

Children of All Nations (COAN)

Children of All Nations Ltd

Weatherill House, New South Quarter, 23 Whitestone Way, Croydon CR0 4WF

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

This is a privately owned independent fostering agency based in London. It aims to meet a range of placement needs for children, including sibling groups and parents with children. The agency has 17 fostering households. The agency is currently providing placements for 24 children.

The registered manager has been in post since September 2018 and was registered in November 2018.

Inspection dates: 1 to 5 July 2019

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	requires improvement to be good
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The independent fostering agency provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 15 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people make progress across several areas from their starting points. Achievements include learning to be part of a family, learning a new language and managing personal hygiene for the first time. Feedback from young people and allocated social workers supports this. One young person said, 'I like living there. Everyone is really cool with me.'

Young people achieve positive outcomes. Several young people have remained with their carers after their 18th birthday under staying put arrangements. Other young people have made planned moves onto semi-independent accommodation.

Young people's behaviour is good. Carers use their positive relationships with the young people to intervene effectively when they are struggling. Young people learn to recognise their own behavioural triggers and will remove themselves from risky situations.

Young people make progress in education. Carers proactively pursue local authorities for the swift allocation of school placements. Resulting education progress and academic achievements are warmly celebrated.

Foster carers support young people to gain resilience and to advocate for themselves. One young person is a member of his local care council and has visited the Houses of Parliament to contribute to a national forum.

Positive contact with friends and family is prioritised. Foster carers support young people to understand their culture by visiting places of significance to them such as the Caribbean. Where appropriate, foster carers liaise directly with parents to ensure that the young people maintain important relationships with their families.

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

Effective placement matching is a major strength of this service. The agency benefits from an experienced placement matching worker, who understands the strengths of each carer well. This is evidenced by low levels of placement disruption.

Young people quickly establish trusting relationships with their foster carers. This helps young people to reduce risky behaviour, such as running away from the placement. One allocated social worker commented, 'He has settled for the first time. He is a different child.'

Foster carers benefit from good levels of training and relish the fostering task. One foster carer enthusiastically informed the inspector of the impact on them of a recent course on keeping safe. This foster carer now feels more confident in discussing risk with the young person placed with her.

Birth children are actively involved in the service. Some attend training and support groups and work with their parents to promote a warm and supportive environment.

Foster carers feel valued by this agency. They reported strong levels of support whenever the need arises, 24 hours a day. In addition, the agency employs a therapist, who supports foster carers to address personal issues.

Foster carers are committed to the young people and value the importance of placement stability. One carer declined a period of respite, as she felt it would unsettle the placement.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Management monitoring requires improvement. The fostering agency does not have a system in place to evaluate the education progress of the young people. Ofsted has not received any management monitoring reports since the last inspection. Reports and risk assessments seen during the inspection do not include any feedback from young people, which reduces their effectiveness.

The agency has benefited from the experience and stability brought by the new registered manager, who has worked at the agency since 2016. She understands the strengths and weaknesses of the agency and is focused on a programme of ongoing improvements.

Despite improved supervision arrangements, case recording practice remains variable. This inspection found that one young person's file lacked a risk assessment and one foster carer's daily recording was seriously lacking in detail. This limited a full evaluation of the progress achieved by some young people and was also a concern raised during the last inspection.

Respite provision for carers is limited. One foster carer was unable to access respite as the agency could not find a carer with the required skills.

The agency has grown slowly since the last inspection. The registered manager has prioritised the importance of rigorous recruitment and assessment of carers. Foster carers reported realistic and effective preparation during their assessment phase.

The fostering panel is effective. Where concerns arise with regards to carers, effective action, such as delaying or suspending approval, is taken. However, one set of panel minutes did not fully evaluate the concerns surrounding a foster carer.

Managers advocate strongly to maintain placements and provide stability for the young people. When difficulties occur, managers quickly explore the possibility of providing extra support from the agency. If required, decisive action is taken to end placements and to explore alternative provision.

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>Education, employment and leisure activities</p> <p>The fostering service provider must promote the educational achievement of children placed with foster parents.</p> <p>(2) In particular the fostering service provider must— (a) implement a procedure for monitoring the educational achievement, progress and school attendance of children placed with foster parents. (Regulation 16 (1) (2)(a))</p>	01/11/2019
<p>35: Review of quality of care</p> <p>(1)The registered person must maintain a system for— (a) monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate intervals, and (b) improving the quality of foster care provided by the fostering agency.</p> <p>(2)The registered person must provide Ofsted with a written report in respect of any review conducted for the purposes of paragraph (1).</p> <p>(3)The system must provide for consultation with foster carers, children and their placing authority. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3))</p> <p>Ensure that reports are forwarded to Ofsted, at least on an annual basis. In addition, reports should evidence the feedback of young people.</p>	01/11/2019

Recommendations

- Ensure staff and fostering households follow the service's policy for the keeping of files. ('Fostering services: National minimum standards' 26.2)
- Ensure the fostering service implements an effective strategy to ensure sufficient foster carers to be responsive to current and predicted future demands on the service. ('Fostering services: National minimum standards' 13.1)
This is with specific reference to ensuring that all foster carers have a suitable, assessed respite provision.
- Ensure the wishes, feelings and views of children are considered in developing the fostering service. ('Fostering services: National minimum standards' 1.3)
Ensure that the views of children remain considered for staff appraisals and risk assessments.
- The panel chair ensures written minutes of panel meetings are accurate and clearly cover the key issues and views expressed by panel members and record the reasons for its recommendation. ('Fostering services: National minimum standards' 14.7)
In particular, ensure that written records reflect the full discussion of panel and that all areas of concern are addressed.
- All children should have an up-to-date risk assessment. ('Fostering services: National minimum standards' 4.5)

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: SC418371

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Inspector

Barnaby Dowell, social care inspector



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