

Dudley Lodge

Dudley Lodge Safeguarding Children Services

Dudley Lodge Family Assessment, 143 Warwick Road, Coventry CV3 6AT

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential family centre

This residential family centre is owned by a charity. It is registered to provide accommodation for up to 12 families. Families are usually assessed from four to 12 weeks.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 11 November 2020. They were away from work at the time of this inspection. In the registered manager's absence, the responsible individual, the deputy manager and other senior managers from within the organisation were present.

At the time of this inspection, 10 families were resident at the centre.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 November 2025

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: 8 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and parents: good

Children and parents are enabled to build positive relationships with staff at the centre. Parents describe some staff members as 'amazing', and say that staff work with them in an open and honest way. They said that they feel respected and listened to. These relationships directly contribute to parents being able to take on board important messages to learn how to keep their children safe.

The centre's complaints process is accessible to parents. Parents raise concerns when they are unhappy about staff's responses and when there is conflict between families. Managers respond promptly and consult with parents about next steps.

The centre facilitates a range of activities for children and parents, including bingo, arts and crafts. In addition, religious and cultural events are celebrated. Parents enjoy creating memory books for their children to reflect their time at the centre. Groups for fathers are less established. This is an area for improvement identified by managers, and community links are being forged.

Assessments are carried out by trained and qualified social workers. They regularly review and adapt assessment plans to ensure that tailored interventions address the risk factors that impact children's safe care. Parents are clear about the reasons for assessment. Progress and targets are communicated to them regularly. The most recent final assessment report reviewed demonstrated a focus on the parents' capacity for change to inform clear recommendations.

Interventions are individualised. Staff use creative approaches to help engage parents in the assessment process. For instance, a family assessment social worker has taken the time to create a booklet including different scenarios and choices that lead to different outcomes. This type of approach helps parents to develop a deeper understanding of concerns. Additionally, the centre has forged links with a support agency to offer continual support to families beyond their time at the centre.

How well children and parents are helped and protected: good

Prior to families moving in, staffing levels are reviewed to ensure that the centre can meet each family's needs. Additionally, leaders consider each family's location to inform their decision-making before moving into the centre. This reduces the potential for conflict for families living together.

Risk assessments are regularly reviewed, alongside supervision and monitoring levels. Information relating to restricted persons is included across different records, and the planned frequency of approved visitors attending the centre is not always clearly defined. While no practice concerns were identified, this leaves room for error in promoting safe and agreed family time for children and parents.

Staff place children's safety at the centre of their practice. They understand the risks and vulnerabilities for each family, and they act when needed to increase children's safety. When a parent and child were missing from the centre, staff implemented prompt and coordinated actions until they were found.

Surveillance and monitoring are used, and their use is reviewed regularly in line with progress and concerns. Managers have taken action to strengthen the recording of parents' views when supervision and monitoring levels change.

Parents have access to secure medication storage arrangements in their accommodation. Additionally, there is an effective system in place to ensure that any medication coming in and out of the centre, and medication administration, is recorded clearly.

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding thresholds and processes. They use body maps to record marks seen on children. When marks are deemed as a cause for concern, staff intervene to ensure children's immediate safety and information is shared with the relevant agencies to inform next steps. When marks are recorded that are reasonably explained, or when advice is given, for instance to file a child's nails, the decision to take no further action is not consistently recorded on the associated body map record.

Recruitment procedures are in place to reduce the risk of unsuitable persons working at the centre. In one example, an agency worker started work prior to all relevant checks being received. They did not work directly with children and parents until all checks were received, but the risk assessment due to be implemented over this period was not completed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The centre is managed by a stable management team, whose members are motivated and forward-thinking to ensure that the centre continually develops. They have comprehensive oversight of the plans for families. This ensures that the centre is run in the registered manager's absence effectively.

Staff feedback is positive. They describe feeling well supported and valued by managers. They present as enthusiastic about their work, and their practice is consistent with the centre's ethos. They have access to training opportunities and specialist advice that underpin their work with families. In the main, parents are positive about their experiences at the centre.

Staff receive regular supervision that is recorded effectively. They benefit from additional supervision sessions that provide further opportunity for reflection about the issues that impact children's safe care. Additionally, managers deliver workshops to staff, for instance about professional boundaries to promote safe relationships at the centre.



Case records vary in quality. Some records provide detailed guidance to staff to support families, and children's and parent's voices are recorded clearly. Other records lack detail. However, the quality of assessment and support for families is not compromised.

The centre is well maintained, and communal areas provide a warm and welcoming environment. Parents' feedback about their accommodation is mixed due to the layout of some flats and the use of the communal areas during nighttime hours. In response to this feedback, managers said that they will monitor the frequency of parenting tasks supervised in the communal area to ensure that this always happens in the best interests of children and parents.

The recommendation made at the previous inspection is met. Action has been taken to implement a log of management visits that occur each night. This provides additional oversight of practice at the centre.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the centre's records relating to restricted persons and approved visitors detail all relevant information succinctly and clearly. (Residential family centres: NMS 5.7)
- The registered person should ensure that staff members and others subject to recruitment and vetting checks do not start work at the centre until all the checks required in The Residential Family Centres Regulations 2002, as amended, are completed. (Residential family centres: NMS 14.6)
- The registered person should ensure that there is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record-keeping and take action when needed. In particular, when marks on children are reasonably explained, the registered person's decision-making regarding no further action to be taken, or when advice is given, should be recorded on the body map record. (Residential family centres: NMS 20.2)

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: SC047520

Registered provider: Dudley Lodge Safeguarding Children Services

Registered provider address: Dudley Lodge Family Assessment Centre, 143
Warwick Road, Coventry CV3 6AT

Responsible individual: Rachael White

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Inspectors

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