

# Chariteens Residential Family Centre

Chariteens Residential Family Centre CIC

10 Khartoum Road, London E13 8RF

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this residential family centre

The centre is registered to provide parental assessments for up to six families. Alongside parenting assessments, the centre provides psychological assessments, drug and alcohol testing and counselling.

At the time of the inspection, there were two families undergoing assessment at the residential family centre. The inspector interviewed three parents. The centre registered with Ofsted in June 2014 and the manager registered in January 2015.

### Inspection dates: 25 to 27 January 2023

**Overall experiences and progress of children and parents, taking into account** requires improvement to be good

How well children and parents are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers inadequate

The residential family centre is not yet delivering good assessments, help and care for children and parents. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of previous inspection:** 16 March 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** inadequate

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and parents: requires improvement to be good**

The judgement for this outcome area is influenced by the poor leadership and management of the centre and weaknesses identified in staff's ability to keep families safe.

Families share positive relationships with staff, and are warmly welcomed when they arrive at the centre. However, some families' stay at the centre is lengthy, with delays before the start of their assessments. The duration of some parenting assessments extends well beyond the expected 12-week assessment period. For example, a family currently staying at the centre has been at the centre for over 6 months. Delays in the completion of parenting assessments was cause for concern at the previous inspection. Managers are yet to resolve this issue.

Parents say that staff are attentive, supportive and listen to what they have to say. A parent said, 'It's been good. I understand what the concerns were and how to make it better. I like learning; it's good for my children and I.' Families have good opportunities to share their views about their experiences. They understand and engage well with the assessment process.

Parents take part in individual feedback meetings and residents' meetings. This gives parents the opportunity to share their views and experiences about the centre. Staff manage complaints fairly and robustly.

Families benefit from staff's close working relationships with health care professionals. Staff encourage parents to keep key medical appointments for themselves and their children. Families promptly register with GP and health visiting services when they first arrive at the centre. Families attend weekly healthy eating sessions. As required, parents have sessions with the centre's in-house therapist. Parents access community-based health care services, such as drug and alcohol programmes. These services help families to live healthy lifestyles.

Families have good opportunities to enhance their education and remain employed if they so wish. For example, a parent is attending classes to help improve her command of English, and another parent continues to work part time while living at the centre. Toddlers attend pre-school centres. This supports their learning and development.

Staff meet families' identity needs. For example, for families for whom English is not their first language, interpreting and translation services are readily available. This includes, for example, the translation of the centre's residents' guide. A family also had their mid-way assessment report translated into their primary language. Staff encourage families to cook and share traditional meals from their country of origin. Staff receive training to complete PAMS (parent assessment manual) assessments.

This ensures that parents who have learning disabilities are able to fully engage with their parenting assessment.

Qualified staff undertake assessments that meet the specific needs of families. These assessments include a range of methods and programmes that evaluate parents' capacity to safely care for their children. Sessions with families address the local authority's concerns for children's safety.

Assessment reports are of a good standard. Staff ensure that the assessment process is thorough, and they make use of a variety of assessment tools that meet the needs of children and their parents. Final reports are evaluative, analytical and evidenced based. These reports outline parents' strengths and weaknesses and highlight their capacity for change.

### **How well children and parents are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

There are weaknesses in staff's efforts to safeguard children and their parents. The vetting of some staff is not robust. For example, managers do not complete all staff recruitment checks. This does not confirm that all staff are suitable to work with families.

Staff receive training in child and adult protection policies and procedures. However, some staff do not demonstrate good enough knowledge of the action to take in the event of an allegation against a senior member of staff. This was an area of concern at the last inspection.

Staff do not consistently complete risk assessments that are sufficiently detailed and include strategies that help to reduce risks to children and parents. Some risk assessments fail to highlight known risks as outlined in local authority referral information. This does not demonstrate that staff are aware of or have strategies in place to address potential risks to children and their parents.

The centre's premises have recently undergone redecoration, making the centre homely and comfortable. However, the centre's physical environment is not free from potential hazards to children. The centre's garden contains discarded lockers and old filing cabinets. Staff confirm that these have been stored in the garden for a significant length of time. Doors to the lockers are free-swinging and pose a hazard to toddlers, should they attempt to play with the furniture.

The centre's designated smoking area is the garden. The grass area close to the garden door is littered with cigarette ends. There is no storage facility to safely collect any discarded cigarette ends. This poses a hazard to children who access the garden for play.

Staff are not attentive to the accommodation needs of families. Staff do not ensure that bedrooms are free from large furniture that is not in use. A family new to the centre arrived with a small cot for use with their new-born child. Two centre-owned

cots remained in the bedroom for a number of days after the family had moved in with their cot. At the time, the centre had two vacant rooms, which remained unused. This does not demonstrate that staff are sensitive to families' accommodation needs and ensure that bedrooms remain spacious and free from unused furniture.

Staff supervision and monitoring of families is consistent. There have been no allegations made against staff or any episodes of families going missing from the centre. Staff work with parents to explore the impact of risks posed to them and their children by offending behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse, and domestic abuse. Parents participate in relevant programmes that help them to reflect on their past experiences.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

The leadership and management of the centre are not effective. Managers and leaders do not consistently work in partnership with local authorities. There is a lack of mutual understanding and agreement of families' placement objectives before and after placements are negotiated. This lack of partnership working results in significant delays in families assessments commencing. This is not in children's or parents' best interest. Extended placements and the misuse of the centre was cause for concern at the previous inspection.

The continued misunderstanding and miscommunication between centre managers and the local authority result in managers' poor decision-making for children and their parents. Specifically, managers' decisions around matching. Matching decisions do not always consider the best interests of children. In one case, the experiences of young children, staying at the centre at the same time, were not positive or nurturing.

Managers do not take effective action to escalate difficult placement issues with senior managers within the local authority. This does not ensure that staff are able to appropriately challenge local authority practice that is not in the best interest of families.

Staff receive regular supervision and good support from their managers. Annual appraisals take place each year and staff have access to a training programme. However, the majority of this training is online. Staff have limited opportunities to complete face-to-face training. Managers do not consistently evaluate the effectiveness of the training programme. For example, staff complete safeguarding training, but gaps remain in their knowledge about managing allegations. This was of concern at the previous inspection.

Staff make use of surveillance equipment to help monitor parents' care of their children. This includes CCTV. Families and other stakeholders are aware from the start of parental assessments of the centre's use of CCTV. However, the registered manager has access to CCTV coverage off site, from her home. This practice requires review as it does not ensure that families' rights are fully maintained, that

families are explicitly aware of this practice or that their confidentiality is guaranteed.

Managers' and leaders' monitoring systems do not result in improvements to the quality of the services provided by the residential family centre. Quality of care reviews are descriptive, detailing the activities of the service. These monitoring reports are lengthy but do not provide an analysis of strengths of the service or identify areas for improvement. There is no action plan indicating what needs to happen to help drive improvement.

The centre's statement of purpose has been very recently revised. However, the document requires further amendment as information about the staff team and their qualifications is not current.

## 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
<p>The registered person shall ensure that all persons employed by him—</p> <p>receive appropriate training.</p> <p>This specifically relates to staff training about managing allegations against staff. (Regulation 17 (5)(a))</p>	1 March 2023
<p>For the purposes of paragraph (1), a person is not fit to work at a residential family centre unless—</p> <p>he is of integrity and good character;</p> <p>he has the qualifications, skills and experience necessary for the work he is to perform;</p> <p>he is physically and mentally fit for the work he is to perform; and</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to him in respect of each of the matters specified in Schedule 2. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p>	1 March 2023
<p>Subject to paragraph (6) the registered person shall ensure that the residential family centre is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose.</p> <p>The registered manager must not operate the residential family centre outside its registered conditions. (Regulation 4 (5))</p> <p>This relates to children and parents remaining at the centre without a parenting assessment being undertaken.</p>	1 March 2023
<p>The registered person shall having regard to the size of the residential family centre and the number and needs of residents—</p>	1 March 2023

<p>take adequate precautions against risk of accidents. (Regulation 14 (2)(g))</p> <p>This relates to the removal of file cabinets, lockers and cigarette ends from the garden.</p>	
<p>The registered person shall having regard to the size of the residential family centre and the number and needs of residents.</p> <p>The registered person shall ensure the residential family centre is suitably furnished with adequate living, storage and communal space to—</p> <p>meet the needs of the residents. (Regulation 14 (2)(k)(i))</p> <p>This relates to the prompt removal of unused furniture from families' bedrooms.</p>	1 March 2023
<p>The registered person shall, 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 (in these Regulations referred to as "the placement plan") setting out, in particular—</p> <p>the objectives and intended outcome of the placement. (Regulation 13 (1)(b))</p>	1 March 2023
<p>The registered person shall—</p> <p>keep under review and where appropriate revise the statement of purpose and resident's guide; and</p> <p>notify the [Chief Inspector] within 28 days of any such revision. (Regulation 4 (4)(a)(b))</p>	1 March 2023

## Recommendations

- 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 legitimate policy 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 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 the centre only provides admission to parents and children whose assessed needs they can expect to meet, consistent with the centre's statement of purpose. (Residential family centres: NMS 7.2)
- The registered person should ensure that there is effective leadership of the centre's staff and operation, so that the centre is organised, managed and staffed in a manner that delivers the best possible outcomes for parents and children. In particular, that there is effective communication and partnership working with local authorities. Regulation 23 quality of care reviews result in actions that improve the centre's quality of care. (Residential family centres: NMS 12.4)

## **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:** SC474728

**Registered provider:** Chariteens Residential Family Centre CIC

**Registered provider address:** 10 Khartoum Road, London E13 8RF

**Responsible individual:** Sarah Pulle

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## **Inspector**

Mrs Sandra Jacobs-Walls, Social Care Inspector

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