in their care planning. This enables them to fully understand

expectations of them and the structure of the assessment process. Children and families needs are individually assessed and staff prepare excellent placement plans which outline how the assessment will be undertaken.

There is a structured review process in which parents and all key professionals are fully involved. Staff regularly feedback and discuss issues with parents to enable them to share their views and opinions on a daily basis. Parents are also kept informed of their progress on a regular basis through frequent written summaries. Staff are fully aware of the importance of communication and use interpreters and other resources such as pictures, DVDs, worksheets and adapted role plays to ensure parents are fully able understand and participate in their assessment. Older children are also consulted and staff have developed creative ways to communicate with children including those with disabilities.

Parents are positive about the quality of the service that they receive. They are well aware of the need for staff to closely observe parenting tasks and confirm they are fully consulted. Parents have commented that staff are 'fair and thorough' and 'have provided us with useful information and good feedback'.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

Families are provided with high quality and comfortable accommodation which is appropriate to their individual needs and supports the assessment process. Each family has the sole use of a self-contained flat providing one or two bedrooms, a bathroom, a lounge and fully fitted kitchen/diner. Fixtures and fittings are of a good standard and are well maintained.

Parents are largely positive about their accommodation and feel they have everything they need. There is a well equipped communal laundry room and drying areas for families to use. Outside there is a large garden for children to play which includes a grassed area and an excellent range of good quality play equipment.

Residents have access to wireless internet, subject to a password. This provides children with the resources to manage home work and develop computer skills and for parents to keep in touch with family and friends.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The centre is organised and well managed to ensure that parents and children receive excellent care and services. Robust processes are in place to monitor and audit the quality of the care being provided to families.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. There is a strong commitment from staff to promote diversity and support families who are disadvantaged. Staff

identify and support individual needs relating to ethnicity, culture and religion. Parents and children with disabilities, learning difficulties or where English is not their first language, are fully supported. Staff use interpreters and other resources such as pictures, DVDs, worksheets and adapted role plays to ensure parents are fully able to understand and participate in their assessment.

Families and placing social workers are given detailed written information about the service they can expect to receive and which reflects the services and facilities provided. The centre also has developed a children's guide with relevant information about the centre.

Team case managers work effectively with team coordinators, family support workers and group workers. This supports the effective management of the centre in meeting the needs of parents and children. The centre has a new manager recently appointed who has yet to apply for registration. A recent management reorganisation has strengthened the management team with an operations manager overseeing two centres, a business support and human resources manager and a chief executive. The assessment process is led by competent and knowledgeable staff who are available in adequate numbers to support the assessment process.

Staff receive comprehensive in-house and external training covering a wide area of health, development and safeguarding issues. Staff also receive training in specific areas pertinent to residential family centres. Two workers are being supported through a social work degree course.

Staff are highly focused and committed in ensuring children's needs are being met. Written reports, progress summaries and assessments are of a high standard. Management and staff are proactive in ensuring they work in partnership with other key professionals. Feedback from external professionals includes comments such as 'quality of service excellent', 'service users received relevant support that was personalised to meet their needs' and 'child focused assessments'.