

Subari Foster Care Limited

Subari Foster Care Limited

Dexter House Ltd, Southbridge House, Southbridge Place, Croydon CR0 4HA

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

Subari Foster Care Limited is an independent fostering agency based in Croydon, south London. The fostering service specialises in providing foster care for individual children and sibling groups. It provides emergency, respite, short-term and long-term placements.

The agency registered with Ofsted in April 2022. The manager registered with Ofsted at the same time. The registered manager is a highly experienced social worker and holds an appropriate management qualification.

At the time of this inspection, the fostering service was providing care for 17 children. The agency has 11 approved fostering households. The inspector spoke with five of the children.

Inspection dates: 19 to 23 June 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The independent fostering agency provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children flourish within nurturing foster homes, which has a positive impact on their well-being. Since living with their foster carers, children are happier and more confident, and have increased self-esteem and a sense of belonging. Children affectionately refer to their foster carers as 'aunty', 'uncle' or 'mum'. They also enjoy good relationships with their foster carers' extended family.

Children receive effective individualised support. A virtual headteacher said, 'I don't think I have worked with a child for a long time who has had such a huge positive turnaround in such a short period.' Children contribute to their own care plans and they have access to a support worker. The latter provides them with meaningful, personalised quality time. The agency staff team is all female, which means that there are limited male role models.

Children benefit from the good health arrangements. There are improvements in their speech and language, social skills and continence. Children are listened to and their views are valued. They contribute to the agency through the planning of activities and their involvement in the newsletter. A youth ambassador assists with consultation and provides an extra person for children to speak to.

Children receive good educational support. All children regularly attend school or college. Foster carers advocate for them to attend suitable education establishments. They also assist children with their homework, and smaller children benefit from being read bedtime stories. Children have good educational attainment and they have positive career aspirations for the future. The agency also celebrates children's achievements.

Children's talents and interests are nurtured. There are examples of children planning careers from their hobbies, such as horse riding. Children enjoy a range of social activities organised by the agency and independently by their foster carers. The former enable children to develop friendships within the agency. Children enjoy various activities, including bowling, eating out, playing football and basketball, swimming, cheerleading, going to the seaside and going away on holiday.

Foster carers help children to develop their independence. Older children have the option of continuing to live with their foster carers until they feel ready for independent life. Some children express pride in who they are and others are struggling in this area. Most children live with foster carers from the same ethnic background and children are encouraged to take pride in their heritage. Life-story work is planned to further help children with developing a positive self-identity.

Children receive good-quality care from committed and compassionate foster carers. A placing social worker described the foster carers as 'fantastic'. However, foster carers' records do not reflect all the life-enhancing things they do with children, and some of the language used does not take into account children's trauma.

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

Children benefit from the good safeguarding arrangements. Children confirm that they feel safe. Children can also identify who they would contact to make a complaint. Staff work with children to increase their knowledge around staying safe, including online safety, fire safety, peer pressure, consent and appropriate friendships. Children's risks are identified, understood and successfully managed.

There are currently no children who go missing from care or who are involved in sexual or criminal exploitation. If children return home late, appropriate action is taken. The agency works in partnership with local authorities to positively resolve any concerning issues. Together, they regularly review safety plans and individualised behaviour support plans, and routines are introduced for children.

Foster carers and staff benefit from a range of safeguarding training. The agency appropriately manages allegations. A research-informed reflective model helps foster carers and staff to learn from incidents. Supervising social workers assist with resolving conflicts. They encourage foster carers to praise, encourage and reward children to help with the development of socially acceptable behaviour. Supervising social workers also provide individual training and direct support to foster carers.

The research-informed therapeutic parenting programme helps foster carers to understand the impact of traumatic experiences on children. Children engage in counselling and therapy. A therapist described a foster carer as being 'very attuned' to the child and 'a source of comfort and calming'. Children receive support with managing their emotions, which helps them to feel safe and secure.

The highly nurturing parenting approach is centred on empathy. Foster carers use firm but fair boundaries. Children learn to take responsibility for their actions. They learn to reflect on their behaviour, show remorse and apologise, if necessary. The responsible individual highlighted that foster carers see children's potential and 'look beyond the behaviour and see the child as what they can be'.

Leaders and managers prioritise upskilling foster carers to meet the emotional and mental health needs of children. The children's support worker helps in emergency situations and offers day-care respite for foster carers. There are also plans to further extend the support services for foster families. Leaders and managers aim to build a resilient and caring community of peer support. The objective is to empower families to support each other and overcome challenges together, to enhance the stability of each fostering household.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Children and foster carers appreciate that the agency is small and is a family-style community. Placing authorities also see this as an advantage. They highlight that leaders and managers know all their foster carers' strengths and challenges, which

helps with providing the most suitable home for children. A placements manager described the agency as 'excellent, thoughtful and refreshing to work with'.

Children receive a service from an agency that prioritises their needs and actively supports their foster carers. The members of the highly experienced management team work well together and they demonstrate heartfelt leadership. They have high aspirations for children and their foster carers. Leaders and managers evidence a commitment to enhancing children's lives.

Leaders and managers are influential and committed to disseminating good practice. They have produced their own life-story book, which has also been commissioned by a local authority. This helps children to understand their care experiences. Children are cared for by resilient foster carers, who are well supported. Foster carers do not wish to give up on children and unplanned endings are rare. The majority of children have been living with their carers for several years.

Children receive care from foster carers who are committed to making a positive difference in children's lives. Foster carers are well prepared for their role, through extensive training, guidance and support. They receive certificates in recognition of their specific achievements. Foster carers feel valued and they praise the professional and personal support that they receive. Foster carers highlight that, without the agency's support, they would not have been able to continue in their role.

Leaders and managers have a good oversight of children and their progress. The agency has a quality assurance system, which involves monitoring the necessary regulatory information. However, the compliments and questionnaires that leaders and managers collate do not feature in their quality-of-care reports. This is a missed opportunity to highlight the agency's positive feedback.

The fostering panel is purposefully committed to children's welfare and promoting children's best interests. Members of the central list have a range of expertise, which includes social work, health, education and fostering. The list does not include a care-experienced person; however, the panel is actively trying to recruit a suitable person. The panel chair and agency decision-maker are highly experienced social work professionals. The fostering panel process provides suitable challenge and constructive criticism.

The agency works in partnership with placing authorities. The planning prior to a child moving into a foster home is a strength. However, a social worker highlighted that they were unaware of some of the dynamics within a foster home. Leaders and managers acknowledge the need to formalise and improve the written feedback given to social workers. There are plans to produce monthly reports. This will ensure that social workers receive the necessary information to enable them to plan for each child effectively.

The assessments of foster carers are analytical and generally of a good quality. The exploration of prospective foster carers' ability to care for children with varied sexual

and gender identities is, at times, inconsistent. The agency has a clear, comprehensive and realistic development plan to further improve the service. The agency is growing primarily through word-of-mouth referrals. Local authorities praise the agency's helpfulness and commitment to meeting the individual needs of children.

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, The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and the national minimum standards. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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 system referred to in paragraph (1) must provide for consultation with foster parents, children placed with foster parents, and their placing authority. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3))	1 September 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff and fostering households understand the nature of records maintained and follow the service's policy for the keeping and retention of files. In particular, recording about children should be meaningful and trauma-informed and provide a good overview of children's experiences. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 26.2)
- The registered person should ensure that children are provided with personalised care that promotes all aspects of their individual identity. In particular, provide support regarding children's ethnic and gender identity. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 2.1)
- The registered person should ensure that the experience of persons on the central list is sufficient to enable the fostering service to constitute panels that are equipped to make competent recommendations to the fostering service provider, taking into account the nature of the children and carers that the service caters for. In particular, ensure that the central list includes a person who has experience of being in care. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 14.8)
- The registered person should ensure that there is a good system of communication between the fostering service social workers and the child's social worker. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 21.12)
- The registered person should ensure that the written report on the person's suitability to be approved as a foster carer sets out clearly all the information that

the fostering panel and decision-maker need in order to make an objective approval decision. In particular, ensure suitable exploration of their ability to care for children with varied sexual and gender identities. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 13.7)

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: 2667130

Registered provider: Subari Foster Care Limited

Registered provider address: Southbridge House, southbridge Place, Croydon,
Surrey CR0 4HA

Responsible individual: Valerie Fitzpatrick

Registered manager: Constantia Pennie

Telephone number: 07931 735361

Email address: support@subari.co.uk

Inspector

Sharon Payne, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023