

Care 2 Share

Inspection report for residential family centre

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Inspector	Sandra Jacobs-Walls
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This residential family centre is owned by a private organisation. The centre provides assessment of parenting, on a residential basis and in the community. In the case of residential placements, assessments are generally completed within a 12 week timescale.

Care 2 Share is one of two residential family centres owned by the provider. This centre is based in the Walthamstow area of the London Borough of Waltham Forest and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six families. The centre accepts referrals for families with children aged between 0-11 years only.

The inspection judgements

Outstanding

Good

Requires improvement

Inadequate

The overall experiences of children and parents

The overall experiences of children and parents are good

Families report that they feel safe and are protected from abuse, neglect and violence. Where incidents of an adult or child protection nature occur, managers take appropriate action. Staff manage challenging behaviours well and families generally adhere to house rules.

Staff provide good quality care, support and guidance in accordance with personalised family placement plans. This results in families having positive experiences, and improved outcomes for children. Staff and parents work together to meet children's day-to-day needs. Parents are actively engaged in placement planning and understand these plans. They generally share positive relationships with the staff group.

Families are well-supported by a range of professionals to understand their own capacity to offer safe care and the impact of their behaviour on children. Staff partnership working with other professionals is excellent.

The wishes and views of families have some influence on the running of the centre and the delivery of care, guidance and support. Complaints are infrequently made. Where this is the case, concerns are taken seriously, managed appropriately and in accordance with the centre's complaints procedures.

The home's premises are secure, well-maintained and comfortable.

Areas for improvement

Statutory Requirements

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

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
11 (2002)	ensure that all parts of the residential family centre to which residents have access are so far as reasonably practicable free from hazards to their safety. In particular that the temperature of bathroom towel rails are lowered to reduce the potential for harm (Regulation 11(4)(b))	01/10/2015

Recommendations

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

- Ensure staff receive high quality training to enhance their individual skills and to keep them up-to-date with professional and legal developments. Specifically, in aspects described by the statement of purpose. (NMS 16)

Quality of assessment

The quality of assessment is **good**

Staff complete assessments that meet the individual needs of children and parents. Assessments are comprehensive and analytical. They evidence a clear understanding of historical events, risk and the capacity of parents to protect and promote the well-being of their children. Assessments are thorough, evidenced-based and explicit in methods used. These are fully compliant with court and local authority requirements.

Assessments include good evidence of the child's journey in being cared for safely and are clear in outlining future support and action to be taken for children to remain safe. Some assessments lack reference to relevant practice research. Staff ensure that recommendations about children's futures are based on their best interests and well-triangulated evidence. Feedback from a Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service representative states, 'The reports are detailed and in depth – again assist with making my recommendation. Safeguarding is my main concern and this is, on the whole, reflected in the reports I have had from the service thus far.'

Staff devise placements plans that meet the individual needs of families. Plans are consistent with the Department for Education's 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance and these are regularly reviewed and revised to reflect changing placement issues. Assessments are realistic about parental capacity for change and the extent to which parents understand the impact of their behaviour on children. Staff ensure that placement plans are explicit in outlining the centre's use of surveillance systems; families are made aware of these at the outset of placement negotiation and agreement.

Parents are very much involved throughout the entire assessment process. Staff provide clear verbal and written feedback and parents are very much encouraged to share their views on feedback provided. The centre makes use of a 'traffic light' recording tool which provides written and visual information about the degree to which learning and tasks have been accomplished. For example, one such record states on 'green', 'Excellent household management; you scored 10 (out of 10) for both room checks. Well done.' The recording tool is an innovative method of highlighting parental progress or issues, while providing parents with an opportunity to share their views on staff feedback. Staff ensure they record any feedback received from families clearly on file. Parents have good access to information written about them and are formally made aware of the contents of assessment reports. Again, any feedback from parents pertaining to assessment reports is clearly recorded.

Staff are committed to ensuring that throughout the entire assessment process, partners and involved professionals are kept apprised of placement progress and issues. This effective liaison contributes to the completion of comprehensive, high quality assessments and considered recommendations about future planning. Professionals involved with families make effective contribution to the assessment. A local authority social worker comments, 'I have found for the families I have at Care

2 Share that the reports are child focused and have assisted me with being able to make recommendations for the child.'

The Registered Manager, who is responsible for completing assessment reports, is an experienced, qualified social worker with extensive experience of family assessment, child and adult protection and management. This supports the completion of quality assessments, although some reports are found to contain little reference to practice research. Managers and staff follow a largely behavioural theoretical model to promote change and safe care. The staff team have good opportunities to reflect collectively and as individuals on practice issues; this has a positive impact on children and parents' experiences.

How well children and parents are protected and helped

The service is **good** at how well children and parents are protected and helped.

Children's welfare and safety is central to the work of this residential family centre. Managers and staff work hard to ensure children are well-protected from harm, abuse and neglect. As a consequence, critical instances that compromise children's safety are rare. However, since the last inspection there have been two incidents as a result of staff failures which do not demonstrate effective safe care practices. In both instances, each serious in nature, managers took prompt and appropriate action to address the identified shortfall in staff practice. Managers systematically monitor all allegations and promote learning from such incidents within the staff team. This has resulted in changes in practice and policy development.

The centre has clear and comprehensive child and adult protection policies and procedures that are conducive with local authority policies and police protocols. Staff are familiar with these as they feature in staff induction and regularly thereafter, for example in team meetings and supervision. Staff have access to regular safeguarding training to further support safe practice.

Staff devise care plans that are explicit in highlighting known or potential risks to children's safety and well-being. Staff keenly monitor risk assessments, alongside parents' parenting skills and plans are updated as required. Staff take appropriate action to ensure children's needs are being met; this includes their emotional and attachment needs. Where this is lacking, staff offer support and guidance to promote healthy attachment between parent and child.

Where placements are planned, families receive clear and detailed information about the service. For example, the residents' handbook is an informative, easy-read guide which outlines the centre's aims and practices and what families can expect. Staff pay good attention to families identity needs, in particular in relation to gender, age, disability, religious and linguistic needs. For example, staff encourage families to attend places of worship if they wish to and are mindful of religious obligations such as fasting during Ramadan. Separate cooking utensils are made available so that the

preparation of food is in accordance with faith practices. Male parents are routinely included in the assessment process, where this is in-line with placement objectives, and fathers' groups can be accessed. Staff work effectively with families where learning difficulties feature; staff ensure assessments also fully consider age, ethnic and cultural needs. Families have access to interpreting services as required.

Staff and managers have good insight into the impact of the residential experience on families and this is used positively to promote the quality of practice and support to parents. A guardian comments, 'Care 2 Share are incredibly fair. They are real people that live in the real world and understand issues. Staff are very normal and calm. The staff and the centre's culture enables families a chance to be successful, rather than just looking for faults.'

Parents are supported to resolve conflict in a constructive manner. Staff promote positive relationships between residents, and families report there are few major disputes. Where there are issues, staff encourage parents to discuss these openly, for example within residents' meetings, so issues can be resolved. Families and other stakeholders have access to the centre's complaints policies and procedures. Complaints against the service are made infrequently. Where this is the case, concerns are taken seriously, managed appropriately and in accordance with the complaints procedure.

Staff manage challenging behaviour well and work to eliminate any anti-social behaviour. Staff complete annual restraint training which supports their efforts to address potentially volatile situations. A staff member comments, 'I speak with parents to try to diffuse situations. I can reason with them that way. If children are misbehaving, I speak with them also. I use humour a lot as a distraction to what's doing on.'

The centre's premises are secure, well-maintained and comfortable. The building meets the needs of families undergoing assessment; families are satisfied with their surroundings and enjoy the facilities. Staff ensure the building is physically safe; there are routine safe health and safety measures in place, and fire precautions systems are sound. A towel rail in one of the family bathrooms is hot to the touch; this is an unnecessary hazard to the health and safety of residents, in particular children. On highlighting this hazard to managers, the rail was rendered inoperable while the inspector was on site.

Staff share strong and proactive relationships with key partner agencies. A local authority social worker comments, 'The levels of communication from the centre have always been excellent.' Staff's strong partnership working is also evident with courts, community support services and in particular health care services. The centre actively promotes positive outcomes in relation to families' health and education. Staff maintain good health care records such as immunization histories, health care appointments and their outcomes. Parents are supported to attend baby clinics and access support and advice in relation their own alcohol and substance misuse. Staff encourage parents to seek community mental health services and have good links to specialist community resources that address issues such as domestic violence. Staff receive training in first aid and the administration of medication. Staff's medication practices are safe and very consistent. The inspector was made aware of one recent

incident where this was not the case; on this occasion, managers took immediate remedial action to ensure the issue was addressed and risks were minimised.

Working with partners to improve outcomes

The service is **outstanding** at working with partners to improve outcomes.

Staff's partnership working with key agencies is excellent and highly effective. This is a clear strength of the service. Staff's collaborative working with stakeholders is positive and significantly contributes to support and protection of children. A local authority team manager comments, 'At a previous meeting held together with a service manager from the authority we discussed the quality of assessments and court reports. As a result of his discussion the authority revised its procedures and we will now issue a letter of instruction (to any family assessment centre) prior to the commencement of an assessment in order to ensure that all of the pertinent issues are covered in the final report.'

Key partners are active participants in reviews of placement progress. A senior social worker says of the service, 'I referred my family to Care 2 Share residential assessment unit as recommended within the current care proceedings. This is a very complex case and required effective professional and agencies collaboration. My involvement with Care 2 Share has been very positive and I am pleased with their commitment to work in partnership with the local authority and the parents while prioritising the children's welfare. I was kept informed and updated on a regular basis about the family's progress within the unit.'

A placements officer says of communication with the service's registered persons, 'We are able to communicate on a 'grass roots' level to ensure we are making our placement in the best place possible. We are able to speak about any issues regarding families....these are dealt with in a timely manner... Overall my experience with Care 2 Share was positive.'

Staff ensure frequent and regular communication with key partners. Highly effective collaborative working is routine centre-practice and this approach ensures children receive the support and protection they require and are entitled to.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The effectiveness of leaders and managers is **good**.

The centre is well-managed. Leaders and managers have clear and realistic ambitions for the continued improvement of the service. Development plans highlight staff recruitment, staff training, and a continued programme of refurbishment as some future priorities. The service is appropriately staffed and resourced to meet families' assessment needs.

The leadership of the service is sound. There is an experienced, skilled, social work qualified Registered Manager in place who effectively and effectively manages the service. Monitoring systems are good and managers conduct an annual review of the service; review findings help shape service development. Independent monthly monitoring visits evaluate the quality of service and highlights well its strengths and weaknesses. Where required, action is taken by managers to address identified shortfalls. This ensures the quality of service remains at a high standard which is of benefit to families undergoing assessment. Leaders and managers demonstrate and communicate their high expectations to staff about sustaining improvement and this is embraced by the staff team.

The service's policies and practice with regards to admissions is clear and effective. Staff ensure that where placements are planned, comprehensive background information is sought and that families have introductory visits to help settle them in. When admissions occur at short notice, which is regularly the case, staff work hard to ensure the transition is managed as sensitively as possible.

The centre's statement of purpose is very comprehensive, outlining the services, facilities, ethos and practices of the two residential family centres owned by the provider. The document is fully in compliance with the regulations. Managers ensure that Ofsted and other bodies are promptly notified of significant events as outlined in the regulations. Notifiable events are not frequent occurrences at the centre, but when they do occur, managers ensure that children's needs are well met and that they are protected and kept safe.

The staff team are committed workers, who are passionate about their work with families and safeguarding children. One staff member comments, 'I love doing the job. I like to see mothers go home with their children. What do I enjoy the most? I know that I am coming in to help give a mother a little oomph, a push so that they're leaving here on a high. It hurts when they just don't get it.'

Support for staff is good. A new member of the team states, 'I felt I could ask for support early on, especially with support around my key work sessions. It's easy to be open with the manager and other team members.'

Staff practice is supported by regular and meaningful supervision that meets the staff members' individual needs. One worker comments, 'I love my supervision....just the way you can be with our manager; it's all about you – you can express yourself, it's your own time.' Staff benefit from group/peer supervision and team meetings that promote reflective practice.

Training opportunities for staff requires improvement. The service this year offers staff a basic, core training programme which is not dissimilar from the programme available to staff the previous year. This training includes food hygiene, health and safety training, restrictive physical intervention and safeguarding. The service does not readily access training available via the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Plans are in place for staff to shortly access more challenging and relevant training to promote individual and collective team development objectives. For example, the Registered Manager has completed Parental Assessment Manual training and has

shared this learning with the staff group. Other training opportunities scheduled for the near future include first aid and supplementary training on the safe administration of medication. Staff, children and parents will benefit from a comprehensive, quality programme of staff training that is more relevant, challenging and effective in meeting the aims and objectives of the service.

Children and their families benefit from the service's robust and safe vetting and recruitment practices. Staff personnel files evidence that all required information and checks are in place. This practice helps prevent unsuitable persons from working with vulnerable families.

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 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the inspection framework and the evaluation schedule for the inspection of residential family centres.