

# The Laurels

Inspection report for residential family centre

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC429589
<b>Inspection date</b>	24/04/2012
<b>Inspector</b>	Sharon Lewis
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Social Care Inspection

---

<b>Setting address</b>	16 Freemans Road, Minster, RAMSGATE, Kent, CT12 4EL
------------------------	---

<b>Telephone number</b>	07870645792
<b>Email</b>	ross@majesticfs.co.uk
<b>Registered person</b>	Majestic Family Services Limited
<b>Registered manager</b>	Katherine Louise Scoins
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Katherine Louise Scoins
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	22/09/2011

---

© Crown copyright 2012

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

## Service information

### Brief description of the service

Majestic Family Services is a privately owned organisation. It provides supported residential accommodation in which children can live with their families while parent's parenting skills are developed and assessed. The centre offers a service to parents and children of all ages. They specialise in undertaking assessments of expectant mothers and parents with young children. Training, support and communal programmes include both educative and social activities. These are designed to give children and families quality experiences. The centre provides 24-hour staffing. It can accommodate up to three families at any one time. Staff are also able to conduct community based placements and viability assessments. The centre's primary assessment tool is the Department of Health's Framework for Assessment of Children and Families 2000. This is complimented by other renowned assessment techniques.

### The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements  
Good: a service that exceeds minimum requirements  
Adequate: a service that only meets minimum requirements  
Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

## Summary

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This unannounced inspection is the first inspection since registration. Families benefit from a good service with outstanding health provision. This is relation to an exceptional level of individualised training and support for parents. There are also excellent links with health professionals and the centre commissions their own cognitive assessments. The service has significant strengths and strives to be a centre of excellence. Families have the opportunity to thrive within an empowering environment dedicated to enhancing their lives. Parents greatly appreciate assistance of staff in relation to their parenting skills and personal development. Professionals are equally complimentary.

Shortfalls are minor and consist of recommendations to further improve practice: These relate to establishing links with the local safeguarding children board; addressing the water pressure issue in a bathroom; improving the centre's discharge procedures and ensuring staff consistently sign all records. The centre has a good foundation to succeed within the sector and a good capacity to further improve.

## 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):

- establish links with the local safeguarding children board (NMS 11.8)
- produce procedures for parents and children leaving, covering both planned and emergency departures (NMS 2.8)
- ensure water supplies in the upstairs bathroom are distributed at an adequate pressure (NMS 20.5)
- ensure written entries on records are signed and dated. (NMS 5.2)

### Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable. This is the first inspection since registration.

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Families receive an exceptional range of holistic support. They benefit from extensive resources which actively promote their health, well-being and self-esteem. The centre demonstrates an innovative approach to care practices. There is a strong emphasis on understanding families and meticulously addressing their individualised needs. This includes identifying the best ways parents learn and using a variety of methods to enhance their knowledge. The aim being to build on their skills and provide a foundation for life-long learning. The service commissions their own cognitive assessments which purposefully informs their work with parents. There are excellent links with other professionals, which includes health visitors and the children and adolescent mental health service.

Parents greatly appreciate the extensive levels of support, describing it as 'outstanding'. They articulate that the educational programme has given them 'more confidence'. The staff team includes nurses who are able to provide one-to-one training on sexual health, children's health and development issues. Parents are able to participate in staff training, an example being food nutrition. Families proudly list how the centre has positively influenced their parenting and personal development. This includes learning a wide range of life skills; for example budgeting and cooking. Parents comment that 'the help is there if you need it.'

Families have access to very good healthcare, their needs are identified and assessed at the earliest stage. Families register with a local doctor and attend relevant health appointments. Staff have comprehensive training in first aid and medication

administration. There are secure medication storage facilities and relevant up-to-date records. The service has a risk assessment process in relation to parents' ability to administer medication to their children. Families are now taking greater responsibility for their own health. This includes raising their awareness, eating a more balanced diet and extending their international cookery skills. Exercise is part of the weekly routines; this includes walking and swimming.

Staff are fully aware of parents' strengths and nurture their talents. Parents receive encouragement and support to continue their education and enhance their skills. The service innovatively uses arts and crafts to capture memories. For example parents produce baby books and moulds of their baby's footprints. Families are able to safely discuss their feelings. They now demonstrate greater emotional warmth and social skills. They respond well to consistent encouragement. Families are independently engaging in activities which they enjoy and are stimulating for children. This includes parent and baby groups, baby massage, and messy play. These activities also provide an opportunity for them to develop meaningful friendships.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The service effectively safeguards and promotes the welfare of children. Children's safety is of paramount importance. Staff effectively advocate for the needs of the families. An example being insisting on appropriate intervention from a domestic violence organisation. Families enjoy a good level of security and state that they feel 'comfortable, like living in own home.' Parents confirm that they are treated with respect. They are aware of the rules and expectations regarding their behaviour. Staff effectively maintain confidentiality and securely store personal information. Staff undertake their observations in a relaxed, unobtrusive manner. Parents comment that staff are 'more like your friend.' There is a very good balance between warmth and professionalism. The use of monitoring devices is in line with good practice.

Parents feel safe and appreciate the guidance they receive related to their rights and personal safety. Parents are able to reflect and analyse their relationships and the impact on their parenting. The aim being to help parents create a safe and secure environment for their children. Parents learn about the various forms of abuse and how to minimise risks. Feedback from parents was positive. The service has a clear complaints procedure. Parents and staff are fully aware of how to make a complaint. The service has not received any complaints, however, they have received several compliments. These highlight the professionalism of staff, the flexible supportive environment and effective communication system.

Families benefit from the service's strong arrangements dedicated to their protection. Staff receive a broad range of training relating to safeguarding children and adults. Safeguarding procedures incorporate local guidance. The service, however, has not developed links with the local safeguarding board. This is recommended in the national minimum standards. There has not been any notifiable incidents. The

service however, has robust procedures to promptly inform all relevant parties. Parents confirm the need for any restrictions, monitoring or supervision of children has been fully explained to them.

Families live within a safe environment. Prior to employment, all staff undergo the relevant checks and the recruitment procedure ensures the careful vetting and monitoring of new staff. There are efficient policies for monitoring and supervising visitors. There is a comprehensive risk management system relating to individuals, working practices and the premises. The environment is physically safe and appropriately secure. New staff and families receive fire training as part of their induction. Staff demonstrate good awareness and effectively monitor health and safety matters. Certificates are in place which confirm the safety of the gas and electricity supplies.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is not judged.

There are no national minimum standards under this outcome area.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Families benefit from comprehensive care planning which positively meets their individual needs. The service empowers parents through the strong commitment to partnership working. The staff aim to provide a supportive advocacy role for parents and work hard to develop relationships based on trust and honesty.

Parents know what is expected of them and are made accountable for their actions. Staff work proactively with families, identifying and addressing highlighted issues. The open file policy enables parents to regularly comment on the assessment process. Staff sensitively manage any literacy problems. They routinely read records back to parents. This enables parents to actively voice any concerns. Families receive ongoing motivation, which raises their self-esteem. Staff are aware of each family's strengths and appropriately praise and encourage them.

Families confirm that the admission process was both informative and welcoming. The centre has a robust admission procedure, which consists of meeting with placing authorities and families. This ensures parents are fully aware of the assessment process prior to the start of their placement. Parents proactively contribute to their placement plan. This plan details all areas of individual need including health, ethnicity, culture, religion, language and disability. Placement planning incorporates historical information supplied by the placing authority and other agencies. This provides staff with valued knowledge on the complexities of each family, which effectively informs their working practices. The assessment process supports parents

to retain appropriate levels of choice and independence during their residential placement. Placement plans are subject to regular reviews. Families participate in review meetings and are assisted to put forward their views.

The centre empowers families, enabling them to take a key role in decision making. Parents appreciate that they are able to choose their link worker. Parents' views contribute to daily life and the longer-term arrangements. Families positively influence service development through a variety of avenues, which includes key work and house meetings. There is a strong promotion of individual rights and staff appropriately make referrals to specialist advocacy and other organisations. The centre only demonstrates one minor shortfall in this outcome area. This relates to the discharge procedures. These are currently informal and do not sufficiently detail the arrangements for planned and emergency departures. This does not have a significant impact on the quality of care.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Families reside in modern, homely, well-maintained premises. Families are in close proximity to the high street, local resources and a large park. Regular bus and rail routes enable families to travel to surrounding areas, to access a wider range of facilities. The centre also has a house car which can be utilised by staff with the manager's agreement. The residential centre is a large modern house, which is furnished and decorated to a good standard. Each family has their own room located upstairs. Rooms are of sufficient size, space, fittings and furnishings to meet the individual needs of the family. There are bathrooms and toilets on each floor. Parents have their own keys and there is a secure entry system. The centre is used solely for the use of families and not for any other purposes.

Families can enjoy a wide range of communal areas. This includes a spacious kitchen, dining room, television lounge, a laundry room and a play and contact room. To the rear of the property is a garden with a lawn, decking and safe play equipment. Parents comment that the centre is 'always clean'. They appreciate the facilities stating a 'good thing is the play room.' They were also looking forward to the plans to have a vegetable patch, enabling them to grow their own produce. The only complaint was in relation to the water pressure in their bathroom. During the inspection, this issue was promptly referred for investigation. Stimulating, educational toys are available and a range of culturally diverse books. The centre has a range of features which are appropriate to the age, development, cultural and ethnic background of the parents and children using the service.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The centre provides families with a high quality service. The company is owned and run by qualified social workers with extensive experience of working with children

and their families. The management, staff and service culture is open, inclusive, homely and non-institutional. Processes and systems comprehensively support good practice. Staff and parents feel that they are given quality leadership and very good support. Parents describe staff as 'lovely' highlighting their amiable, caring and respectful attitudes. The Statement of Purpose comprehensively details the centre's philosophy, principles and working practices, all within the legislative framework. Families benefit from their own guide which summarises the centre's ways of working. They greatly value this guide stating 'it tells you everything you need.'

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to promoting dignity and respecting parent's rights. There is a strong focus on meeting the individual's diverse needs and engaging positively with partners and other family members. Families benefit from an extensive range of highly personalised support within the centre and outside. Policies and procedures demonstrate the centre's commitment to working in an anti-discriminatory manner. Training and support for families focuses on building up their self-esteem. This includes using specialist assessment packages to meet the needs of parents who have a learning disability. Staff skills also incorporate the ability to communicate using Makaton.

Families benefit from a highly motivated, competent staff team, with a wide range of qualifications and prior experience. This includes social work, residential care, youth work, probation, child care and nursing. The organisation also employs a psychotherapist and psychologist both of whom are qualified to deliver therapy to individuals and families. The skills within the team are matched to the service user group. The staff team is predominately female, with male representation. Vocational training is in progress. There is a structured induction and training plan for all staff and parents may be involved. Staff are well supported in their role. They receive regular supervision and training. The organisation demonstrated a strong commitment to staff development. Appropriate staff disciplinary policies and procedures are in place to address poor practice.

Families receive support from an effective staff team. Staff demonstrate a proactive approach to working in partnership with a wide range of key professionals. The number of staff on duty robustly meets the needs of the parents and children. This enables staff to successfully undertake assessments, activities, visits and appointments. There are robust quality monitoring and assurance systems. These comply with regulations and positively incorporate the views of families and staff. Management takes action to address identified areas for improvement. Record keeping is up-to-date and clearly details each parent's progress. Staff usually sign their names on records, to ensure accountability. One occasion was found when this did not happen. The national minimum standards highlight that all written entries must be signed.



## **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 for children. 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.