

Ideal Fostering

Anchor House, 4 Bridgeman Street, Walsall WS2 9NW

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

Ideal Fostering is registered as a private limited company. In September 2017, the management structure changed, and one manager took over the overall ownership of the company. The agency undertakes recruitment, assessment, approval and support of foster carers. The range of placement types provided includes emergency, long-term, medium-term, short-term and parent and child placements. The agency has a suitably experienced manager who is registered with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 20 May 2020

Date of previous inspection: 25 June 2018

This monitoring visit

The purpose of the monitoring inspection was to assess the progress that the provider has made towards meeting the requirements and recommendations made following a full inspection on 25 June 2019 and a monitoring inspection on 18 December 2019.

The service has made positive progress since the last inspection. Leaders have met all the previous requirements and recommendations. One new recommendation was made during this inspection.

Panel minutes demonstrate that panel members carefully consider all information presented to them. The recommendations that they make are well documented. Panel members defer making decisions on any assessments that have missing information. Particular attention is paid to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. The agency decision maker's records of decisions have improved.

Leaders and managers have updated safeguarding policies, and flow charts have been implemented to ensure that staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding processes. The policy also details the requirement to inform Ofsted of any significant

incident. The agency has followed this requirement. Monitoring of safeguarding incidents is good. Monitoring systems provide a clear timeline of events with proposed completion dates. This is regularly reviewed and monitored and prevents drift and delay.

When the registered manager and staff have concerns about a foster carer's practice, they take appropriate action to ensure that children and young people are safe. When necessary, the continued approval of a foster carer's suitability is reviewed. Additional support and training are provided to foster carers to develop their practice when necessary. The agency has a psychotherapy team. They support foster carers to reflect on their practice.

The agency regularly gathers children and young people's views. These views are listened to, and action is taken if children or young people express any concerns. This practice helps keep children and young people safe.

The agency assesses the suitability of children and young people living with foster carers before they move in. Overall, this is done well. However, on one occasion the matching process did not identify the lack of skills that the foster carer had to care for a parent and child together. Leaders reflected on this when the placement ended abruptly. They have learned from this experience and have thought about more robust processes for determining the suitability of parent and child placements in the future.

Previous recommendations that were made have been met, including improving the children's guide to make it accessible to all children and ensuring that the panel members have yearly appraisals.

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

Recommendations

- The fostering service only suggests 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. (National Minimum Standards 15.1)

This relates to foster carers being adequately skilled to manage parent and child foster placements

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: SC472125

Registered provider: Ideal Fostering Limited

Registered provider address: 1 Coton Lane, Erdington, Birmingham B23 6TP

Responsible individual: Seth Roe

Inspector

Lisa O'Donovan, social care inspector

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