

TheraParent Fostering

TheraParent Ltd

Unit 8, Arnside Road, Waterloooville PO7 7UP

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

TheraParent Fostering is a privately owned independent fostering agency. The agency was registered with Ofsted on 11 January 2023.

The agency supports three fostering households and four children who live with these foster carers.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 11 January 2023.

Inspection dates: 27 to 29 February 2024

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

Date of last inspection: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Foster carers and agency staff provide the children with consistently good-quality care and there are elements of exceptional practice. All children receive a high level of individualised care and support. Agency staff and foster carers are highly skilled in providing therapeutic support to the children. The therapeutic approach is fully embedded in the agency. As a result, children continue to make progress.

The agency staff actively build relationships with the foster families and children. This is a strength of this agency. Interactions between children and staff are positive and warm. Some foster carers who had worked with the staff at another agency have followed them to this agency. This is because the foster carers trust them and hold them in high esteem. The importance of the voice of the child is embedded throughout this agency. Children's views are understood and routinely captured. Children say that they feel listened to by the staff team. The quality of children's day-to-day experiences is good.

Staff ensure that foster carers feel well supported. This builds foster carers' resilience to provide the best possible care for the children. The therapeutic offer from this agency is particularly good. The children feel able to confide in their carers and the agency staff. One child said the agency staff 'sit and listen to what happened in the past' and help them 'get through it'. The highly skilled staff team offers bespoke packages of support to foster carers and children. This additional layer of therapeutic input is valued by the children and foster carers. It helps build and maintain stability in the foster home, ensuring that the whole foster family feels supported and held by the agency.

All the children are attending education. Agency staff actively support foster carers and children with education. Feedback from education professionals is positive. When there are concerns around any aspects of education, agency staff are present to offer advice and support.

The agency is in its infancy. However, staff have already arranged a variety of activities for children and their foster families to participate in. These positive experiences help foster carers to quickly build relationships with other foster families and agency staff. All foster carers say that they have felt welcomed by the agency from the moment of initial contact. One foster carer said, 'They are the most supportive of the agencies we have spoken to. From the application process through to placement, they have been amazing.'

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

Children are central to safeguarding practice in the agency. Agency staff understand risks present for, and from, the children. Risk assessments are detailed and individualised to the child. They are updated regularly and when there is a change to the child's needs. Managers maintain good oversight of children's risks and

vulnerability through monthly case review meetings, foster family and staff supervisions and effective auditing of files.

Foster carers and agency staff support the children in ongoing work around keeping safe. One child completed additional online training around internet safety with their fostering agency life coach. The child said they benefited from these sessions. This proactive approach to managing risk keeps children safe.

All families have a family safety plan in place, as well as a child-specific safety plan. Children have their own bespoke safety action plans to help them identify risks, what to do and who to call if they feel unsafe. The children are encouraged to contribute to these safety plans to help them identify the best ways they can keep safe.

Unannounced visits are made to foster households. These are well planned and recorded. The agency staff see the children alone and obtain their views.

The good-quality training and support provided to the carers means they are well prepared in advance to think about how to manage any safeguarding incidents. All foster carers have access to quick-reference working cards to guide them on the safeguarding procedures. This practical and user-friendly information is valued by the foster carers.

There has only been one significant incident. The coordinated response by the staff to support the child and foster carers was appropriate and thorough. All necessary steps were taken to safeguard the child and offer additional follow-up support.

There have been no allegations made against foster carers or agency staff. The children know how to make a complaint. They feel safe and can identify trusted adults to speak to if they have concerns.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager, while new to the role, has extensive professional and personal experience in fostering. She is reflective and uses constructive feedback and advice to further develop the agency. Despite the agency only having been in operation for just over a year positive changes have already been implemented as a result of the continual learning approach of the senior leadership team. This has further enhanced practice and oversight.

The senior leadership team is made up of family members who together own the agency. They are alert to the inherent risks of this and have put systems in place to ensure continual external support and challenge. Appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure that each member of agency staff is supervised by a suitably experienced and qualified independent professional. Should any concerns arise around staff practice, there are also procedures in place to appoint an independent person to investigate.

Senior leaders have shared high expectations for what the children can achieve. They are all passionate about building a bespoke fostering agency which provides the best possible therapeutic care for children and support for foster carers. All the agency staff are therapeutically trained. They are innovative and creative in their interactions with children and families. One foster carer referred to the therapeutic lead as 'the guru'.

All direct work with children and foster families is currently undertaken by the three senior leaders. Foster carers value the bespoke and intimate feel of this small agency. They are confident that the whole staff team knows them and the children well. The staff understand the children and the progress they are making, through being actively involved in the foster family's life.

Prospective foster carer assessments are thorough. Training is rigorous and relevant. Foster carers have regular good-quality supervision with their agency supervising social worker. One experienced foster carer said, 'I don't know anyone that does it better.'

This is a child-focused provider. Children are at the forefront of all the work and care. One foster carer said, 'They [the agency staff] support us, but it's all about the kids and that just shows.' Children say that they feel heard by the agency. The skilful team ensures that work is child-led, in partnership with the network of professionals, foster carers and birth family.

Leaders and managers actively challenge other professionals when their responses are not effective. External professionals said they have positive working relationships with the agency. One professional talked about great positive change in one child's self-esteem, confidence and well-being. They attributed this to particular agency staff support and described the staff team as 'truly remarkable'.

The experienced panel chair and agency decision-maker ensure the fostering panel fulfils its role to ensure the approval of only suitable and safe foster carers. The agency decision-maker provides thorough and highly detailed feedback about the suitability of applicants when making the decision to approve them as foster carers.

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: 2688004

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Responsible individual: Michael Spencer

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Inspectors

Skye Frain, Social Care Inspector

Joanna Heller, Social Care Iinspector

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