

SC034804

The Children's Family Trust

Hanbury Court, Harris Business Park, Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire B60 4DJ

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

This agency is part of a national charity. It currently has 42 approved carers caring for 62 children. It provides a range of fostering services, including long- and short-term care, respite care, and parent and baby placements.

Inspection date: 8 September 2020

This monitoring visit

Ofsted completed a monitoring visit after receiving a complaint about how the agency recruits and retains staff, manages staff grievances, and the functioning of the agency's panel.

During the monitoring visit, the inspector identified that the agency has safely recruited staff. Trustees and the responsible individual have a good overview of the turnover and recruitment of staff.

During the last two to three months there has been an increase in staff turnover. The trustees and responsible individual have taken action to limit the impact of this for foster carers. This means that foster carers have continued to receive good-quality support. Specifically, interim experienced agency staff and independent consultants are being used to cover vacancies. Proactive steps have been taken by leaders to ensure that new staff are appointed promptly.

The registered manager left the agency in May 2020. A new manager has been appointed. The manager completed a phased introduction into the region in July and August 2020, and officially started in post on 1 September 2020. He is currently in the process of submitting his application to register as manager with Ofsted.

Over the last year, there have been no complaints from staff, foster carers or children. There has been one grievance made by a member of staff. The grievance

was investigated by an independent consultant and was not upheld. The inspector did not identify any concerns in how this grievance had been managed by leaders.

The agency panel operates in line with policies and regulations. The panel chair and members ensure that the panel is quorate. They are clear about the role of panel adviser and would not allow the individual in that role to vote on decisions. Good arrangements have been put in place in response to COVID-19 taking into consideration all relevant guidance and advice.

The requirements made at the last inspection were not examined during this monitoring visit.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
Ensure that the welfare of children placed or to be placed with foster parents is safeguarded and promoted at all times. (Regulation 11(a)) This is with regard to obtaining relevant documents in a timely way.	29/10/2018
Provide foster parents with such training, advice, information and support as appears necessary in the interests of children placed with them. (Regulation 17(1)) This is with regard to providing training and supervision to all carers in line with the agency's policy.	26/11/2018
Ensure the fostering service provider does not employ a person to work for the purposes of the fostering service unless that person is fit to do so and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to that person in respect of each of the matters specified in Schedule 1. (Regulation 20(1)(a)(3)) This is with regard to verifying the reasons the applicant left previous roles with children or vulnerable adults.	24/09/2018
Ensure that there is 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 carers, and their placing authorities. (Regulations 35(1)(b) and 35(3))	24/09/2018
Ensure that 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	24/09/2018

persons or bodies indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table. (Regulation 36(1))	
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Recommendations

- Implement a system to monitor the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take action when needed. (NMS 26.2)
- Record information about the child clearly and in a way that will be helpful to the child when they access their file now or in the future. (NMS 26.6)
This is with regard to their matching documents containing sufficient information.

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.

Ofsted is aware of the challenges that COVID-19 (coronavirus) is currently posing to those we regulate. During this visit, the inspector took into consideration the impact of any measures being taken to slow the spread of COVID-19 by the agency. This has included the effect these have had on staffing arrangements.

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

Independent fostering agency details

Unique reference number: SC034804

Registered provider: The Children's Family Trust

Registered provider address: Hanbury Court, Harris Business Park, Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 4DJ

Responsible individual: Marina Mulholland

Registered manager: Post vacant

Telephone number: 01527 574 446

Email address: marina@thecft.org.uk

Inspector

Dawn Bennett, social care inspector

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