

Amber Grange/Amber Family

Amber Family Ltd

18 Windsor Road, Southport, Lancashire PR9 0SG

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential family centre

This residential family centre is registered to accommodate up to four families at any one time. The residential family centre is privately owned. The residential family centre gives parents the opportunity to live together with their babies and enables the centre to assess families and provide support and guidance with a view to successful reintegration into society.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in August 2018. The registered manager has a social work and leadership and management qualification.

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and parents, taking into account good

How well children and parents are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The residential family centre provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of previous inspection: this is the first inspection since the residential family centre was registered in August 2018.

Overall judgement at last inspection: N/A

Enforcement action since last inspection: N/A

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and parents: good

Assessments are thorough, individual and clear. The needs of children are paramount throughout the assessment. There is a strong emphasis on the parents' capacity to change and sensitively meeting parents' needs as well. Time for reflection is built into the assessment programme, enabling parents to better understand their parenting capacity and ability to change. Staff develop positive relationships with families, which encourages them to participate in the assessment.

Consultation with parents is a strength of the service. Parents' opinions are valued and acted on. There are formal and informal ways for the parents to make their views known. If concerns are raised, they are dealt with appropriately. Restorative practice and meetings are used well to manage conflict between families and to help resolve any issues that arise. However, records are not always completed to demonstrate this positive restorative approach from staff at the centre.

The staff immediately work to establish positive relationships with the parents and children. The parents said that the staff are understanding and fair. This helps them to build strong and trusting relationships. The parents emphasised the fact that staff do 'listen' to them. This embedded ethos has a very constructive impact on the assessment process and experience of the parents and children.

The staff know each family extremely well. The staff achieve this with understanding and sensitivity and consider each family's circumstances. The families are provided with highly individualised support, guidance and clear direction. The staff strongly maintain an elevated focus to promote good parenting.

There are regular opportunities for parents to engage in a range of social and recreational activities in the centre and in the local community. These include accessing parenting classes, sessions for parents who have suffered domestic abuse, baby yoga and massage, and craft and life-story sessions. Parents and children visit local community groups, and some go swimming.

Parents and children are only admitted to the centre after careful consideration of their detailed referral information and when the leaders and managers are confident that the staff team is able to meet the needs of parents and children and keep them safe. Furthermore, consideration is given to the impact that new placements will have on the parents and children already residing at the centre.

Additionally, staff carefully plan how to help parents and children when they leave the centre. Staff help parents to record memories of their child, which they can take with them, for example by making memory boxes, making a copy of their child's footprints and taking photos of their child's time at the centre.

A parent said, 'I was worried about coming here and it is much better than I thought, it is a very relaxed atmosphere. The staff are really helpful and reassuring. All the workers are approachable.'

The home environment and facilities offer parents and children a nice place to stay. The home is decorated and furnished to a good standard. Parents are supported and encouraged to maintain good standards in their own bedrooms and there is a rota for them to undertake chores in the centre. Parents have set times to do their laundry and prepare and cook their own meals. This helps parents to develop good routines and improve their parenting and independence skills.

How well children and parents are helped and protected: good

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding and generally use this knowledge well. They provide a range of activities and opportunities for discussions, which support families to develop their awareness and abilities to keep their child and themselves safe.

Children's safety is paramount and carefully monitored. The staff know what they are expected to do in respect of each of the families who are at the centre and what risks exist for each. Risk assessments are generally detailed and frequently updated. Risk assessments contain good guidance for staff about what they should do to manage and minimise risks.

Parents receive written guidance about expectations and behaviour during their stay and sign a behaviour contract at the start of their placement. The staff reiterate this and explain the importance of respecting others and the rules and boundaries that need to be adhered to during the placement and assessment process. As a result, parents have maintained positive and acceptable behaviour overall. The parents confirmed that the rules are 'fair' and that they are there to keep everyone safe.

The centre has recently introduced a co-sleeping policy and agreement to ensure that parents adhere to safe sleep guidelines for their children. Staff take effective prompt action when a parent co-sleeps with their child to ensure that children are safeguarded. Staff spend time talking to parents about safe sleep and provide them with information to raise their awareness and understanding on the importance of safe sleep. A parent spoke about the work that staff have undertaken with her about safe sleep and that this has led to her no longer co-sleeping with her baby.

Parents and children rarely go missing from the centre. On the one occasion when a parent and child did not return to the centre at the agreed time, staff made attempts to locate them and ensure their safe return. The placing local authority social worker and the police were informed due to the safeguarding concerns. The parent and child returned to the placement a short time later and the police completed a safe and well check. Discussions took place between the parent and staff to highlight the importance of returning to the centre on time and to prevent a further incident of them being missing.

The home has effective arrangements in place for recruiting staff. Records demonstrate that the manager undertakes thorough recruitment and selection processes. All the appropriate checks and references are undertaken prior to the staff taking up employment. This means that, as far as possible, the children and parents are protected from contact with unsuitable adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have a clear vision for the service, which they achieve well. They provide strong leadership, which results in a focus on children's best interests, parents who can make their views known, a motivated staff team and an effective balance between parenting assessment and support for parents and children.

There are good levels of appropriately qualified staff on duty throughout the day and night. Their range of skills, backgrounds and knowledge flexibly meets children's and their parents' needs well. Staffing levels are kept under review and change depending on what is happening.

Staff support is good, and the frequency of supervision for support workers has increased. All staff receive regular professional supervision that enables them to discuss the needs and progress of parents and children and reflect on practice. The provider has now introduced joint team meetings for support staff and key workers to ensure that the staff team is cohesive and provides a consistent level of care and support to parents and children.

Mandatory training includes first aid, health and safety, reporting and recording, and safeguarding. Specialist training areas now include, five to thrive, attachment in the early years, ADHD and autism spectrum disorder, and managing anger. A number of staff are trained as mental health first aiders. One member of staff has been given the opportunity to undertake a social work apprenticeship degree. This provides the staff with a wealth of knowledge and skills. In turn, this ensures that the delivery of the best support to parents and the undertaking of a robust assessment keeps children safe.

The staff highlight the good support that they receive. One member of staff said, 'Managers make me feel valued; I did not think I would ever enjoy coming to work until I worked here. Managers believe in me and have helped me to believe in myself due to their recognition and praise of my work.'

Commissioning services and parents are well informed about the service provided to families through a detailed statement of purpose and parents' handbook. These documents set out the ethos and objectives of the residential family centre to all those accessing it. However, the provider has not sent an updated statement of purpose to Ofsted in line with regulation. Leaders and managers have established strong partnership working with all professionals, including social workers and health visitors. This ensures that all the professionals work cohesively in the best interest of the children and parents. A placing social worker spoke about the 'fantastic' support

that the centre provides. The social worker said, 'The staff are absolutely fantastic and go above and beyond what is expected of them.'

The quality of the internal and external monitoring of the service is variable. There are good systems in place to monitor the assessment process through 'the life of a key-worker' monitoring tool and regular file audits. However, some records, such as key-worker progress meeting reports, do not demonstrate management oversight and evaluation. The provider is awaiting the implementation of a new electronic system to improve the monitoring of training and human resources and has appointed an external independent monthly visitor to improve the monitoring of the service.

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 Centres Regulations 2002 and the national minimum standards. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person shall compile in relation to the residential family centre a written statement (in these Regulations referred to as 'the statement of purpose') which shall consist of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1.</p> <p>The registered person shall provide a copy of the statement of purpose to the [Chief Inspector]. (Residential Family Centres Regulations 2002. Regulation 4 (1)(2))</p>	28/02/2020
<p>The registered provider and the registered manager shall, having regard to the size of the residential family centre, the statement of purpose, and the number and needs of the residents, carry on or manage the centre (as the case may be) with sufficient care, competence and skill. (Residential Family Centres Regulations 2002. Regulation 8(1))</p>	28/02/2020

Recommendations

- There are clear and effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the centre. (Residential Family Centres Regulations 2002, NMS 19.1, page 29)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and parents using the 'Social care common inspection framework'. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Residential Family Centre Regulations 2002 and the national minimum standards.

Residential family centre details

Unique reference number: 1278368

Registered provider: Amber Family Ltd

Registered provider address: K A Farr & Co Chartered Accountants, 6-8 Botanic Road, Southport, Lancashire PR9 7NG

Responsible individual: Carol Benbow

Registered manager: Natalie Clarke

Telephone number: 01704 807 170

Inspector

Mrs Mulcahy, Social Care Inspector

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