

New Life Fostering Agency

Charter House, 848 Tyburn Road, Birmingham B24 9NT

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

A private company operates this fostering agency. The agency was registered with Ofsted in 2012.

The fostering service provides short-term, long-term, emergency, and parent and child foster homes. It also provides foster families who support brothers and sisters to remain together.

A new manager started in post in February 2023. Ofsted received the manager's application to register during this visit.

Inspection date: 28 September 2023

Date of previous inspection: 31 July 2023

This monitoring visit

From 31 July to 4 August 2023, Ofsted conducted a full inspection of the fostering agency. Serious and widespread concerns were identified in safeguarding practice and in the leadership and management of the agency. Ofsted judged the agency to be inadequate and issued compliance notices under regulations 8, 11 and 12, along with two other requirements.

The purpose of this visit was to review the safety and well-being of children and monitor the provider's progress towards meeting the steps in the compliance notices. Inspectors also reviewed progress against the requirements made under regulations 17 and 36.

Managers have improved systems that provide additional oversight of the agency. Regular case file audits take place to ensure that children's plans are up to date and relevant. This means that carers have accurate information to provide the best care for children, in line with their care plans. Managers and senior leaders meet on a

weekly basis to review all aspects of the service. This provides additional scrutiny to ensure actions from audits are met.

Systems for matching children with prospective carers are effective. Referral information is shared with supervising social workers and carers to determine if the needs of a child can be met. The manager has oversight of the matching documentation to consider if the match is deemed appropriate, taking into account the skills and experience of the carers. As a result, all children placed since the last inspection continue to live with their foster families.

Managers have taken appropriate action to improve systems that help to keep children safe. For example, safe care plans and risk assessments for children have vastly improved. Risk management plans are specific and individualised to children and provide carers with effective guidance to minimise the risks for children.

Staff have refreshed their knowledge of safeguarding and child protection policies. Managers have provided social workers with training on how to manage allegations of harm effectively and have updated internal safeguarding policies. This means that staff are provided with effective guidance to help to keep children safe.

Improvements have been made to the agency's records of allegations and concerns about staff practice. Investigations take place, with records showing a clear rationale for decision-making. Records are clear and learning is threaded into practice.

As a result of this visit, Ofsted has deemed the compliance notices to be met, as well as the requirements under regulations 17 and 36.

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.

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

Independent fostering agency details

Unique reference number: SC447166

Registered provider: New Life Fostering Agency Limited

Registered provider address: Charter House, 848 Tyburn Road, Birmingham B24 9NT

Responsible individual: Gary Pickles

Inspectors

Kev Brammer, Social Care Inspector

Lydia Isaac, Social Care Inspector

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