1257501

Oasis Places Limited

Address withheld

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential family centre

This residential family centre is owned and managed by a private provider and can care for up to six families. The centre offers residential parental assessments exclusively to women and girls and their children. The residential family centre premises are formed of two houses that are across the road from each other.

At the time of the inspection, there were four families undergoing parental assessments.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2021.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 January 2023

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 last inspection: 12 December 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and parents: good

Families' relationships with the staff team are positive. Parents say that staff are supportive and offer them sound advice and information. Some parents say that as a result of staff's input that they have become better parents.

Placements are carefully planned and children and parents settle quickly when they arrive at the centre. Staff provide families with clear information about the centre's operation and what is expected from both parties. The centre's welcome pack is an easy-to-read guide that outlines expectations and the range of programmes and parenting sessions that feature in parental assessments. These are tailored to meet the needs of individual children and parents.

Families feel listened to and know how to make complaints. Managers take complaints seriously and manage these fairly and promptly. Families have good opportunities to share their views about the centre in general and, more specifically, about how they feel their assessment is progressing. Weekly feedback meetings and residents' meetings are some of the ways staff gather families' views on the services provided.

Staff treat families with respect and dignity. Families benefit from staff's efforts to ensure that their identity needs are met by the service. Families' needs are well met in relation to gender, religion and culture. However, staff do not always ensure that the linguistic needs of families are adequately met. In one case, there have been significant difficulties in finding translation and interpreting services for a parent who speaks a rare dialect of another language. This does not ensure that the parent is able to fully participate in the assessment process as expected.

Parents highlight that the frequency and scope of leisure activities available to them is an area for improvement. They say that there are limited opportunities for them to relax and enjoy social events as a group. Increased leisure activities are important to balance the intensity of the work being undertaken with families.

Staff encourage families to lead healthy lifestyles. Families are promptly registered with key healthcare services such as GP surgeries and health visiting services when they move into the centre. Families can access specialist healthcare services as required, for example, community-based substance misuse programmes.

The management of medication is safe and staff receive training in first aid. Staff regularly offer families healthy eating sessions to ensure that children and parents eat nutritionally balanced meals.

Individual sessions help parents to understand the concerns that the courts or placing authorities have about the care that they provide to their children. Parents take part in programmes and activities to help them to understand what they must

do to improve their parenting skills. Parents take part in programmes that explore their emotional health. For example, they attend sessions that explore healthy relationships, conflict resolution and issues of domestic abuse. Families benefit from taking part in counselling services that focus on, for example, relationship-building skills.

Assessments have a strong focus on children's needs and their protection. Assessment programmes explore parents' progress and the areas that they need to improve on. Assessments are individualised and realistic about what parents can achieve. Parents receive the support that they need if children are to return to their care.

The registered manager is responsible for writing final assessment reports. These are well written, evidenced-based and analytical. Final reports outline parents' strengths and areas for development. They highlight parents' ability to change behaviours that are of concern and their understanding of the needs of their children and how to keep their children safe.

How well children and parents are helped and protected: good

Children and their parents are protected from harm and neglect. Staff offer a strong and appropriate response to any safeguarding concerns. Team and management meetings routinely explore safeguarding issues and staff complete child and adult protection training. Staff also have access to clear and comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures.

Risk assessments help to identify known risks and risks that can be anticipated. However, risk assessments do not always accurately highlight the level of risk, and some do not clearly outline the strategies to be used to help reduce risk-taking behaviour.

The centre's buildings are safe and secure. Staff conduct regular checks which ensure that there are no health and safety concerns. Staff make use of surveillance equipment, including CCTV. Families and other stakeholders are made aware from the start of parental assessments of the centre's use of CCTV. However, it is less clear who within the organisation has access to the CCTV footage and where they can view it from. One parent said she was unhappy about the responsible individual having remote CCTV access when not on the premises. This practice requires review as it does not ensure that the families' rights are fully maintained, that their confidentiality is guaranteed or that families and others are explicitly aware of this practice.

Serious incidents do not happen regularly. There have been no instances of parents or children going missing from the centre or any incidents requiring restraint. Staff encourage families' positive behaviour and parents receive support to manage their children's behaviour. Discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated, and staff challenge and manage well any disagreements between families.

Allegations against staff are rare. When these are made, managers take appropriate action and resolve issues sensitively and quickly. This includes informing the relevant placing authority and local authority designated officer.

The recruitment and vetting of staff are robust and safe. This ensures that staff employed to work with families are suitable to do so.

Families benefit from staff's effective and consistent partnership working with external professionals. Working successfully in this way helps to ensure that there is a joined-up approach to safeguarding children and parents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The management and leadership of the residential family centre are strong. Managers and leaders place the well-being of families at the centre of their practice. They know and understand the needs of families and tailor their assessments accordingly. The registered manager is well qualified and experienced to manage the centre and does so effectively.

In recent months, there has been a high turnover of staff. A successful recruitment drive has seen a number of new staff appointed to work at the centre. However, some staff told the inspector that at times staffing numbers are still low and that this does not support good practice.

Some parents echo this view. For example, some parents feel that, at times, the lack of staff limits their opportunities to be escorted into the community. Some parents and staff believe that the current staffing pattens are the reason why leisure activities and trips out do not take place as frequently as they would like.

Managers' support and supervision of staff are regular and meaningful. Staff say that they are very well supported by an effective management team. A staff member said, 'I receive supervision at least once a month, more if I need it. Sessions are generally focused on families, but also my development and my well-being. The quality of support and supervision is good.' Managers complete staff appraisals each year.

Staff training is an area identified for improvement. Leaders have a heavy reliance on online training and training provided by the host local authority. Face-to-face training which is specialised and bespoke to working in a residential family centre is not routinely provided to staff. Therefore, there are limits to the scope and effectiveness of the staff training programme.

Leaders and managers monitor the quality of care provided. There are business and development plans in place that provide senior managers with an overview of the centre's operation, strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement.

Managers conduct file audits that help them to review the quality of records. Case records and final reports are orderly, relevant to individual families, evidence-based

and support assessment findings. However, 'letters of instructions' from local authorities are sometimes not obtained until well after the assessment has started. This does not demonstrate that, from the outset, that all parties have an explicit understanding and agreement of issues to be explored during parenting assessments.

The residential family centre operates out of two houses which are located opposite each other. Both houses are clean and tidy, comfortable, well equipped and well furnished. They provide a nurturing environment for children. Some areas of the premises, especially some bathrooms and lounge areas, show signs of wear and tear and require minor redecoration. Consideration should be given to hanging net curtains or blinds at windows where anyone can see in, to maintain the privacy of children, parents and staff.

Managers and staff work effectively and in close partnership with other professionals. This helps them to coordinate and conduct their work with children and parents thoroughly. A local authority social worker said, 'Communication has been great. Staff have been welcoming. Mum is happy here and she shares a good relationship with her key worker. I receive weekly reports which are detailed and provide a good overview of the placement.'

The centre is run in line with its statement of purpose. The leadership and management of the centre are good. Identified shortfalls do not significantly impact on families' progress and experiences, which are positive.

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
The registered person shall ensure that there is, having regard to— the statement of purpose of the residential family centre, its size and the numbers and needs of its residents; and the need to safeguard and promote the health and welfare of residents, a sufficient number of suitably qualified, competent, and experienced persons working for the residential family centre. (Regulation 15 (a)(b))	1 March 2023
The registered person shall ensure that all persons employed by him— receive appropriate training. (Regulation 17 (5)(a))	1 March 2023
The registered person shall make suitable arrangements to ensure that the residential family centre is conducted— with due regard to the sex, religious persuasion, racial origin, and cultural and linguistic background and any disability of residents. (Regulation 10 (3)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff can meet the linguistic needs of families.	1 March 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the nature of records and that there is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record-keeping and take action when needed. This relates to the quality of risk assessments. (Residential family centres: NMS 20.2)

- The registered person should ensure that there is a clear and effective policy on the use of surveillance in parenting assessments. The policy should set out how the surveillance will be used to contribute to assessments, how families will be informed of its use for their particular circumstances, how legitimate privacy will be protected and how residents will be protected from potential abuse of such measures. This relates to managers' use of remote surveillance systems. (Residential family centres: NMS 10.1)
- The registered person should consider taking action to address any issue of concern that they identify or which is raised with them. This relates to staff promptly obtaining letters of instructions from local authorities. (Residential family centres: NMS 19.7)
- The registered person should provide a comfortable and homely environment that is well maintained and decorated. In particular, to ensure that bathroom and lounge areas are decorated to a high standard and that windows are covered with curtains or blinds. (Residential family centres: NMS 11.2)
- The registered person should encourage parents to communicate their views, wishes and feelings on all aspects of their placement, assessment and support. Staff should take account of these views, wishes and feelings in the day-to-day running and development of the centre. This relates to parents' requests that staff provide more leisure activities. (Residential family centres: NMS 2.1)

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: 1257501

Responsible individual: Suzanne Bailey

Registered manager: Julia Sutton

Telephone number: 020 371 8673

Email address:

Inspector

Sandra Jacobs-Walls, Social Care Inspector

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