

To The Moon And Back Foster Care Limited

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Future Business Centre Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge CB4 2HY

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

This privately owned independent fostering agency registered in 2017. The office is located in Cambridge. The agency supports foster families living in Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. The manager registered in September 2017.

At the time of this inspection, the agency had 22 approved foster carers in 14 households. The agency currently provides care and support for 12 children living with foster carers. The agency provides emergency, short-term and permanent foster care arrangements.

Inspection dates: 9 to 13 February 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The independent fostering agency provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the independent fostering agency contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

Date of last inspection: 3 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

This is a small agency that holds children and carers at the centre of everything it does. The strong ethos and values set by the leaders permeate through to practice. Fostering social workers have the time to get to know their families exceptionally well and provide extremely high levels of support. This helps children to thrive.

Some children have been with their carers for a very long time. Children are fully integrated into their foster families and are offered a sense of permanence. One child who took part in the inspection refers to their carers as 'mum and paps'. Another child said, 'It's the best placement I have ever had.'

All of the children have full-time education plans, with most children attending mainstream school or college. The agency and the carers work closely with education partners to make sure children can succeed at school. This creates a culture where children aspire to continue further with their education. One child told the inspector about the exceptional predicted grades they have in their upcoming GCSEs.

Fostering social workers spend time with each family to get to know them well. Carers gave overwhelmingly positive feedback on the support they receive. Supervisions are regular and fostering social workers are always available to carers. Fostering social workers are curious and reflective, and this helps them to create individualised support for each family.

The agency has a therapist available to support carers with any specific needs. Carers gave excellent feedback on how helpful this has been for them. The therapist helps the fostering social workers to build their reflective practice and to have time to really think about their families. She offers individual support to fostering social workers if needed. This holistic approach fully considers people's wellbeing and ensures the team around each child can be emotionally available to meet their needs.

Foster carers have both in-person and online training. Carers said they are impressed with the training offer. The agency is taking part in a pilot scheme with a new online training platform for carers, which is informed by artificial intelligence programming. This platform is very engaging and adjusts to the needs of carers. Innovative offers like this help to enhance learning and skills for carers.

Carers and agency staff ensure that children are provided with life-enhancing opportunities. They promote and support children's passions and talents. One child took part in a 'scholarship programme' that aims to open university pathways for young people in care. The child benefited from a residential trip to a university and ongoing mentoring with the charity. Consequently, they made

exceptional progress. The child is a very talented artist and has been commissioned to do some artwork for a prestigious university. Another talented child described how they are also showing their art at an exhibition for young people in care.

The agency works closely alongside other professionals to ensure that children receive the support they need and have the best opportunities available to them.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

Children say they feel safe and happy in their homes. They have really strong bonds with their carers. All of the children spoken to said that they would share any worries with their carers. Positive relationships like this help children to stay safe.

A strength of the agency is carers' knowledge around online safety. For children who have mobile phones, carers have different apps that they use to help to keep children safe. Carers also talk to children about these apps, and this opens up important conversations.

Children rarely go missing from home. On one occasion, a child did not return home when they should. Their carer immediately contacted the agency and received excellent support from agency staff to ensure the child's swift and safe return. The agency social worker went out the next day to provide additional support to the family.

Carers are extremely complimentary about the out-of-hours support they receive. They described the out-of-hours support as 'really great'. They value that the out-of-hours support is always provided by someone that they know who offers calm advice and support.

Carers have not had to physically restrain children. Recently, the agency provided training for all carers and agency social workers on de-escalation skills. Carers valued this training, which they described as 'very good' training. This proactive approach to equipping carers with the skills they may need in the future helps carers to manage difficult moments for children in an informed way.

There is a diverse fostering panel with a strong and experienced panel chair. Reviews and assessments are shared with panel effectively, and panel thoroughly considers the information presented to it. The experienced agency decision-maker is confident to challenge or disagree with panel. Decisions on foster carers' suitability are approached in an evidenced-based way. On the small number of occasions when practice does not meet the required standards, the manager has appropriately initiated standards of care investigations. These investigations are thorough, and appropriate action has been taken as necessary. Any allegations against foster carers have been managed appropriately. The manager has shared with, and acted on, any advice from the local authority designated officer.

When there have been any worries for children, the agency has acted quickly. There is excellent multi-agency working, and carers are fully invested in safety planning for children. Concerns for children are managed quickly and effectively. This has helped to speedily reduce risk.

On one occasion, a family received an exemption to the usual fostering limit from the local authority in order to care for more than 3 children. However, the agency did not update the carers' terms of approval in line with the number of children they were caring for.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The responsible individual and the registered manager founded the agency and have provided outstanding stable and consistent leadership. They are both extremely dedicated to developing and providing an excellent service. They lead the agency with very strong values and a strong ethos that keeps children at the centre of what they do. A high number of families and professionals commented on the values and ethos of this agency as being one of the things that makes the agency so special.

Leaders and managers are very good at networking and value innovation. They make links with people and organisations that open up creative opportunities for children and carers. Opportunities such as the scholarship programme and the new training platform are examples of some of the areas they are developing.

The manager has completed training in specialist therapeutic techniques. This training explored the developmental stages children may have missed and how carers can be supported to help children meet these milestones and develop these skills. For one child in particular, this has had remarkable results. This training and model of practice is an area the agency is continuing to develop.

Leaders and managers are aware of their strengths and vulnerabilities. They are reflective, open and transparent about these. Leaders and managers are constantly looking to improve and have a thirst for learning. They have created a reflective space where fostering social workers have the time to really focus on their fostering families and the support these families need.

Throughout the year, there are several opportunities for everyone to get together to support each other and share good practice. The agency hosts several family days. These are open to everyone, including the fostering social workers' families. This reinforces the family feel at this agency and the inclusive ethos it is creating. At these events, children and carers' views are also sought in a number of innovative ways, such as graffiti and other artwork sessions. This helps children and families to be part of shaping the service moving forward.

The majority of foster carers took part in the inspection, and the overall feedback was extremely positive. Local authority social workers described the strengths of the agency as being supportive and offering stability to children. They said that the agency workers go 'above and beyond' to offer support to children and families.

Local authority commissioners said they wish this agency had more carers. They highlighted the positive stability of children in their fostering families and excellent communication from the agency. They described leaders as professional and supportive, but also able to challenge where necessary. One commissioner said that the agency completed work that 'far exceeds' what they see from other agencies.

What does the independent fostering agency need to do to improve?

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that no fostering household cares for more than 3 children without suitable foster carer terms of approval in place. The 'usual fostering limit' is set at 3. This means that no one may foster more than 3 children unless the foster carer's terms of approval allow it. (Assessment and approval of foster carers: Amendments to the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services 2013, page 16)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people 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 Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and the national minimum standards.

Independent fostering agency details

Unique reference number: 1259274

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Registered provider address: 7 St John Street, Mansfield NG18 1QH

Responsible individual: Angela Hunt

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Inspector

Mary Costello, Social Care Inspector

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