

# Richmond House

Family Assessment and Support Services Limited

Lillesden Lane, North Curry, Taunton, Somerset TA3 6BY

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this residential family centre

This residential family centre is registered to undertake parenting assessments for up to six families. Families are referred for assessment by the courts or local authority children's services. Richmond House is situated in a rural location, in easy travelling distance of a large town and healthcare, education and leisure facilities.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

### Inspection dates: 26 and 27 April 2022

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and parents, taking into account</b>	<b>good</b>
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How well children and parents are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The residential family centre provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of previous inspection:** 9 January 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## **Inspection judgements**

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

The family centre is housed in a spacious building which includes excellent facilities such as a good-sized garden, well-equipped kitchen and bathrooms. The centre is well maintained, and it is evident that senior leaders and managers continually invest in the property.

Information for parents and children on the centre's website is of poor quality. A new and more inclusive version of the residents' guide was provided to inspectors during the inspection. There is an active plan to update the children's guide.

Good communication between the registered manager and parents helps parents move into the centre with a good understanding about what to expect. This includes timescales and expectations. This reduces their worries. Providing role models for good parenting is intrinsic to the ethos at the centre. Parents are provided with consistent advice and guidance underpinned by NHS guidelines.

Families are well supported to develop their parenting skills and other important life skills. There are a vast number of opportunities for families to enjoy with their children, both at the centre and in the community. These include structured sessions and informal play opportunities.

Parents who are far from their homes are supported to spend time with their extended families. Staff also support children to spend time with a parent who is not living at the centre.

All parents who currently live at the centre were spoken to during the inspection. They all feel involved with the assessment process and are provided with regular feedback. They feel that they can give their views and feel listened to.

Clarity for parents regarding exit planning is lacking. However, open discussions about possible outcomes are held during the assessment process. Also, placement plans do not incorporate the requirements of any referring agency and, where applicable, the court. For example, information setting out how the level of supervision of the family and of parenting will change over time dependent on progress is missing. There is also a lack of clarity about how privacy and dignity will be promoted.

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

Safeguarding practice is vigilant. Staff understand safeguarding well and this translates into a safe environment for families within which any concerns are well managed. This includes good working partnerships with other agencies and the effective sharing of information.

Parents are fully supported to manage their own behaviours and feelings. When there are concerns, staff manage these sensitively to help parents, while ensuring child welfare is paramount.

Risk assessments cover all the identified risk issues and provide clear guidance for staff. These assessments are dynamic and are updated on a regular basis, to ensure staff are clear about how to safeguard children and, when required, adults.

Key policies are regularly reviewed to ensure their effectiveness. This includes safeguarding, the use of CCTV and monitoring, and the privacy and dignity policy.

Body maps are used in conjunction with daily records to detail when children have suffered minor injuries. These are reviewed by senior leaders and managers to ensure action is taken if there are concerns.

There were three medication errors for one child in 2020. A management investigation was completed, and a great deal of learning has been embedded to help prevent any further errors.

There is a blanket rule regarding the management of parents' medication. Currently, only staff have access to the medication safes in the family bedrooms where parents' medication is kept. This is an institutional approach and does not reflect the individual needs of each parent.

A great deal of information is obtained prior to the start of a placement, including the letter of instruction. However, a clear rationale for a placement offer and the centre's capacity to meet the needs of the family are not always clear.

Recruitment practice of permanent staff is safe and effective. The process and checks are thorough and robust. Agency staff are used on a minimal basis. However, evidence to ensure the suitability of agency staff is lacking.

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

The registered manager consistently promotes and models good practice. His oversight is excellent. He takes every opportunity to act upon any identified learning opportunities.

The quality assurance process is embedded. The registered manager is using various mechanisms to drive improvement, including producing good-quality monitoring reports which are reflective in content.

Supervision records sampled demonstrate a good level of reflective practice, and further echo the learning and development culture. Group supervision sessions are also taking place to help support shared learning within the team.

Support and guidance for parents is delivered by a highly skilled, committed and well-established staff team. Staff are trained in areas of specific expertise, which is

helping to meet the bespoke needs of families. Thorough shift handovers between staff changes are further ensuring a consistent approach for families. Team morale is excellent. Staff feel well supported by managers.

Assessments are evidence based and well informed, using daily observations. However, one report sampled does not provide in-depth analysis of how progress has been achieved at the interim stage. In contrast, another report sampled provided thorough and good analysis and is closely linked to the requirements of the letter of instruction.

The registered manager appropriately challenges the wider network of partners and professionals to ensure that families receive the best services available. There are thorough quality assurance processes in place that ensure a consistent approach to assessments.

A great deal of positive feedback has been received from the staff team at the centre. The consensus is that the centre is well run and providing a high standard of support, guidance and fair assessment for families.

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

### **Recommendations**

- The registered person should ensure that prescribed medication is only given to the parent or child for whom it was prescribed. Parents who are old enough and able to do so can keep and take their own medication, unless the family placement plan stipulates otherwise. (Residential family centre NMS 6.7)
- The registered person should ensure that a formal viability assessment is produced which demonstrates the registered manager's rationale for the offer of the placement, and the centre's capacity to meet the needs of the family, in conjunction with the needs of other families currently living at the centre. (Residential family centre NMS 9.1)
- The registered person should ensure that the family placement plan contains a clear exit plan and details how the quality of the attachment between the parents and their child will be measured and assessed. (Residential family centre NMS 9.2)
- The registered person should ensure that the placement plan incorporates the requirements of any referring agency and, where applicable, the court, setting out how the level of supervision of the family and of parenting will change over time dependent on progress. This includes how privacy and dignity will be promoted. (Residential family centre NMS 9.3)
- The registered person should ensure that the residential family centre has a record of the recruitment and vetting checks which have been carried out on those working for the residential family centre (including as volunteers), and, in particular, agency staff. (Residential family centre NMS 14.3).

### **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:** SC490087

**Registered provider:** Family Assessment and Support Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** Old Mill Accountancy Llp, Maltravers House, Petters Way, Yeovil, Somerset BA20 1SH

**Responsible individual:** David Tucker

**Registered manager:** Michael Lake

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## **Inspectors**

Polly Soper, Social Care Inspector

Louise Bacon, Social Care Inspector

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