

# Amber Grange/Amber Family

Amber Family Limited

18 Windsor Road, Southport, Merseyside 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. Families access the centre at the direction of the family court or the local authority for the purposes of assessment.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2018, when the residential family centre became operational. She is appropriately qualified and experienced.

There were four families staying at the centre at the time of this inspection.

### Inspection dates: 20 and 21 March 2024

**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:** 15 January 2020

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and parents: good**

Parents are supported to make progress in their parenting and their capacity to respond to their child's needs. Parents develop positive and trusting relationships with the staff team and their key workers. Families are provided with a homely and welcoming place to stay. Staff encourage parents to maintain their rooms and the centre to a good standard. This prepares them for returning to their own home.

Staff are invested in the families and they are committed to achieving the best outcomes for the children. They demonstrate a sensitive and nurturing approach to help parents to develop the skills they require to meet their child's needs and promote their welfare. Staff make themselves available to parents to guide them with parenting tasks and to provide childcare support so that the parents can attend meetings and support groups.

When families move into the centre, they are provided with clear information about the assessment process and what to expect. A detailed induction to the centre means that parents have all the information they require about their stay. Parents said that the staff reassured them and helped to ease their anxieties when they arrived at the centre.

Individual assessment plans stipulate the parenting courses and direct work that families must undertake to assess their parenting. Families' letters of instruction from the court and up-to-date care plans are not always provided by the placing authority within suitable timescales. The manager does not have an effective system in place to ensure that placing authorities provide the required documents at the beginning of the family's placement.

Parents are provided with opportunities to express their views, thoughts and feelings throughout the assessment process. Parents' weekly summary reports provide a comprehensive overview of parents' progress. Key workers and parents meet weekly to talk through any strengths or concerns identified. The simplicity of the reports and use of colour coding make the reports easy for parents to understand and their progress can be tracked effectively. Obtaining parents' views, promoting transparency and partnership working with the families are priorities for this service.

Parenting assessments accurately reflect the evidence gathered during the assessment process. Detailed weekly summary reports are used as an evidence base for the assessment. The assessing social worker is clear and consistent in their findings and they make proportionate recommendations about the family's future. All assessment reports are appropriately quality assured and have the manager's full oversight.

The staff team works positively with health agencies to ensure that appropriate support and guidance are provided to parents. Well-being assessments are

undertaken regularly with parents from the time of their admission to the centre. They are an effective tool to monitor parents' emotional well-being throughout the stages of the assessment. It also provides parents with a forum in which to be honest about the support they require and about how they are feeling.

Weekly planners and having daily responsibilities help parents to establish effective routines and structure in preparation for when they leave the centre. Additional in-house and community-based activities are in place to support bonds between parents and their children. They provide opportunities for play and stimulation in an age-appropriate way.

When parents move out of the centre, there are support plans in place to ensure that their move is supportive and sensitive. Families are given memory books and photo albums of their time together as a family in the centre. This means that parents and the child have memorable keepsakes to take with them, no matter what the outcome of the assessment.

### **How well children and parents are helped and protected: good**

Safeguarding action plans for families are updated regularly to ensure that staff are provided with up-to-date information. The staff team is responsive to any signs of concern. They can identify risk and understand how to manage it in their daily practice. Consequently, serious incidents are rare and there have been no incidents of parents being reported missing from the centre.

Leaders and managers carefully consider if parents can live together safely, and they agree strategies that can be implemented to minimise risks and to support the families effectively. However, families' admission risk assessments do not evidence this process or the strategies that have been agreed for staff to follow. The manager recognised that the content of these records could be improved.

Staff help parents to understand risks to their children and how to care for them safely. An in-house teaching team is responsible for delivering parenting sessions specifically tailored to each family's needs, in areas such as domestic violence, healthy relationships and budgeting. Members of the training team are all qualified to deliver the sessions. Leaders and managers also have useful links with external agencies so that additional support can be accessed for parents who require counselling or support for substance misuse.

Parents receive help to manage their emotions appropriately and positive behaviour is promoted by the staff team. Staff are trained in specific areas that are relevant to ensuring families' safety and meeting their needs. This includes mental health first aid, perinatal infant mental health and positive parenting training.

The staff team's responses to any incidents of concern are appropriate and prioritise children's safety. The manager oversees all incidents and provides lessons learned responses to identify any practices and procedures that could be improved. When parents have made unsafe decisions, leaders and managers have made prompt

decisions to end parents' placements to safeguard children and other families living in the centre.

There have been no reported concerns or allegations made by parents. When they arrive at the centre, parents are provided with information about the procedures for making a complaint. They are confident about how they would raise a complaint and that it would be taken seriously. They said the staff team has an open-door policy for hearing parents' views and, because of this, they have not had the need to complain.

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

Leaders and managers understand parents' individual needs and their current progress against their assessment plan. They collectively oversee any significant incident and lessons learned, to help develop the service and to improve families' experiences. The manager is realistic in her expectations about parents' capabilities. She is a positive role model in striving for positive outcomes for families and this is reflected in the staff team's approach.

Partnership working is a strength. Leaders and managers work closely with external professionals and agencies to support their engagement with the families. The provider also runs a residential family centre providers' group. It has been well received by other providers and has become a valuable forum to share good practice.

There is a stable and appropriately qualified staff team in place. They have a range of relevant experience to enable them to support families and to develop their parenting. The staff team is provided with a wide range of training that is specific to the needs of the families. When there has been a need to disseminate information quickly, leaders and managers have ensured that staff have been able to access training quickly to meet families' needs, such as epilepsy training.

Staff are valued and supported in their roles. The manager and the staff team all have monthly practice-related supervisions. They find these sessions beneficial, as they help promote good practice and positive staff morale. The manager also attends regular peer supervision with the other qualified social workers in the company. Internal professional development for staff is promoted. Two staff were supported with their social work apprenticeships and have now become qualified social workers in the company.

Team meetings ensure that staff are kept up to date on current issues in the home. Leaders and managers have strengthened the effectiveness of communication in the team by introducing separate support worker and key-worker meetings throughout the year. This provides an opportunity for leaders and managers to embed staff's knowledge of their roles, to refresh knowledge of procedures and to deliver focused training.

The review of the quality of care reports lack evaluation to assess effectively the impact of the service on the outcomes for families. The reports do not evidence that consultation with families has taken place to contribute to the assessment of the quality of the service. In addition to this, the independent visitor reports rarely provide feedback from staff working in the centre, to validate any findings from the visits and to evaluate the effectiveness of the service for families.

## 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, The 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 maintain in respect of each family accommodated in the residential family centre a record which—</p> <p>includes the information, documents and other records specified in Schedule 3 relating to the members of the family. (Regulation 19 (1)(a))</p> <p>Specifically, a copy of the placing authority care plan and a letter of instruction from the court under which the family is provided with accommodation in the residential family centre should be held on the family's file.</p>	3 May 2024
<p>The person carrying out the visit shall—</p> <p>interview, with their consent and in private, such of the residents and persons working at the residential family centre as appears necessary in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the residential family centre. (Regulation 25 (4)(a))</p>	3 May 2024
<p>The registered person shall establish and maintain a system for—</p> <p>improving the quality of care provided at the residential family centre.</p> <p>The system referred to in paragraph (1) shall provide for consultation with residents. (Regulation 23 (1)(b) (3))</p>	3 May 2024

## **Recommendation**

- The registered person should ensure that prior to a placement, a risk assessment is carried out to ensure that the centre is well placed to meet the family's needs and that the family is able to fit in with the centre's other residents. (Residential family centres: NMS 9.1)

## **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:** 1278368

**Registered provider:** Amber Family Limited

**Registered provider address:** KA Farr & Co Chartered Accountants, 6-8 Botanic Road, Southport PR97NG

**Responsible individual:** Carol Benbow

**Registered manager:** Natalie Clarke

**Telephone number:** 01704 807170

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## **Inspectors**

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

Sarah Huntbatch, Social Care Inspector

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