

Orange Grove Fostercare Staffordshire

Orange Grove Fostercare Ltd

30b & 30c Brookside House, Brookside Business Park, Cold Meece, Stone,
Staffordshire ST15 0RZ

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

This independent fostering agency is part of a national organisation that provides fostering services across England. The agency provides a range of foster placements including emergency, respite, short-term and long-term.

At the time of the inspection, the fostering service had 43 approved fostering households and 60 children placed with its foster carers.

Inspection dates: 19 to 23 January 2026

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: 10 October 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 have a good experience and are making progress in their lives because of the care and nurture that foster carers provide. The relationships between children, foster carers and agency staff are excellent. As a result, children's needs are well understood, and their care is planned collaboratively.

Children are valued by their foster carers and are warmly welcomed into their homes and lives. Many children are matched long term with their foster carers. As a result, children have a strong sense of belonging.

Foster carers are highly committed to the care of children, even through difficult times either for the child or the fostering family. For example, some carers have been through periods of grief and serious ill health, and they have continued to provide stable homes for children. The agency has enhanced their support to foster carers in response to these situations.

Foster carers actively help children to develop their independence skills, and they exhibit great pride at the progress children have made with this. For example, one foster carer reflects that the child in their care was very timid and reliant upon them, and they now get the bus independently to college. The agency has produced bespoke independence booklets. This provides a framework of skills for children to work towards, for example learning how to book a health appointment. The agency provides incentives to encourage children's participation. As a result, children are helped to prepare for their future.

Foster carers provide clear routines and structure that promote children's emotional security and well-being. They support children to engage in education and a range of activities for leisure. Children have lovely experiences with their foster carers, such as holidays and Christmas events including visits to Santa.

The agency actively promotes diversity through sharing resources and holding events. For example, a henna-inspired art competition was held as part of Diwali celebrations. Children's individual cultural needs are carefully considered as part of planning their care. When children live in a home that does not match their culture, agency staff support their cultural needs. On one occasion the manager spent time cooking a traditional meal with children in line with their culture; the children really enjoyed this experience.

The participation of children is a key strength of the agency. Children's wishes and feelings are important to the agency, and they actively seek to listen to and understand children. Children share their views in a variety of ways. This includes attending the children's council, using the QR code and through speaking to agency staff. Children enjoy a wealth of activities provided by the agency and value the opportunity to spend time with other children who have similar experiences.

Respite is provided when this is necessary for supporting foster carers in their roles. However, arrangements are child centred with consideration of children's needs and preferences. The number of approved back up carers has increased at the agency. Furthermore, many foster carers actively provide support to one another. As a result, children are usually very familiar with those caring for them, with a sense of staying with an extended family member or friend.

Respite placements are used creatively. For example, one child is unable to live alongside other children due to their current needs. However, their sibling visits the foster home twice a month for a short break. This supports the sibling's own care plan and gives the children valuable time together.

Leaders and managers make well considered decisions for children to be placed with their foster carers. They take children's needs and the foster carers skills and experience into account. When placements do breakdown, managers are highly reflective and strategically review this, taking any learning into account to develop the service.

Foster carers and staff now write records directed to the children. As a result, overall, children's records use caring language. However, there are some documents and records that are missing and others that lack detail. This could affect children's understanding of their experiences.

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

Staff and foster carers have a good understanding of children's risks and vulnerabilities. Children are safe living in their foster homes and foster carers are committed to providing stability to children.

Children have trusted adults and know who they can talk to if they have any worries. The agencies family support worker is a key person many children are able and willing to share their feelings and worries with. They are very creative in interacting with children that results in children feeling comfortable to engage.

Foster carers always share any worries they have for children with the agency. When there are challenges for children, the agency staff provide a high level of support to foster carers. This enhances their resilience, and reduces placement breakdowns. Foster carers also benefit from the support and experience of other foster carers. This is through the planned forum that brings carers together and through the agency linking specific carers, who may have shared experiences.

Foster carers share information with the agency regarding risks and incidents of concern for children. The agency staff are very responsive and will visit foster carers and children to speak with them to explore this further. They are skilled at discussing sensitive topics with children and including them in their safety planning. The family support worker has helped children make progress in a range of areas. For example, positive relationships, managing emotions and how to keep safe.

There are very few incidents of children going missing. When this does happen, foster carers are very responsive and take the necessary actions and seek guidance from the agency. Agency staff visit children following missing incidents and listen to children's views and experiences. The risk of missing is considered in the children's plans.

Foster carers are equipped to help children manage their behaviour through their training and in reflective discussions with agency staff. They welcome these discussions and seek out advice from the agency.

Leaders and managers have high expectations of foster carers to provide safe and high-quality care to children. Managers are confident in addressing any concerns about foster carer's practice. They adhere to procedures and take timely action such as 'standard of care' investigations. This provides assurance that foster carers remain suitable to care for children.

Overall, the agency shares information and concerns with the local authority and works in partnership to address any matters. However, there has been one occasion when safeguarding concerns were not shared, this is despite the manager highlighting this as a necessary action through their management oversight. There are other occasions, albeit infrequent, when the actions taken following safeguarding concerns have not been recorded in a timely way. While this has resulted in no harm to children, this leaves uncertainty about their completion and the outcomes unclear.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is an inspirational leader and role model. The manager is present and accessible for staff, children and foster carers. She is highly motivated and has successfully driven improvements across the agency. This has had a positive impact on the retention of foster carers, with carers choosing to remain with the agency long term when they had previously considered leaving. Foster carers report that this is due to the high level of support they receive from the agency, which enables them to feel valued, confident, and well supported in their role.

There is a skilled and competent staff team who are aspirational for what children can achieve. Staff have well established and effective relationships with foster carers and children, which in turn ensures high quality support is provided to them.

The staff team is stable with minimal changes, which has ensured consistency and stability for carers and children. Foster carers, say that when changes happen this is well managed and they have been well prepared for and supported during any changes.

Foster carers receive a breadth of training to ensure they can meet the specific needs of children in their care. Additional training is provided to meet children's bespoke needs; this ensures that carers are upskilled to provide high quality care for children.

Foster carers and their extended families are exceptionally valued and appreciated by the agency. Recognition of the work foster carers do is celebrated and shared through cards, gifts and positive praise. Foster carers highly value the interest agency staff have in their birth children and their understanding of their importance in the fostering households. They go above and beyond to get to know them, for example taking them out to the coffee shop and arranging additional support including counselling when needed.

Staff receive regular supervision, providing an opportunity for discussions and reflection on their own wellbeing and practice. However, the manager does not consistently review actions from supervision, to ensure progress and completion. This reduces the effectiveness of day-to-day management oversight. As a result, shortfalls in relation to children's records and completion of important actions have not been addressed sufficiently. Furthermore, while the manager champions staff development and progression, staff annual appraisals are overdue.

The fostering panel is well organised and operated. There are clear and dedicated roles, fulfilled by skilled and experienced practitioners. The panel membership is diverse, including care experienced members and questions written by children are asked to foster carers. As a result, the panel is an effective and appropriate decision-making forum.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the fostering service works effectively in partnership with other agencies concerned with child protection, e.g. the responsible authority and does not work in isolation from them. This includes timely sharing of any safeguarding concerns and following all agreed actions in response. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 4.7)
- The registered person should ensure that information about the child is recorded clearly and in a way which will be helpful to the child when they access their files now or in the future. Children are actively encouraged to read their files. This includes ensuring that all records are completed in a timely way and there are no gaps. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 26.6)
- The registered person should ensure that they regularly monitor all records kept by the service to ensure compliance with the service's policies, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. Immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 25.2)

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: SC485797

Registered provider: Orange Grove Fostercare Ltd

Registered provider address: Malvern View, Saxon Business Park, Hanbury Road,
Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove B60 4AD

Responsible individual: James McGarrigle

Registered manager: Rajvir Barker

Telephone number: 01782 645060

Inspectors

Alison Snell, Social Care Inspector

Menaka De Silva, Social Care Inspector

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