

Serendipity Family Assessment Centre

Serendipity, 24 Victoria Road, Exmouth, Devon EX8 1DW

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential family centre

This residential family centre provides parenting assessments for up to six families. The families are accommodated in two houses a very short distance apart. Parents must be at least 16 years old. The service accepts children up to 10 years old.

Inspection date: 30 October 2017

Date of previous inspection: 22 August 2017

This monitoring visit

This inspection visit took place to monitor compliance with the notice to restrict accommodation and to monitor progress against previous regulatory requirements.

A notice of proposal to cancel the registration of this residential family centre has been issued. A representations panel is to be convened to consider the provider's representations against the notice of proposal. The outcome of this monitoring visit is that the service is not yet sufficiently evidencing embedded improvement that would give Ofsted the confidence to withdraw the notice of proposal to cancel the registration.

External consultants continue to offer weekly support and guidance to the registered manager to help them implement the improvement plan. This monitoring visit found that some improvement in relation to governance and recording systems has taken place since the previous monitoring inspection visit. However, serious concerns continue about the quality of assessments and the safety of children and families in the service.

One family is now placed at the residential family centre. One house has been closed since the notice of restriction of accommodation was issued. The notice of restriction of accommodation has been complied with by the residential family centre. No new

families have been admitted. There has been no use of agency staff since the previous monitoring inspection.

Placement plans have been rewritten and continue to be an improvement on those used previously. Plans now state when the staff should intervene if there are concerns about the safety of a child. However, on one occasion since the last monitoring visit, a baby suffered a mark to their head and was distressed as a result of making contact with their head on a radiator. The parent failed to observe that the baby's changing mat was positioned too close to the radiator. The staff failed to intervene to make the situation safe. No evaluation of this incident has taken place to ensure that there is learning for the staff and so that measures can be put in place to ensure that a similar situation is not repeated.

Recordings by the staff in daily logs still do not contain sufficient information to clearly state whether a member of staff is in the room with a parent while observing a task, or whether they are observing the parent on CCTV.

An agreement is now in place from the placing authority regarding the 'indirect observation' of the family when they are out of the family centre alone. This means that staff are observing and employing surveillance on parents without their knowledge while they are in the community. However, no risk assessments are in place to guide staff on what action to take if the staff member does observe that parents are putting their child or themselves at risk.

The manager has instructed the staff to call the police if a family visiting a parent at the residential family centre will not leave when asked. This demonstrates a lack of understanding of the vulnerabilities of the family, one of whom is a nine-year-old child. To obtain police support for a task that the staff would be expected to have the skills to manage is inappropriate and risks criminalising a child.

The staff state that the parent remaining in the family centre is currently assessed as 'minor concern/placement settled'. The manager has asked for an extension to this placement. This documented recommendation, which was confirmed as accurate by a member of staff when asked by the inspectors, does not tally with the evidence in the daily logs, which document repeated concerns with the parent's care of their child. The recommendation recently changed from 'there are concerns but placement not at risk of breakdown'. There is little evidence to support the change in the recommendation. Many concerns are evident about the inability of this parent to safely parent the child, but the residential family centre has not reconsidered the viability of the assessment. The children's guardian for the child said: 'I would have thought that staff would have given a clearer direction. You would expect the mother to be doing things independently this late on in the assessment and not staff doing hands-on care and making decisions for her, which is what is happening... they are not clear where the assessment is going.'

Concerns remain about the accuracy of a report that has been submitted to court for a final hearing. The accuracy of this report is being scrutinised, together with the

daily recording logs to establish whether there are any discrepancies. The placing authority has serious concerns about the change in the recommendation from the residential family centre that changed from one of concern to being very positive.

A comprehensive system of quality monitoring by the registered individual and registered manager is not yet in place. Audits are being carried out by a consultant with no clear plan for how the registered individuals will take on this task in the future. There is not yet any evidence to show that the parents' views are used and incorporated into the quality monitoring system. However, the views of parents are now gathered as part of the assessment process.

Parents' complaints are now recorded and the outcome of the investigation into these complaints is recorded.

All staff have now received safeguarding training. The child protection policy and procedures have been updated. The staff have been reporting all incidents to the relevant authorities so that they are absolutely sure that all are reported in a timely manner.

What does the residential family centre need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Residential Family Centre Regulations 2002 and the national minimum standards. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
Ensure whenever practicable, the wishes and feelings of residents are taken into account when making decisions about their health and welfare, or the manner in which they are treated. In particular, that residents' views are incorporated into the quality monitoring processes. (Regulation 10(2)).	16/11/2017
Ensure that the facilities and service to be provided during the course of the placement are documented in the placement plan and risk assessment. In particular, methods of surveillance and that any surveillance by the staff that takes place outside of the residential family centre without the parent's knowledge, is agreed with the placing authority and documented in individual family placement plan and risk assessment. (Regulation 13(1)(a)).	16/11/2017
Ensure that before providing a family with accommodation in the residential family centre, or if that is not reasonably practicable, as soon as possible thereafter, draw up in consultation with the placing authority a written plan setting out in particular, an assessment of risks which a resident at the residential family centre may present to their own health, safety and welfare or that of other residents or staff at the centre. Ensure that an impact risk assessment is undertaken to ensure that it is safe for the family to move in with the centre's other residents. It must inform the level of supervision necessary and be kept under review. (Regulation 13(1)(b)).	16/11/2017
Ensure that an assessment or monitoring of parents' capacity to respond to children's needs and to safeguard their welfare is monitored or assessed by a suitably qualified person in accordance with the requirements of this regulation. (Regulation 13A(1)).	16/11/2017
Ensure that supervising social workers receive appropriate supervision and appraisal from a suitably qualified person. (Regulation 17(5)(a)).	16/11/2017
Ensure that a system is established and maintained for reviewing at appropriate intervals and improving the quality	16/11/2017

of care provided at the residential family centre. (Regulation 23(1)(a)(b))	
Ensure that all assessment or monitoring of parents' capacity to respond to children's needs and to safeguard their welfare must be carried out in accordance with appropriate and generally recognised methods for such assessment. In particular, that reports to the court reflect a true and accurate summary of assessment and observation findings. (Regulation 13A(2))	16/11/2017
Ensure that the aims and objectives and intended outcomes of the placement are documented in the placement plan. In particular, the supervising and protection to be provided at the centre regarding how the child's welfare will be promoted. This plan must set out the level of supervision required and how this will change in time dependent on progress. (Regulation 13(1)(b))	16/11/2017

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the residential family centre since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Residential family centre details

Unique reference number: SC445624

Registered provider: Serendipity (Devon) Ltd

Registered provider address: Serendipity, 24 Victoria Road, Exmouth, Devon EX8 1DW

Responsible individual: Ian Jackson

Registered manager: Julie Jackson

Inspectors

Tina Maddison: Social care inspector

Sarah Canto: Social care inspector



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