

Paramount Foster Care

Paramount Foster Care

Sma House, 172 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich, B70 6QG

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

A private company operates this fostering service. The agency was registered with Ofsted in October 2019.

The fostering service provides short and long-term fostering.
At the time of this inspection, 42 children were living in 31 households.

The agency is managed by an experienced and qualified registered manager.

The registered provider has recently appointed a new responsible individual, and we are currently checking this person has the relevant capacity, experience and skills to carry out the role.

Inspection dates: 18 to 22 May 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The independent fostering agency provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 25 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Summary of findings

Children are making good progress with their foster carers. They are in education, supported to meet their health needs and enjoy a wide range of opportunities and experiences provided by their carers and the agency.

There has been a low number of safeguarding incidents. Each incident has been well managed, and the agency has demonstrated strong partnership working with key agencies. Children are settled and stable in their homes; there have only been 3 unplanned endings for children. There have been mitigating factors which have contributed to the endings but there have been missed opportunities to reflect and learn from these endings.

A stable and highly committed staff team supports the agency. Leaders have worked hard to address staffing issues identified at the last inspection. There is a high level of support available to foster carers through training and support groups.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress from their individual starting points because of the consistent and nurturing care they receive. Many children have lived with their carers for several years. Children said they feel 'happy', 'safe' and that they 'love their carers'. They feel like valued members of their households and form strong bonds with their carers and extended families.

The manager has worked hard to develop positive relationships with children's birth parents. As a result, children feel settled and reassured, knowing there is constructive communication between the agency and their families.

Children receive a sensitive and well-planned welcome to their foster homes. They are provided with a memory box and a children's guide before moving, helping them to understand what to expect and reducing anxiety. The agency has successfully supported a high number of brother and sister groups to remain together.

The agency has supported a number of children to move on positively; 3 children have moved to adoption, and 8 have been successfully reunited with their birth families. Where children move towards independence, carers ensure they are well prepared for the next stage of their lives. Carers continue to maintain strong relationships, providing ongoing support as young people adjust to independent living.

However, 3 children have experienced unplanned endings to their placements. In these cases, the children's needs were not fully understood at the point of referral, and key information was not consistently shared by placing authorities. Additionally,

there have been missed opportunities for the agency to reflect with carers and explore the circumstances surrounding decisions to end placements.

The agency has a diverse range of foster carers. Careful consideration is given to children's identity and cultural needs, supporting effective and sensitive matching. The agency promotes a strong culture of inclusivity, and the manager is passionate about celebrating individuality. When exact cultural matches are not possible, carers demonstrate a commitment to meeting children's needs through thoughtful and proactive support, enabling children to explore and understand their identity.

All children are in education or training. Foster carers place a strong emphasis on education and actively promote children's learning and social development. Children have excellent attendance and are making good progress. They also benefit from a wide range of extracurricular activities, including football, swimming, gymnastics and cheerleading.

Children's health needs are well met. Foster carers understand children's individual health needs and advocate effectively to ensure access to specialist services when required. The recent appointment of an in-house clinician and therapeutic lead further strengthens the support available to children and carers.

There have been no complaints since the last inspection. Children receive clear information about how to raise concerns when they move into their foster homes, and they understand how to make a complaint. A high number of 'children-seen' visits are undertaken, providing regular opportunities for children to share their views. The agency also organises activities during school holidays, enabling children to express their wishes and feelings in a relaxed environment. This helps to ensure that children feel listened to and valued.

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

Foster carers demonstrate a clear understanding of how to keep children safe. They are knowledgeable about children's individual risks and respond appropriately. Carers consistently report receiving a high level of support from the agency.

Children have strong and trusting relationships with their carers. During the inspection, children said they feel safe and able to speak openly about any worries or concerns.

Since the last inspection, children have generally been settled, and incidents have been rare. There has been no use of physical restraint and no concerns relating to exploitation. When incidents have occurred, the manager has taken swift and effective action, working closely with partner agencies to share information and safeguard children. Practice is child-centred, with a clear focus on maintaining stability and minimising disruption. One carer spoke highly of the support received during a significant change.

There has been one episode of a child going missing from home. This was managed effectively, with the child located within 30 minutes. Procedures were appropriately followed, and reflective discussions took place with carers to reduce the likelihood of recurrence. This has remained an isolated incident.

There has been one allegation, which remains under investigation at the time of inspection. The manager has worked effectively with the placing authorities and the local authority designated officer. Appropriate safeguarding measures have been implemented, including a detailed safety plan and increased monitoring visits. Where necessary, carers are referred back to panel to ensure independent scrutiny of their continued suitability.

Foster carers are well supported by supervising social workers and have access to independent advocacy and in-house therapeutic services. This enables carers to reflect on their practice and share any concerns.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The agency is led by a committed manager who is dedicated to achieving the best possible outcomes for children. She demonstrates high aspirations, which are embedded within the agency's culture and practice. A new responsible individual has recently joined the agency, bringing a wealth of experience and introducing positive changes to strengthen practice.

At the last inspection, staffing changes had impacted on the consistency of support to carers, with some experiencing changes in supervising social workers. These issues have now been addressed. The agency has a stable staff team, with most members being in post for over a year. Carers report significant improvements and value the consistent, high-quality support they now receive.

Monitoring systems are in place and generally effective. However, some aspects require further development. Not all carers have up-to-date supervision agreements that reflect current arrangements.

Recording systems also require improvement. Some documents were not readily accessible during the inspection, as they were stored in different locations. In addition, draft versions of reports have been uploaded, meaning that the most up-to-date information is not always available. Leaders recognise the need to streamline recording systems to ensure that accurate and current information is easily accessible.

A wide range of training is available to staff and carers through both online and face-to-face delivery. Carers report that training is informative and enhances their skills. The agency promotes a strong learning culture and responds to training requests.

In addition, the agency facilitates regular support groups, which are highly valued by carers. These form an important part of the agency's support offer, alongside events such as the annual carers' appreciation dinner.

The fostering panel is well established and effectively chaired by an experienced independent chair. Panel members have appropriate skills and expertise. The panel provides robust scrutiny and contributes positively to the recruitment, assessment and ongoing review of foster carers.

Panel recommendations are clearly focused on children's needs and supported by evidence-based analysis. The agency decision-maker gives careful consideration to recommendations and makes timely, well-reasoned decisions, with a clear focus on promoting children's welfare.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that information about the child is recorded clearly and in a way which will be helpful to the child when they access their files now or in the future. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 26.6)
- The registered person should make sure that the supervising social worker ensures each foster carer that he or she supervises is informed in writing of, and accepts, understands and operates within, all regulations and standards and with policies and guidance agreed by the fostering service. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 21.9)
- The registered person should ensure that the manager regularly monitors all records kept by the service to ensure compliance with the service's policies, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. Ensure that immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 25.2)

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: 2509967

Registered provider: Paramount Foster Care

Registered provider address: Sma House, 172 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich B70 6QG

Responsible individual:

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Inspectors

Joanne Hawkins, Social Care Inspector
Alison Snell, Social Care Inspector

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