

Red Kite Fostering

The Old Surgery, The Meads, Kington, Herefordshire HR5 3DQ
Monitoring visit
Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

Red Kite Fostering is a private limited company based in Herefordshire. It also has access to premises in Telford that provide a more accessible base for training for carers who live in the West Midlands. The agency provides a range of fostering placements, including long-term, short-term, emergency and respite placements.

At the time of this inspection, the agency was providing placements for 19 children. It had 23 fostering households, of which two provided respite care only. The agency has not recruited any fostering households since the last inspection.

Inspection date: 25 June 2019

Date of previous inspection: 14 May 2019

This monitoring visit

This independent fostering agency was judged inadequate at the last full inspection, conducted between 14 and 16 May 2019. Four compliance notices were issued as a result of the findings of this inspection.

The purpose of this monitoring inspection was to review the action taken by managers to meet the four compliance notices and two of the 11 requirements issued following the full inspection. The remaining nine requirements are still in timescale for completion and will therefore be reviewed at a later date.

At this monitoring inspection, inspectors found that managers have failed to take sufficient action to meet any of the compliance notices or the two requirements. Progress has been far too slow.

Inspectors found significant and widespread shortfalls in the leadership and management of the agency and in the arrangements made by the agency for the protection of children. This resulted in Ofsted taking the decision to suspend the service on 28 June 2019. A further four requirements have been raised and the four compliance notices have been re-issued.

Senior managers have failed to ensure that the fostering agency has the essential components necessary to carry out its regulatory functions. The agency no longer has a fostering panel or a registered manager. Although the responsible individual has taken steps to appoint a new agency decision-maker, this appointment has been made before all necessary safe recruitment checks have been completed.

The absence of these significant roles means that the fostering service cannot operate in line with regulation or fulfil its responsibilities in supervising and reviewing all children's placements.

Arrangements for the safeguarding of children remain inadequate. Managers have failed to carry out a review of the agency safeguarding policy and to ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge for dealing with allegations.

Managers do not demonstrate that they know how to respond to safeguarding concerns. Despite inspectors raising concerns at the full inspection in May 2019 regarding an allegation made by a child against a foster carer in February 2019, managers have still not carried out a post-allegation review. They have also failed to ensure that children's risk assessments and safer caring plans are brought up to date to reflect significant incidents. Inspectors found that one child's risk assessment and missing-from-care protocol had not been updated since 2015, despite this child being recently missing from care. This lack of action fails to ensure that foster carers and staff can learn from an incident, or that foster carers know how to keep children safe.

Managers do not demonstrate that the service is providing support and oversight of foster carers. There is no clear record of when foster carers have received supervision. Managers have reviewed the organisation's policy regarding the supervision of foster carers. However, changes made to the frequency of visits fails to demonstrate how this supports the managers to have sufficient oversight of fostering households or how they are safeguarding children.

Foster carers continue to lack the essential training that they require to enable them to safely care for children. For example, only three foster carers have completed first aid training. In addition, senior managers have failed to review foster carers' training or identify when carers require support to meet the individual and complex needs of children in their care. This places children at risk of harm from foster carers who do not understand their needs or how to respond to them.

Supervising social workers have failed to complete training allocated to them as a result of the findings of the inspection in May 2019. Managers have not addressed this omission. This leaves a continued gap in staff skills and expertise for their specialist roles.

Since the last inspection, managers have failed to provide staff with supervision or an annual appraisal of their performance. This further evidences the lack of

management oversight of practice and limits opportunities to develop the skills of these key staff.

Managers have failed to ensure that new staff recruited to the organisation have been appropriately vetted. For example, managers have not verified references, confirmed identity or reassured themselves that staff have the necessary qualifications for their role. This leaves children vulnerable to people who may not be safe to work with them.

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
<p>The fostering service provider must produce a written guide to the fostering service ("the children's guide") which includes a summary of the statement of purpose and a summary of the procedure (the representations and complaints procedure) established in the case of an independent fostering agency, under regulation 18(1). (Regulation 3(3)(a)(b))</p>	22/07/2019
<p>A person must not carry on a fostering agency unless in the case of an organisation carrying on a fostering agency, where the organisation has given notice to the Chief Inspector of the name, address and position in the organisation of an individual ("the responsible individual") who is a director, manager, secretary or other officer of the organisation and is responsible for supervising the management of the fostering agency, the responsible individual, satisfies the requirements of paragraph (2) as to fitness. The requirements are that the person is of integrity and good character. (Regulation 5(1)(d)(2)(a))</p>	22/07/2019
<p>A person must not manage a fostering agency unless they are fit to do so. A person is not fit to manage a fostering agency unless that person is of integrity and good character. (Regulation 7(1)(2)(a))</p>	22/07/2019
<p>The registered provider and the registered manager must, having regard to the size of the fostering agency, its statement of purpose, and the numbers and needs of the children placed by the fostering agency, and the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children placed by the fostering agency, carry on or manage the fostering agency (as the case may be) with sufficient care, competence and skill.</p> <p>The registered provider must ensure that where the registered provider is an organisation, the responsible individual, from time to time, such training as is appropriate to ensure that they have the experience and skills necessary</p>	06/08/2019

<p>for carrying on the fostering agency.</p> <p>The registered manager must undertake, from time to time, such training as is appropriate to ensure that they have the experience and skills necessary for managing the fostering agency. (Regulation 8(1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(3))*</p>	
<p>The registered person in respect of an independent fostering agency must ensure that the welfare of children placed or to be placed with foster parents is safeguarded and promoted at all times. (Regulation 11(1)(a))</p>	06/08/2019
<p>The fostering service provider must prepare and implement a written policy which is intended to safeguard children placed with foster parents from abuse or neglect and sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of any allegation of abuse or neglect. The procedure under paragraph (1)(b) must, subject to paragraph (4), provide in particular for liaison and co-operation with any local authority which is, or may be, making child protection enquiries in relation to any child placed by the fostering service provider, written records to be kept of any allegation of abuse or neglect, and of the action taken in response, and consideration to be given to the measures which may be necessary to protect children placed with foster parents following an allegation of abuse or neglect.</p> <p>In this regulation, "child protection enquiries" means any enquiries carried out by a local authority in the exercise of any of its functions conferred by or under the 1989 Act relating to the protection of children. (Regulation 12 (1)(a)(b)(3)(a)(d)(e)(5))*</p>	06/08/2019
<p>The fostering service provider must provide foster parents with such training, advice, information and support, including support outside office hours, as appears necessary in the interests of children placed with them. (Regulation 17(1))*</p>	06/08/2019
<p>The registered person must ensure that a written record is made of any complaint or representation, the action taken in response to it, and the outcome of the investigation. (Regulation 18(4))</p>	22/07/2019
<p>The fostering service provider must ensure that there is a sufficient number of suitably qualified, competent and experienced persons working for the purposes of the fostering service, having regard to the size of the fostering service, its statement of purpose, and the numbers and needs of the children placed by it, and the need to safeguard and promote the health and welfare of children placed with foster parents. (Regulation 19(1)(a)(b))*</p>	06/08/2019

<p>The fostering service provider must not employ a person to work for the purposes of the fostering service unless that person is fit to do so, or allow a person to whom paragraph (2) applies, to work for the purposes of the fostering service unless that person is fit to do so. For the purposes of paragraph (1), a person is not fit to work for the purposes of a fostering service unless 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)(b)(3))</p>	22/07/2019
<p>The fostering service provider must ensure that all persons employed by them receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal, and are enabled from time to time to obtain further qualifications appropriate to the work they perform. (Regulation 21(4)(a)(b))</p>	22/07/2019
<p>The fostering service provider must maintain and keep up to date the records specified in Schedule 2. (Regulation 22(1))</p>	06/08/2019
<p>The fostering service provider must ensure that the fostering panel has sufficient members, and that individual members have between them the experience and expertise necessary to effectively discharge the functions of the panel. (Regulation 23(7))</p>	06/08/2019
<p>The fostering service provider must review the approval of each foster parent in accordance with this regulation. A review must take place not more than a year after approval, and thereafter whenever the fostering service provider consider it necessary, but at intervals of not more than a year. (Regulation 28(1))</p>	22/07/2019
<p>A foster parent may give notice in writing to the fostering service provider at any time that the foster parent no longer wishes to be a foster parent, in which case the foster parent's approval is terminated with effect from 28 days from the date on which the notice is received by the fostering service provider.</p> <p>A copy of any notice given under this regulation must be sent to the placing authority for any child placed with the foster parent (unless the placing authority is also the fostering service provider), and the area authority for any child placed with the foster parent. (Regulation 28(13)(14))</p> <p>In particular, to ensure that procedures for accepting and processing foster carers' resignations.</p>	06/08/2019
<p>A fostering service provider must maintain a case record for each foster parent approved by them which must include copies of the documents specified in paragraph (2) and the information specified in paragraph (3).</p>	06/08/2019

<p>The documents referred to in paragraph (1) are the report prepared under regulation 26(3)(b) and any other reports submitted to the fostering panel, any recommendations made by the fostering panel, the notice of approval given under regulation 27(5)(a), any report of a review of approval prepared under regulation 28(4), and any notice given under regulation 28(12). (Regulation 30(1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(e)(f))</p>	
<p>The registered person must maintain 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 registered person must provide the Chief Inspector with a written report in respect of any review conducted for the purposes of paragraph (1) and, on request, to any local authority. The system referred to in paragraph (1) must provide for consultation with foster parents, children placed with foster parents, and their placing authority (unless, in the case of a fostering agency which is a voluntary organisation, it is also the placing authority). (Regulation 35(1)(a)(b)(2)(3))</p>	22/07/2019
<p>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 persons or bodies indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table. (Regulation 36(1))</p>	06/08/2019
<p>Where there is more than one registered person in respect of a fostering agency, anything which is required under these regulations to be done by the registered person, need only be done by one of the registered persons. (Regulation 41)</p>	06/08/2019

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- Fostering panels are intended as multi-disciplinary bodies with a considerable element of independence from the fostering service. (The Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations volume 4: Fostering services, page 38, paragraph 5.2). This relates to potential conflicts of interests for the social worker panel member.
- Each panel member's performance, including that of the chair, should be reviewed annually against agreed performance objectives. The service's decision-maker should review the performance of the panel chair, and for this purpose may attend a proportion of panel meetings but only as an observer. Views about the chair's performance should be sought from other panel members and from those who attend panel meetings, such as prospective

foster carers and social workers who present reports to the panel. For all other panel members, the panel chair should conduct the performance review. (The Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations volume 4: Fostering services, page 41, paragraph 5.15)

- Fostering panels have access to medical expertise and legal advice, as required. (Fostering services: National minimum standard, 14.6)
- Each person on the central list is given the opportunity of attending an annual joint training day with the fostering service's fostering staff. (Fostering services: National minimum standard, 23.10)
- Allowances and any fees paid are reviewed annually and the fostering service consults with foster carers in advance of any change to the allowance and fee. (Fostering services: National minimum standard, 28.3)

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: SC417504

Registered provider: Red Kite Fostering Limited

Registered provider address: Rhos House, Old Radnor, Presteigne Powys LD8 2RP

Responsible individual: Carole Barnes

Inspectors

Tracey Coglan Greig, social care inspector

Lisa O'Donovan, social care inspector

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