

Jamma Umoja

Inspection report for residential family centre

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Inspector	Lucy Ansell
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Date of last inspection	19/06/2008

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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

Jamma Umoja is a residential family centre, which offers assessment and treatment services to a maximum of eight families at any one time. This centre is run by a private company.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This was an unannounced inspection and all key standards were judged. The service provides excellent outcomes for the families using this service. The health needs of the families are extremely well met, with many of the staff team having additional skills and knowledge to strengthen the service provided. Safeguarding is robust and comprehensive with all staff having an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Clear systems promote and protect the welfare of the children. A strength of the service are robust assessments and complex risk management systems which offer significant protection to all involved.

The centre is staffed by a competent experienced team, who are led by a residential director. The director understands the importance of a well-qualified, competent and reflective team. This ensures the needs of the families accommodated are extremely well supported. Two recommendations are made to further improve practice in relation to improving the complaints system and ensuring supervision is formal and recorded.

Improvements since the last inspection

The recommendations and requirements made at the last inspection in 2008 have been fully implemented. Hence the service is ensuring the safety and welfare of families and working in the best interests of the those using the service.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Families benefit by accessing comprehensive health care facilities which effectively promote their health and well-being. Prompt registration with local GP surgeries ensures parents and babies readily access the additional health services they need, for example health visitors and midwives. Complex health support needs are commonplace within the service for example, working with clients with learning difficulties. The team recognises its own internal areas of expertise, for example in addictions support and domestic violence counselling but appropriately refers to

external specialist services wherever this is necessary. This means the chances of parents being successful in terms of their assessment are increased because they receive the specific support they need.

Initial planning meetings are fully utilised to obtain pertinent health information. Comprehensive records include health histories and consent forms for emergency treatment. Families further benefit from staff trained in paediatric first aid and medication administration; ongoing competency testing and regular updates in training for all staff ensures safe practices in these areas. Clear guidance and policies on medication administration and homely remedies are competently followed. Staff have a clear understanding of their own responsibilities which are focused upon encouraging parents to take a lead role in the care of their children.

Families are assured that health information is always available in the home. Individual key work sessions are effectively used to address particular issues and to raise awareness; for example, drugs awareness, self esteem, healthy eating or a particular aspect of caring for the baby. The service also encourages healthy eating and where necessary, provides cooking lessons and advice on meal planning, shopping and budgeting. Such input is invaluable in terms of equipping parents with the skills they will need upon leaving.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Families are safeguarded because clear and comprehensive guidance regarding expectations around behaviour are implemented. This is explicitly stated within the parent's welcome pack and is applied to all visitors entering the home. The consequences of unacceptable behaviour are made clear alongside a consistent approach from the staff team. This practice helps to manage anger and high risk issues. The implementation of a clear policy means that physical restraint is not used in the centre; this promotes a positive atmosphere.

An excellent approach to advocacy encourages respect for differences within the group work and key work sessions. For example, using interpreters when required, ensuring parents with learning difficulties are assessed in the context of the support being given and with the recruitment of a diverse staff group. All parents are assessed in their own right with stereotypical assumptions and any pre-judged decisions on capacity actively discouraged.

The privacy of families is respected while still maintaining excellent safeguarding measures. Supervisory techniques are clear while as unobtrusive as possible. Parents state 'they are clear on the way supervision or observations will be carried out' and 'staff are open and honest in communications with us following these sessions'. All information is appropriately shared with external agencies in the best interests of safeguarding the children in residence. Clear guidance about who has access to the content of reports and files further ensures confidentiality. The use of monitoring equipment such as CCTV surveillance is only used when there are significant

concerns and permission for such use has been agreed.

Parents are encouraged to make complaints and representations and reminded of their rights to do so. They know who to talk to, both informally and formally. Parents say they are confident that their concerns, however minor, are effectively listened to and they can be sure of a response. Written procedures on this topic include the service's undertaking to respond to such concerns in writing; however, this is not always being demonstrated.

Families are effectively safeguarded and this topic receives close attention and scrutiny from senior managers. Training is provided at a level commensurate with the roles and responsibilities of every staff member. The manager critically reviews the service's safeguarding procedures, appraises the service's performance and keeps up-to-date with research and legislation. Vulnerable adults and the resident children are being effectively safeguarded by a staff team, including staff who undertake waking night duties, who are clear about the roles and responsibilities of everyone within the service. Individuals know what to report and to whom. Excellent links with the local authority and placing authorities ensure any adult or child protection concerns are swiftly communicated in order for prompt action to be taken.

The families benefit from a service which is conducted so as to make proper provision for managing ongoing risk. The quality of risk assessment is robust and comprehensive and subject to daily scrutiny. The service is aware of the need to be vigilant and ensures all assessments are updated following any concerns. Staff demonstrate a heightened awareness of risk management and their own role in ensuring the safety of all residents.

Families benefit from robust and comprehensive selection and vetting of all staff. This ensures their suitability and the safety of all residents. Staff files contain all the required information and all checks are in place prior to any staff starting work. Any visitors to the home or the separate contact suite are not given unsupervised access to the buildings or other residents. A clear system records who is in the buildings, which ensures the protection of the residents.

Families benefit from staying in accommodation that provides physical safety and security. Positive steps are taken to keep everyone safe from any hazards, risk assessments for the premises are completed and fire checks and evacuations occur on a regular basis. All gas and electrical checks are up-to-date and the home is compliant with all required legislation ensuring the premises are safe for families.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Families benefit from admissions and discharges from the centre being executed in a planned and sensitive manner. The pre-planning meeting ensures the expectations of the centre, the social worker and the parent are clearly stated. During this meeting any concerns are clearly stated in an open forum regarding the purpose and scope of the placement to ensure transparency. The comprehensive referral form completed by social workers prior to admission and the arranged pre-visit further helps ensure the suitability of the client for this service. When recommendations and discharge from the service are planned, the service clearly communicates the families ongoing needs to key professionals. The service's community team ensures a smooth transition for families into their new accommodation and community.

Families benefit from effective and comprehensively written placement plans. These clearly specify services to be provided, assessment and supervision arrangements and contact agreements. The service ensures regular case management and weekly planning meetings, these clearly outline how the assessment is developing and ensure all parties are clear on reviewing progress at every stage before moving on.

Parents commented 'they are kept well informed and are told of all the decisions being made'. Staff take into account any learning difficulties and make sure communication is clear and appropriate to parent's abilities. During any feedback it is made clear parents can always make a comment and say if they feel it is unfair or not. Parents commented 'although it hurts hearing the negatives they still tell you the positives as well' and 'they tell you how it is, it is an honest relationship and they are good role models'. House meetings and key work sessions are other avenues for parents to raise concerns or discuss any issues.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Parents and children enjoy pleasant homely accommodation which is decorated, furnished and maintained to a good standard. The large spacious house and outside chalets provide several communal areas with plenty of space for shared and private areas. There is a separate contact suite with its own entrance to ensure the privacy and security of all families.

The bedrooms have a shared bathroom close by. All rooms are newly decorated and furnished for each resident prior to arrival. These are to a good standard and can be personalised with any belongings parents wish to bring with them. All bedrooms have a thermometer to prompt them so rooms do not become too warm. Families can borrow any other equipment as needed; mattresses and bedding are purchased for each new family. The house has roadside parking and access to a secure outside garden and smoking area.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The Statement of Purpose accurately reflects what the service can offer. The aims and objectives have a strong focus on safety and welfare; and shows how the service aims to improve the outcomes for the families who will be accessing it. This is updated regularly to ensure all information is correct. The welcome pack is appropriate for the families as it contains all the required information.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Staff are extremely proactive in promoting equality and diversity, staff are inclusive and honest in their relationships with the families. Parents 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 ethnic and cultural values of those in placement. There is an excellent mix of diversity within the staff team which families clearly benefit from.

There is a clear system to cover the manager's absence and senior staff who run shifts have the skills and experience for this position. Senior staff manage effectively the on-call arrangements and this ensures families receive the same level of expertise 24-hours a day. Staff members are experienced and established within their roles and responsibilities. The staff team is well qualified and competent; overall this ensures the service provided for families is excellent. All staff possess qualifications and experience above the prescribed national minimum standards for residential family centres, so families benefit from outstanding quality, ongoing support and guidance. This is further complemented by the organisation's access to its own pool of qualified personnel, including a play therapist, drugs and alcohol practitioner, and a range of other external professionals who can be contracted-in for specific pieces of work.

Staff are well supported and regular supervision is taking place; however, this is not always evidenced by formal written notes. The company provides ongoing training and recognises the need for the continuing development of its staff group. For example, the manager is completing an MA in safeguarding, staff have undertaken training in understanding domestic violence and several staff are completing their social work training and higher degree qualifications.

Families benefit from a management team who are able to critically evaluate, monitor and reflect on the service to provide the best outcomes for families. The registered provider and manager conduct monthly and weekly monitoring visits. These visits are centred on the experiences of parents, children and staff, all of whom are fully involved in this process. Findings are 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?

Recommendations

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

- ensure any complaint is addressed seriously and without delay, and a complaint will be fully responded to within a maximum of 28 days, and parents and children are kept informed of progress (NMS 10.1)
- ensure all staff working in the service receive one-to-one supervision from their line manager at least once a month. Records are kept of agreed action following supervision meetings. (NMS 17.2)