

Ryancare Fostering Ltd

Ryancare Fostering Limited

5a Wellington Road, Wanstead, London E11 2AN

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

Ryancare Fostering Limited is an independent fostering agency based in Wanstead, East London. The service has been in operation since 2002. It is one of a number of fostering agencies owned and managed by the National Fostering Group, having been acquired in 2019.

The fostering service specialises in providing foster care for individual children and sibling groups. The agency provides emergency, respite and short-term and long-term placements. The agency also provides parent and child placements.

At the time of the inspection, the fostering service was providing care for 39 children in 22 approved fostering households. Four young adults were living in staying put arrangements.

Inspection dates: 29 September to 3 October 2025

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: 20 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children build trusted relationships with their foster families and benefit from safe, nurturing homes. They develop a strong sense of belonging and feel loved. The care and support they receive help them to overcome previous experiences of neglect and trauma. Several young people have chosen to remain with their foster families in staying put arrangements, because of the consistent care provided. One young person said their carer 'really looked after them' and that they did not wish to leave. Another child, who had lived with their carer for many years, said they felt 'happy' in their home.

Many foster carers are well prepared and supported to help children make positive progress in their health and education and emotional, social and psychological well-being. Carers receive guidance to work effectively with schools, particularly when children are at risk of exclusion or have unmet special educational needs. The education lead works closely with the virtual school to promote stability in children's homes and positive educational outcomes.

The agency's therapists and clinicians provide training and advice to foster families on a trauma-informed approach. This support helps carers respond sensitively to children's needs, improving their ability to be attuned to children's needs and promoting emotional and psychological well-being. Clinicians also work directly with children when required.

Children's health needs are well identified and supported. Children attend routine health appointments, and those with disabilities or complex needs receive specialist care. Foster carers complete tailored health training to ensure children receive safe, high-quality care. One health professional said a child with complex needs was alive due to the exceptional care provided by their carers.

Foster carers appreciate the agency's 'family feel' and feel well supported by managers. Children enjoy a wide range of activities, including trips abroad, which help build their confidence, social skills and aspirations. The participation lead ensures activities reflect children's interests. Children can use an app to record their wishes and feelings, such as how they want their achievements to be celebrated, which has resulted in them being given personalised gifts. Children's identity needs are well met, for example, children's guides are available in various languages, including a guide specifically for children seeking asylum.

While most children live with carers whose skills, experience and culture are suitable for their needs, there have been instances when placements were less suitable, leading to challenges and instability for some children. In these cases, assessments of carers' suitability and the additional support required were not sufficiently robust to fully meet children's needs.

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

All children's records include risk assessments and safe care plans that clearly identify specific safety needs. These documents outline the risks and detail how they will be reduced. They are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect children's changing needs.

Children rarely go missing from their foster homes. When they do, foster carers maintain contact and encourage their safe return. Carers have strong safeguarding knowledge and ensure all relevant agencies are promptly informed, to keep children safe. Positive relationships between children and carers support children to make safer choices and reduce risk of harm.

Foster carers set clear, consistent boundaries that promote positive behaviour. They use effective strategies to manage complex behaviours and encourage appropriate responses. Carers receive training in positive behaviour management and are skilled in supporting children who may become distressed.

The agency's recruitment and vetting procedures for staff and panel members are robust and comply with safe recruitment standards. This ensures that all personnel are suitable to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The leadership and management of the fostering service are strong. Leaders are ambitious for change and strive for continual improvement. Despite recent staffing changes, the agency has maintained stability for children and continued to support foster carers effectively. The new manager has promoted embedding of a trauma-informed approach, and new staff feel welcomed with thorough inductions.

The management team is highly visible to children, foster carers and other stakeholders. Foster carers describe the agency as 'a family' and value its identity as a 'local agency employing local carers'. Many experienced carers have stayed with the service for years and feel they can influence its development, with leaders and managers listening to their views.

Staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals, and they report feeling well supported by the management team, who show genuine care for children, foster carers and staff well-being. Staff also have opportunities for professional progression, with some recently promoted.

The support, supervision and training provided to foster carers are excellent. Training is wide ranging, often bespoke, and includes creative methods such as virtual reality to simulate children's experiences. The training lead is responsive to carers' needs and sources specialist training, including for those offering parent and child placements.

Leaders and managers, supported by quality assurance leads, use effective monitoring systems to review and improve the quality of care. The fostering panel functions effectively, with diverse expertise that supports culturally sensitive and democratic decision-making, promoting safe and secure placements.

Learning reviews are carried out following placement breakdowns or care concerns, with foster carers offered therapeutic support to help them reflect on their experiences and implement trauma-informed approaches more effectively. However, professional development plans for foster carers lack sufficient detail and do not fully evaluate their learning needs.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should only suggest foster carers to local authorities as a potential match for a child if the foster carer can reasonably be expected to meet the child's assessed needs and the impact of the placement on existing household members has been considered. Where gaps are identified, the fostering service should work with the responsible authority to ensure the placement plan sets out any additional training, resource or support required. In particular, the fostering service should ensure that matching assessments address the child's needs and the skills of the carer to address those needs. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 15.1)
- The registered person should ensure that the reviews of each carer's approval include an appraisal of performance against clear and consistent standards set by the agency, and consideration of training and development needs, which are documented in the review report. The foster carer's personal development plan should be reviewed and the effectiveness of training and development received evaluated. Reviews should take into account the views of each child currently placed with the foster carer. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 20.6)

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: SC041354

Registered provider: Ryancare Fostering Limited

Registered provider address: Atria, Spa Road, Bolton BL1 4AG

Responsible individual: Neil McCarthy

Registered manager: post vacant

Telephone number: 020 8989 4970

Email address: neil.mccarthy@nfa.co.uk

Inspectors

Angela Reid, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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