

Parent And Child Fostering Assessments

Setting address: Alpha House, Molesey Road, Walton on Thames KT12 3PD

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

The service offers parent and child foster placements. Independent parenting assessments are carried out during short-term placements.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since June 2015. At the time of this visit, there were nine children placed with the agency and 15 approved foster carers.

Inspection date: 13 June 2023

Date of previous inspection: 24 April 2023

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit was carried out following a judgement of inadequate at the last full inspection. The full inspection took place from 24 to 28 April 2023. Following the inspection, Ofsted issued the agency with two compliance notices. These related to the duty to secure welfare and the fitness of the registered manager. The purpose of this visit was to monitor the agency's response to the compliance notices. The seven requirements set at the full inspection, with the completion date of 7 July 2023, were not reviewed at this monitoring visit.

The agency has responded positively to the compliance notices. They have shown clear commitment to making the significant changes needed.

The agency has completed several written reviews of processes that fell short of standards at the last inspection. These reviews have been extensive. They have produced learning for all those working in the agency, including supervising social workers and foster carers.

A detailed review of how the agency matches parents and children with foster carers has led to changes in the matching tool used by the agency. This includes any internal placement moves in the agency. The agency has updated foster carer profiles, which clearly state their skills, knowledge and experience. The matching tool allows for space to show how the foster carer can meet the needs of a parent and child and strategies to meet any gaps in the match.

The agency has reviewed and updated carer supervision documentation. The new template creates space for gathering extra information and encourages professional curiosity.

There has been one complaint about a foster carer since the last inspection. The agency took appropriate steps to follow this up. They informed the local authority designated officer in a timely manner, and there has been relevant communication between them and the agency. The local authority designated officer has since reviewed the referral and did not express any concerns about the incident and how the agency managed it. However, the agency had not notified Ofsted of this complaint, which only came to Ofsted's attention during this visit.

All staff and foster carers have received refresher training about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. An external agency provided this training, which was extensive. Additionally, all social work staff completed fostering specific online child protection and safeguarding training. The staff spoken to demonstrated an understanding of their roles and responsibilities, as well as an understanding of the agency's safeguarding policy. The registered manager provided confirmation of her booking to attend local authority facilitated training around the management of allegations. She is committed to attending this and demonstrated an understanding about why.

The agency has taken seriously the concerns raised relating to two placements. In one of these, harm came to children. The agency carried out a detailed learning review and has made all individuals who work in the agency aware of the outcome. Staff and foster carers demonstrate an understanding of the learning. Staff are responsive to the new process for carrying out health and safety checks. They understand why social work staff have increased these checks and why they are being more stringent. Staff have completed advanced level health and safety training specific to fostering. All households have received a health and safety check since the last inspection, and the recommendations made are responded to in a timely manner. All staff and carers have received paediatric first-aid training since the previous inspection.

Foster carers say they feel well supported by the agency. They reported that support is available out of hours. All foster carers spoken to have attended the recent training and are able to reflect on this. External professionals expressed no concerns and talk positively about the agency. However, one professional commented on the negative impact that the inadequate judgement had on the stability of a placement that has since ended.

Considering the extensive work carried out by the agency, there have been marked improvements made since the full inspection was carried out. The outcome of the visit is that both compliance notices have been met.

What does the independent fostering agency 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, Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and the national minimum standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The fostering service provider must provide foster parents with such training, advice, information and support, including support outside office hours, as appears necessary in the interests of children placed with them. (Regulation 17) Specifically, all foster carers must be trained in paediatric first aid before having new-born babies placed with them. Additionally, all foster carers must be supervised by a qualified social worker as stated in NMS 21.8.	2 July 2023
The fostering service provider must maintain a list of persons who are considered by them to be suitable to be members of a fostering panel ("the central list"), including one or more social workers who have at least three years' relevant post-qualifying experience. The fostering service provider must ensure that the fostering panel has sufficient members, and that individual members have between them the experience and expertise necessary, to effectively discharge the functions of the panel. (Regulation 23 (1) (7)) Specifically, ensure that a care-experienced person participates in each panel.	2 July 2023
The functions of the fostering panel in respect of cases referred to it by the fostering service provider are— to consider each application for approval and to recommend whether or not a person is suitable to be a foster parent, where it recommends approval of an application, to recommend any terms on which the approval is to be given, to recommend whether or not a person remains suitable to be a foster parent, and whether or not the terms of their approval (if any) remain appropriate—	2 July 2023

on the first review carried out in accordance with regulation 28(2), and on the occasion of any other review, if requested to do so by the fostering service provider in accordance with regulation 28(5), and to consider any case referred to it under regulation 27(9) or 28(10). (Regulation 25 (1)(a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(d)) Specifically, the panel must demonstrate a robust process, where questions that are raised are resolved. Furthermore, a specific system must be implemented that ensures the agency decision-maker's questions are returned to the next panel, feature clearly on the agenda and are evidenced and actioned. Furthermore, when concerns regarding foster carers' conduct arise, they must be returned to panel for a review.	
The fostering service provider may carry out an assessment of any person who applies to become a foster parent and whom they consider may be suitable to become a foster parent ("X"), and any such assessment must be carried out in accordance with this regulation. The fostering service provider— must obtain the information specified in Schedule 3 relating to X and other members of X's household and family, and any other information they consider relevant, must interview at least two persons nominated by X to provide personal references for X, and prepare written reports of the interviews, except where the fostering service provider is a local authority and X lives in the area of that authority, must consult with, and take into account the views of, the local authority in whose area X lives, Having regard to the information obtained under paragraph (2), the fostering service provider must— consider whether X is suitable to be a foster parent and whether X's household is suitable for any child,	2 July 2023

prepare a written report on X which includes the matters set out in paragraph (4), and The report referred to in paragraph (3) must include the following matters in relation to X— the information required by Schedule 3 and any other information the fostering service provider consider relevant, the fostering service provider's assessment of X's suitability to be a foster parent. (Regulation 26 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3)(a)(b) (4)(a)(b)) Specifically, ensure that the assessment process is thorough and potential foster carers' life experiences and circumstances are fully assessed. Evidence the efforts and decisions regarding contacting ex-partners and ensure that consideration is given to how foster carers' strongly held beliefs might impact on the fostering role.	
The registered person must maintain a system for— monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate intervals, and improving the quality of foster care provided by the fostering agency. The registered person must provide the Chief Inspector with a written report in respect of any review conducted for the purposes of paragraph (1) and, on request, to any local authority. The system referred to in paragraph (1) must provide for consultation with foster parents, children placed with foster parents, and their placing authority (unless, in the case of a fostering agency which is a voluntary organisation, it is also the placing authority). (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3))	2 July 2023
If any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 7 takes place in relation to a fostering agency, the registered person must without delay notify the persons or bodies indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table. Notifications must be made via the online system in a timely manner and contain clear and full information.	2 July 2023

(Regulation 36 (1) (2))	
The fostering service provider must— keep under review and, where appropriate, revise the statement of purpose and children’s guide, notify the Chief Inspector of any such revision within 28 days. (Regulation 4 (a)(b))	2 July 2023

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the independent fostering agency since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Independent fostering agency details

Unique reference number: 1156149

Registered provider: Parent and Child Fostering Assessments Ltd

Registered provider address: Alpha House, Molesey Road, Walton On Thames
KT12 3PD

Responsible individual: Anne Kabega

Inspectors

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector
Skye Frain, Social Care Inspector

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