

Dudley Lodge

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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 registered to care for 12 families and is owned by a charity. A range of assessment models are used. Families are usually assessed from four to 12 weeks.

In March 2020, Ofsted conducted a monitoring visit to this centre. The report is available on the Ofsted website.

The centre's manager registered with Ofsted in November 2020.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 February 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 previous inspection: 8 August 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and parents: good

Children and parents receive a high quality of care, support and guidance. Parents know what is happening at each stage of their assessment and are regularly engaged in discussions about their progress. Parents describe positive relationships with staff.

Families are welcomed into the centre in a sensitive manner. Where possible, parents are encouraged to visit the centre before they move in to help them to gain a better understanding of what to expect during their stay. If they are unable to visit the centre prior to their move, there are ample resources on the provider's website both for social workers and for parents and children to use to help introduce the service.

Parents' views and wishes are respected through regular one-to-one sessions with their key staff, assessment reviews and house meetings. They feel involved in their assessments and are confident that their views will be taken into account. Parents receive information throughout their assessment that is easy to understand.

Parents' and children's health needs are well understood. A weekly clinic run by local health visitors is an example of good-quality health and safeguarding practice and helps ensure that parents have regular access to health advice for their children.

Parents are positive about the activities available to them and their children in the centre. They enjoy using the large playroom, garden and 'hub'. Following the COVID pandemic, increasing opportunities for families to experience activities in the community is an identified area of development for the service.

Assessment reports are evaluative and analytical. Examples are used to show how evidence supports the recommendations made. Recommendations are clear and considered. A social worker described the quality of a report as 'excellent'.

Assessment endings are managed skilfully. When parents are unable to leave with their children, the provider works hard to ensure the ending is sensitively and empathetically managed for both parents and children.

How well children and parents are helped and protected: good

During the assessment process, parents receive extensive opportunities to learn how to keep themselves and their children safe. For example, there are opportunities for parents to learn about the importance of healthy personal relationships and to understand the different forms of domestic abuse. This helps them to recognise when they may be in an unhealthy relationship.

Staff have a good understanding of the trauma parents may have encountered through their lives and the negative impact that this may have on their parenting. Parents receive support to assist with their mental and emotional well-being. This may include referrals for counselling. A social worker commented that a parent's needs were approached with 'respect and decorum'. Staff identify and respond well to the vulnerabilities and needs of parents and their children, including their cultural background and learning and language needs.

Safeguarding processes are well understood by staff, and staff are confident in following them. They advocate strongly to ensure partner agencies understand their concerns and what is in children's best interests. Risk assessments appropriately cover identified areas of risk. They provide clear guidance for staff. Risk assessments are dynamic and are updated on a regular basis to ensure staff are clear about how to safeguard children and, where appropriate, their parents.

The recruitment of permanent staff is safe and effective. The process and checks are thorough. This helps prevent unsuitable people from having access to children or vulnerable adults.

The home environment and facilities are of good quality. Any maintenance issues reported by families are quickly rectified. Suitable health and safety measures ensure the safety of children and parents at the centre.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A strong leadership team is in place. They have good management oversight, a clear vision and high expectations of staff practice.

There are embedded partnership arrangements with external agencies, including health professionals, placing authorities and children's guardians. These partnerships help the centre to sustain high-quality assessment, support and protection of children and parents. The management team appropriately challenges partner agencies to ensure that families receive the best services available.

Any shortfalls in the functioning of the centre are identified and acted on. Opportunities for debriefs and reflection after safeguarding incidents or after an assessment has ended help to ensure that staff have the space to process their feelings to consider any lessons learned and think about how practice could be improved.

The residential family centre demonstrates a capacity for continuing improvement. Internal management monitoring systems are of good quality. Reports following monthly visits by the registered provider are thorough, rigorous and provide a challenge. For example, shortfalls identified through recent provider visits have led to improvements in the accident reporting policy and complaints policy. Monitoring systems are driving forward improvements in the service. The manager's monitoring would be further enhanced by logging the unannounced ad-hoc checks undertaken at night-time.

There is a skilled, committed and well-established staff team. A wide range of training opportunities are available to staff, and staff are trained in areas of specific expertise that help to meet the individual needs of families. Team morale is usually very good, and if staff have worries or concerns, they feel well supported by managers. Staff gave positive feedback during the inspection. They used words such as feeling 'listened to', 'valued' and 'looked after' by their employer. Staff feel well supported through a structured induction, regular supervision and reflective team meetings. Senior managers have prioritised staff well-being.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that there are clear and effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the centre. In particular, a log should be kept of night-time management monitoring checks. (Residential Family Centres: NMS 19.1)

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: SC047520

Registered provider: Dudley Lodge

Registered provider address: Dudley Lodge, 143 Warwick Road, Coventry, West Midlands CV3 6AT

Responsible individual: Rachael White

Registered manager: Paula Niven

Telephone number: 02476 502800

Email address: safeguarding@dudleylodge.co.uk

Inspectors

Catherine Honey, Social Care Inspector

Laura Walker, Social Care Inspector

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