



# Report of a Children's Residential Centre

Name of provider:	The Child and Family Agency
Tusla Region:	South
Type of inspection:	Monitoring
Date of inspection:	14 and 15 July 2020
Centre ID:	OSV 4186
Fieldwork ID	MON 0029968

## About the centre

The following information has been submitted by the centre and describes the service they provide.

The centre provides residential care for up to four young people.

The model of care adopts a wellbeing outcomes framework, which is informed by attachment and trauma theory. It incorporates risk management alongside the promotion and development of hope and wellbeing. Our aim is to provide a therapeutic living environment, which promotes physical, psychological and emotional safety. We are committed to promoting the involvement of young people, families and community-based agencies at every stage of our intervention.

Number of young people on the date of inspection:	4
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To prepare for this inspection inspectors reviewed all information about this centre. This included any previous inspection findings and information received since the last inspection.

As part of our inspection, where possible, we:

- speak with children and the people who visit them to find out their experience of the service
- talk to staff and management to find out how they plan, deliver and monitor the care and support services that are provided to children who live in the centre
- observe practice and daily life to see if it reflects what people tell us
- review documents to see if appropriate records are kept and that they reflect practice and what people tell us.

In order to summarise our inspection findings and to describe how well a service is doing, we group and report on the standards and related regulations under two dimensions:

### **1. Capacity and capability of the service:**

This section describes the leadership and management of the centre and how effective it is in ensuring that a good quality and safe service is being provided. It outlines how people who work in the centre are recruited and trained and whether there are appropriate systems and processes in place to underpin the safe delivery and oversight of the service.

### **2. Quality and safety of the service:**

This section describes the care and support children receive and if it was of a good quality and ensured people were safe. It includes information about the care and supports available for people and the environment in which they live.

A full list of all standards and the dimension they are reported under can be seen in Appendix 1.

**This inspection was carried out during the following times:**

Date	Times of inspection	Inspector	Role
14/07/2020	09:00-17:00	Tom Flanagan	Inspector
15/07/2020	10:00-16.30	Tom Flanagan	Inspector
14/07/2020	09:00-17.00	Olivia O'Connell	Inspector
15/07/2020	10:00-16.30	Olivia O'Connell	Inspector

## Views of young people who use the service

Inspectors spoke with three of the four young people living in the centre. They told inspectors that they were well cared for and felt safe.

Young people described good relationships with staff and being able to talk with them if they had a problem. All three said that they were provided with good care and they spoke positively about the staff and described them as supportive and kind. "They listen to me and treat me with respect." Young people also spoke of how staff support them in their contact with family. "I can see my family when I want; staff drive me". Each young person told inspectors that they had regular contact with their social worker and could talk with them about their care and future plans. However, one young person expressed anger and confusion about decisions made around contact and access outside of the centre. Inspectors spoke with the centre manager who showed awareness and understanding of the issues and provided assurances that they are being addressed.

Young people told inspectors that they felt safe in the centre; there was no tension between them and everyone was busy "doing their own thing". "We get on well but in our own way".

Two of the young people who spoke with inspectors described being away from the centre a lot doing their own activities, such as sport and spending time with friends, "I don't spend much time here, I'm away all day". They both expressed satisfaction with their placement generally and did not feel that there was anything they wished to change at present. One of the young people, however, told inspectors about frustration in wanting to spend more time with friends and family and that "there's nothing to do here, I'm so bored."

Two of the young people complained about the food. "The food is terrible". "Same meals on same days of the week." According to one young person, the food had improved recently.

Inspectors spoke with two parents who said that they felt their children were safe and well looked after by staff at the centre. They said that staff support their children to become more independent and earn trust by making safe decisions. They also described staff as respectful and supportive. Both parents spoke of good communication with staff and told inspectors that they would be told if there were any concerns.

Inspectors also spoke with an advocate from an independent advocacy organisation for young people in care. The advocate described the centre as child-centred and promoting the voice of the child. They described good working relationships with the centre manager and staff. Staff contacted the advocate upon a new admission and also to support young

people transition into a new stage, such as aftercare. The advocate told inspectors that they received no complaints from young people in the centre during the past year.

### **Capacity and capability**

Management structures were clear and the roles and responsibilities of managers and staff were well defined. Governance arrangements were in place to ensure that the operation of the centre was subject to regular review and that both staff and managers were accountable for their practice.

The interim centre manager was suitably qualified, experienced and competent. She was supported by an interim deputy centre manager. She reported to and was supervised by an interim deputy regional manager who maintained good oversight of the centre. There was an effective system in place to ensure both managers and staff received regular supervision and support.

The staff team was experienced and skilled. Each child was allocated a team of three keyworkers who were responsible for ensuring that the plans for their care were implemented and appropriately recorded. Case managers ensured that the children's care was well coordinated and reviewed regularly. The interim centre manager and interim deputy centre manager had overall responsibility for the quality of care provided to the children and they reviewed and signed off on all records and reports.

Managers provided strong leadership. They ensured that the needs of the children were paramount. They also ensured that the model of care, which had been introduced in 2019, was understood by staff, children and the various professionals involved in their care, and was implemented in full. Staff told inspectors that the new model of care had provided them with a clear focus for their work with the children. They also said that managers had provided good leadership in the implementation of the model of care, that they felt well supported in their work with the children, and that staff morale was good as a result.

In order to assure themselves that the centre operated in line with the standards and regulations, managers completed three separate self-assessments during the previous nine months. They maintained central records, including logs of complaints, physical interventions, and child protection concerns. They also carried out audits on various aspects of service delivery such as medication management, supervision, and keyworking, and they developed action plans to ensure that any deficits were addressed. Managers demonstrated that they were familiar with the details of each young person's care plans and placement plans. They also ensured that there was a collective focus on the outcomes for young people by arranging regular reviews of the progress that each young person was making.

There were good systems of communication within the centre and records of regular team meetings and management meetings reflected this. Managers and staff also developed good working relationships with the young people's parents and with the external professionals involved in their care. Parents, social workers and other professionals told inspectors that managers and staff were accessible and that they were kept informed of the progress that young people were making and advised of any incidents that took place. A system was also in place for significant events to be recorded, investigated, and reported to all relevant persons involved in the young people's care.

Risks were well managed. The interim centre manager maintained an organisational risk register and there were procedures in place for escalating any risks that could not be managed in the centre to regional managers. Risks on this register were reviewed regularly with the interim deputy regional manager. Risk assessments were also carried out periodically in line with the centre's health and safety statement. There was a specific set of risk assessments and procedures in place for Covid 19 and infection control measures were adhered to in the centre. A separate Covid 19 folder was maintained and managers ensured that staff had access to the most up-to-date guidance and associated training.

Individual risk assessments were completed prior to each child's admission. Risk assessments were also completed for each child in relation to specific behaviours, activities or events. The risk assessments were detailed and of good quality.

The centre had an up-to-date statement of purpose. It described the aims of the service, the model of care and how it was implemented, and the services provided. Inspectors found that the statement of purpose reflected the day-to-day operation of the centre. A child-friendly version of the statement of purpose was included in the young people's booklet given to each child on admission.

While there were policies, procedures and guidance in place, many of the policies and procedures that underpinned the operation of the centre had not been updated for several years. Managers told inspectors that a full suite of up-to-date national policies for children's residential centres were due to be signed off later in quarter 3 of 2020, and that a programme of training would then be put in place for staff.

**Standard 5.2**

The registered provider ensures that the residential centre has effective leadership, governance and management arrangements in place with clear lines of accountability to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support.

A full suite of up-to-date policies, procedures and guidance for children's residential centres was not yet in place.

Judgment: Substantially compliant

**Standard 5.3**

The residential centre has a publicly available statement of purpose that accurately and clearly describes the services provided.

The statement of purpose reflected the day-to-day operation of the centre. Information of the centre and the model of care was provided to young people and to others who were involved in their care.

Judgment: Compliant

## Quality and safety

Young people received care and support that was child-centred and based on their individual needs.

Up-to-date care plans were in place for three of the four young people. The fourth young person had recently been admitted and had had a child in care review. However, the care plan had not yet been received by the centre. The care plans reviewed by inspectors were comprehensive, and set out each young person's individual needs and how those needs would be met.

Staff developed good quality placement plans which outlined how the young people's needs would be met in the centre. Placement support plans focussed on the day-to-day care and support to be provided. They were also comprehensive and were agreed in consultation with each young person. Placement plans were reviewed on a regular basis in line with the model of care. Young people, their social workers, and centre staff were jointly involved in rating the progress that the young people had made in achieving their goals.

There was good communication between managers and staff and the relevant people in the children's lives. Social workers described good communication and collaboration. They received regular updates from staff on young people's progress, and were advised of any incidents or concerns. Other professionals involved in the young people's care described the managers and staff as welcoming, accommodating and as good advocates for the young people.

Managers and staff supported young people to maintain contact with their families. Frequent contact between young people and their families was recorded on their care files. Young people were facilitated to meet their families and friends and to stay overnight with their families when this was appropriate and agreed with their social workers. Parents/ guardians told inspectors that they were consulted by managers and staff and involved in the decision-making process. They were also informed of their children's progress in the centre. This sometimes involved the use of interpreters to better facilitate parents' involvement. Care plans were also translated for the parents into their own language when required.

Managers and staff were committed to the protection of the young people. Staff were trained in Children First (2017). Although there were no child protection concerns reported to the social work department during the nine months prior to the inspection, staff were familiar with the process involved in making such reports. Staff told inspectors that any concerns they had could be raised in the team meeting forum and that the managers were very approachable in the event that they needed to raise any issues with them. They were also familiar with the policy on protected disclosure.

Measures were in place to ensure that young people were safe. They included thorough risk assessments of the young people's behaviours and the activities they were involved in outside the centre. Inspectors found that any risks identified were well managed. Inspectors reviewed a recent safety plan that was developed in relation to an identified risk for one young person. It was child-centred and of good quality. Staff worked effectively with social workers, young people and their families to promote the safety and wellbeing of young people and they demonstrated a good understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures. Placement support plans included specific goals aimed at promoting self-care and protection in the young people. Records of key working sessions demonstrated that staff undertook individual work with young people on issues such as self-care, sexual health, and safety on the internet. There were two unplanned absences in the nine months prior to the inspection and they were well managed by staff. An Garda Síochána were notified appropriately on one of these occasions.

The model of care encouraged staff to adopt a positive approach to young people in order to build mutual trust and staff told inspectors that building respectful relationships with the young people was their aim. Staff had also been trained in a Tusla-approved approach to managing behaviours that challenge. Young people told inspectors that they got on well with each other and with staff and this was borne out in the records which showed no recent incidents of behavior that challenged. Previous incidents were short-lived and of a minor nature and these were well-managed by staff. There were no incidents of the use of physical intervention in the nine months prior to the inspection. Young people also told inspectors that staff gave them the space they needed and that they could lock their bedroom doors from the inside if they wished for privacy. Records showed that no restrictive practices were used in the centre.

Young people were provided with information on their rights, including their right to make a complaint. There were three complaints from the young people in the previous nine months. Inspectors found that, although one young person was not satisfied with the outcome of their complaints, the complaints were well managed. Young people were also provided with information on an organisation that provided independent advocacy for young people in care. One of the young people currently had an advocate working with them.

The health, wellbeing and development of each young person was promoted. Placement plans and placement support plans focused on supporting young people's mental and physical health and wellbeing. Young people had access to a general practitioner (GP) of their choice and other specialist services such as mental health services and speech and language therapy. One young person was not able to access specific counselling services due to Covid-19 restrictions, but an alternative had been sought and was due to commence. A psychologist from the residential services provided support and guidance to

staff and one-to-one work with the young people if they required this. Two of the young people had availed of this service.

Young people's educational needs were outlined in care and placement plans. Staff supported young people to attend school, to complete state examinations and participate in further education or vocational training. One young person was completing their leaving certificate, one was registered to begin secondary school in September and one had a training placement. The fourth young person was planning to leave the centre in order to pursue a specific training/career opportunity in the autumn.

Two of the young people were over the age of 17 years. Each had a timely aftercare assessment of their needs on leaving care. Each had an aftercare plan and an allocated aftercare worker. The assessments of need were wide-ranging and the aftercare plans were of good quality. Young people were supported to develop skills for life, including cooking, budgeting and general self-care. They were encouraged to strengthen their sense of identity by developing links with their own communities and cultures. When young people identified specific areas of interest, they were encouraged to pursue them. This was evident in the support given to young people to avail of work placements, volunteer activities, and courses that provided them with certification. Young people were also encouraged and supported to engage in physical activities, including sports and outdoor pursuits.

**Standard 2.2**

Each child receives care and support based on their individual needs in order to maximise their wellbeing and personal development.

Young people received good quality care and support. Their care and placement plans were comprehensive and of good quality. There was effective communication between staff and other professionals involved in the young people's care. Young people were involved in the planning of their own care.

Judgment: Compliant

**Standard 3.1**

Each child is safeguarded from abuse and neglect and their care and welfare is protected and promoted.

Young people were protected from abuse. Good safeguarding practices were in place and young people were supported to develop self-awareness and skills needed for self-care and protection.

Judgment: Compliant

<b>Standard 3.2</b> Each child experiences care and support that promotes positive behaviour.
Staff were trained in an approved approach to managing behaviour that challenged that operated alongside a trauma informed model of care which provided a framework for positive behavioural support. Relationships between staff and the young people were respectful and young people received the support and encouragement they required to engage in positive behaviour.
Judgment: Compliant

<b>Standard 4.1</b> The health, wellbeing and development of each child is promoted, protected and improved.
A holistic approach was taken to the assessment of young people's needs and all aspects of their health, wellbeing and development was promoted. This included the development of life skills to prepare them for leaving care.
Judgment: Compliant
<b>Standard 4.2</b> Each child is supported to meet any identified health and development needs.
The health and development needs of young people were assessed on admission and both the routine services, such as having a GP, and specialist services, such as mental health services or psychological services, they required to meet these needs were provided.
Judgment: Compliant
<b>Standard 4.3</b> Each child is provided with educational and training opportunities to maximise their individual strengths and abilities.
Each young person was provided with appropriate educational and vocational placements. They were encouraged, supported and facilitated to achieve their goals and provided with opportunities to sample potential career pathways.
Judgment: Compliant

## Appendix 1 - Full list of standards considered under each dimension

Standard Title	Judgment
<b>Capacity and capability</b>	
<p><b>Standard 5.2</b> The registered provider ensures that the residential centre has effective leadership, governance and management arrangements in place with clear lines of accountability to deliver child-centred, safe and effective care and support.</p>	Substantially compliant
<p><b>Standard 5.3</b> The residential centre has a publicly available statement of purpose that accurately and clearly describes the services provided.</p>	Compliant
<b>Quality and safety</b>	
<p><b>Standard 2.2</b> Each child receives care and support based on their individual needs in order to maximise their wellbeing and personal development.</p>	Compliant
<p><b>Standard 3.1</b> Each child is safeguarded from abuse and neglect and their care and welfare is protected and promoted.</p>	Compliant
<p><b>Standard 3.2</b> Each child experiences care and support that promotes positive behaviour.</p>	Compliant
<p><b>Standard 4.1</b> The health, wellbeing and development of each child is promoted, protected and improved.</p>	Compliant
<p><b>Standard 4.2</b> Each child is supported to meet any identified health and development needs.</p>	Compliant
<p><b>Standard 4.3</b> Each child is provided with educational and training opportunities to maximise their individual strengths and abilities.</p>	Compliant