Falcon Grove Family Centre

Wandsworth Borough Council
10 Falcon Grove, London SW11 2ST
Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this residential family centre

The centre is owned by the London borough of Wandsworth. It is part of Wandsworth’s children’s services department. The centre provides assessments of parenting on a residential basis and in the community. The centre can accommodate up to five families: four in self-contained flats and one in a self-contained bedsit. One flat is wheelchair accessible. The building is staffed 24 hours a day. The centre is available for families from Wandsworth and other local authorities.

The manager started working at the centre in February 2018. Ofsted is currently processing her application to be the registered manager.

Inspection dates: 20 to 21 June 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and parents, taking into account

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: 15 June 2015

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none
Key findings from this inspection

This residential family centre is good because:

- Families benefit from a personalised service which focuses on helping parents reach their potential.
- The centre has a highly effective assessment process. Final reports are well evidenced, analytical and comprehensively interwoven with relevant theories’
- The expertise of a psychologist, management oversight and continual case reflection enable staff to create unique strategies for working with families.
- Parents are enabled to engage in therapy. There are improvements in the health and well-being of children and parents.
- Parents are able to explore their past issues and develop aspirations for the future. They develop coping mechanisms, which strengthens their emotional resilience.
- Older children benefit from sensitive direct work, which provides a space for exploring their feelings. An example of this is art therapy.
- Children experience a wide range of positive outcomes while living at the centre. Children benefit from routines, boundaries and improved school attendance.
- The safeguarding arrangements within the centre are effective. Staff use a strengths-based, safety-organised approach to child protection.
- Staff raise parents’ awareness of the impact of domestic violence and the importance of healthy relationships.
- Parents gain insight; they learn the importance of developing a strong attachment to their child and creating a secure base.
- It is beneficial that the centre is part of the local authority. There are strong links with the relevant safeguarding personnel and children’s social workers.
- Families receive care from a competent staff team. There are strong management arrangements, which are strengthened by having principal social workers.
- Staff benefit from regular, reflective individual and case supervision. This supports the development of their practice.
- Staff appropriately challenge each other and other professionals, which ensures that the service continues to evolve and good practice thrives.
- Families benefit from living in their own flats, which provide them with a high level of privacy. Some flats have their own gardens.

The residential family centre’s areas for development:

- Record keeping requires further attention. Staff must ensure that they record the action taken when verifying references and responding to complaints and accidents.
- Parents should have a guide which contains the up-to-date contact details for
Ofsted and the Children’s Commissioner.

- Older children need to understand why they are living at the centre. A guide should be available to help them make sense of their current circumstances.
- Parents should be enabled to build and sustain constructive relationships with staff.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Due date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The registered person shall produce a written guide to the residential family centre which shall include the address and telephone number of Ofsted; and the address and telephone number of the Children’s Commissioner. (Regulation 4(3))</td>
<td>01/08/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response and the outcome of the investigation. (Regulation 20(6))</td>
<td>01/08/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The registered person shall make arrangements for residents to have access to such medical advice and treatment as may be necessary. (Regulation 11(1))</td>
<td>01/08/2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations

- Ensure that staff make telephone enquiries with referees to verify written references obtained. (National Minimum Standard 14)
- Ensure the registered person prepares a residents’ guide for older children. (National Minimum Standard 8.6)
- Ensure parents are enabled to build and sustain constructive relationships with staff. (National Minimum Standard 4.3)
Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and parents: good

Families benefit from a personalised service which enriches their lives. A parent stated it is 'like heaven here'. Another parent highlighted their positive changes, which they attributed to the ‘amazing support’ provided by staff.

Overall, families receive a good service. There were two occasions where record keeping did not detail the action taken to address concerns. These related to seeking medical advice after an accident and managing a staff member’s unprofessional attitude towards a parent. In the latter case, a parent was not supported to sustain a constructive relationship with the staff member. These incidents, however, did not have a detrimental impact on the respective families.

Children and their parents benefit from a highly effective assessment process. Final reports are well evidenced, analytical skilfully interwoven with relevant theories’ Reports comprehensively include the requirements from the letter of instruction. A children’s guardian stated that she was ‘really impressed with the quality of assessments’. A social worker described the assessments as ‘excellent’.

Staff regularly meet to review and analyse relevant information regarding each family. The expertise of a psychologist adds an insightful exploration of issues. Active reflection and the continual review of the assessment enables the process to be purposefully adapted to each family’s needs. This access to therapeutic support allows staff to create unique strategies for working with families.

Social work and family assessment staff work cohesively to deliver a personalised placement plan for each family. The assessment plan illustrates how parents’ parenting skills and their capacity for change will be assessed. Staff appropriately advocate a fair assessment process which compassionately and realistically takes into account each parent’s needs.

Assessments highlight recommendations for the future. There is good consideration of the need for therapeutic interventions and a reliable support system. Family group conferences are appropriately used to explore the level of support available from relatives.

Staff assist parents with emotional and practical support; an example of the latter is helping with housing issues. Parents learn independent living skills, for example how to cook and budget. Parents develop their coping mechanisms, such as building their emotional resilience and assertiveness. They also learn to plan for foreseeable problems.

There are good health arrangements. Staff benefit from specialist training from health professionals, which assists with the management of particular medical
conditions. Parents and children learn the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle, combining good nutrition and exercise. Parents also increase their knowledge regarding food hygiene and kitchen safety, and take pride in their ability to cook nutritious meals and ensure that their family enjoys a balanced diet. This successfully assists with weight management.

Parents are enabled to engage in therapy, take their medication and address their personal health concerns. They can also attend external parenting courses alongside their assessment. Children benefit from appointments with health professionals, for example the dentist and optician. There are improvements in the health and well-being of children and parents.

The centre’s work has a strong emphasis on the needs of children. Parents receive encouragement to attend external groups with their babies and toddlers. Older children benefit from sensitive direct work, which provides a space for exploring their feelings. An example of this is art therapy.

Children experience a wide range of positive outcomes when living at the centre. Children’s school attendance has improved, which has increased their educational achievements. Children benefit from routines, discipline and learning the importance of family time.

Parents enjoy generally positive relationships with staff, and feel respected. A parent described staff as ‘friendly and helpful’. Parents receive regular feedback. They are clear on their strengths, concerns and what needs to change. There is a strong emphasis on helping parents reach their potential.

Parents benefit from in-depth key working that is tailored to meet their individual needs. Staff work effectively with young parents, and parents who have learning disabilities, mental health needs and/or a history of substance misuse. Staff use a range of teaching methods, which include the use of pictorial aids. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of and commitment to equality and diversity.

Parents have the opportunity to attend community-based activities at children’s centres. Staff also encourage them to make use of social and leisure facilities in the area. Parents engage in fun activities with their children. Religious and cultural traditions are celebrated, examples being having an egg hunt at Easter and making cards at Christmas.

How well children and parents are helped and protected: good

Safeguarding is at the heart of the centre’s work, with the aim of ensuring that decisions are taken in the best interests of children. Overall, staff recruitment processes minimise the possibility of unsuitable people working with families. But written records are not made of the verification of references. This shortfall was highlighted at the previous inspection.
The safeguarding arrangements within the centre are effective. Staff use a strengths-based, safety-organised approach to child protection. This helps to safeguard children and parents from potential harm. Parents learn the importance of developing a strong attachment to their child and creating a secure base.

Staff receive different types of safeguarding training, which include child and adult protection training. Complementary training includes child sexual exploitation, domestic and honour-based violence and forced marriage. As the centre is part of the local authority, there are strong links with the relevant safeguarding personnel.

Leaders and managers appropriately notify all parties of significant events relating to the protection of children and parents. There are no current issues with parents going missing, being exploited, self-harming, bullying, offending or being at risk of radicalisation.

Through the assessment process, parents are able to explore their past issues and develop aspirations for the future. Parents gain insight and understand the impact their behaviour has on their child. A parent confirmed, ‘I am so confident now and ready for the challenges of life.’

Staff raise parents’ awareness of the impact of domestic violence and the importance of healthy relationships. Parents learn the value of prioritising their child’s needs. They create their own support map and safety plans. These detail how parents will keep themselves and their child safe while living in the community.

The environment is well maintained, physically safe and has appropriate security. Engineers regularly check the fire safety, gas, electrical supplies and portable appliances, to ensure that they meet health and safety requirements. There is an adequate risk management system. Various documents demonstrate that risks in relation to each family and the environment are appropriately addressed.

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

Parents and children benefit from an effective, personalised service. The centre receives consistently good feedback. A social work manager praised the high level of communication, while a commissioner commended the centre’s ‘commitment to achieving the best outcome’. A children’s guardian stated that she would recommend the service, highlighting that she ‘trusts the quality of assessment’.

The centre primarily caters for parents and babies. There are instances, however, where older children are also accommodated. It was noted that older children do not know why they are living at the centre. There is an information guide for parents, which requires updating with Ofsted’s and the Children’s Commissioner’s contact details. A suitable guide is not available for children, to enable them to make sense of their current circumstances.
Leaders and managers highlight that the centre’s culture regarding complaints is changing. There is an acknowledgment of the need to record low-level complaints. Parents said that they feel staff listen, and that they know how to complain. However, details of any action taken by leaders and managers, and the outcomes of the complaint investigations, are not always recorded.

There are strong management arrangements. The leadership and management structure is strengthened by principal social workers. This ensures that there is clear direction and guidance.

Leaders, managers and staff work exceptionally well with a wide range of teams and external agencies. The centre has strong links with children’s centres, the local health centre, mental health services and professionals and organisations. A children’s guardian described staff as ‘very competent’, and ‘organised and quick to respond’.

As it is part of the local authority, the centre has extensive links with children’s social workers and other social care professionals. This benefits families, as staff have the opportunity for early intervention. A child’s social worker praised this, stating that staff ‘have a better understanding of the children’s lived experiences and local authority concerns’. Staff are also able to work more effectively through combining assessment reviews and children’s statutory reviews.

There is an effective quality assurance system. Families positively influence service development through regular meetings with staff, feedback questionnaires and discussions with the regulation 25 visitor.

The staff team is relatively stable, competent and experienced. Staff benefit from regular, reflective individual and case supervision. Supervision is of a good quality and supports the development of their practice. Staff receive additional support from team meetings, annual appraisals and away days.

Leaders and managers are clear on the centre’s strengths and the areas requiring further improvement. They are striving to raise standards and there is a realistic vision for the future. Yearly evaluations of the quality of care contribute to the centre’s annual report and action plan. Staff appropriately challenge each other and other professionals, which ensures that the service continues to evolve and good practice thrives.

The requirement relating to the review of the statement of purpose made at the last inspection has not been met. The recommendation regarding feedback provided for
parents has been effectively addressed. Parents benefit from the improved record keeping, which clearly details the feedback given during key-work sessions.

Families benefit from living in their own flats, which provide them with a high level of privacy. Some flats have their own gardens and a larger communal garden is also available. Flats are adequately decorated; furnishings and fittings are modern. The refurbishment programme ensures that the premises are maintained to a high standard.

Families have access to a well-equipped playroom which includes a wide range of books, DVDs, toys and play equipment. A laundry room, training kitchen and a range of meeting rooms are also available. The premises are within walking distance of a shopping centre and a railway station. Families also have access to a range of buses, which enable them to access the wider community.

**Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and parents. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and parents. They watched how professional staff work with children and parents and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and parents. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the residential family centre knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and parents whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC031779

Registered provider: Wandsworth Borough Council

Registered provider address: London borough of Wandsworth, Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street, London SW18 2PU

Responsible individual: Candice Levy

Registered manager: Post vacant

Telephone number: 020 7228 0836

Email address: clevy@wandsworth.gov.uk

Inspectors

Sharon Payne: social care inspector
Rosie Dancer: social care inspector