

Catchpoint Consultancy CIC

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Vassal Centre, Gill Avenue, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 2QQ

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this adoption support agency

Catchpoint Consultancy CIC undertakes a range of therapeutic and assessment work, using a trauma and recovery model with an emphasis on attachment theory. Therapy may be long or short term.

Inspection dates: 23 to 25 July 2019

Overall experience and progress of service users, taking into account: requires improvement to be good

How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers inadequate

The adoption support agency is not yet delivering effective services for children, young people and adults. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 7 June 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This adoption support agency requires improvement to be good because:

- Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have failed to ensure that the adoption support agency has always been financially viable, thereby placing the services provided to children and families at risk.
- Leaders and managers have failed to deliver some of the aims and objectives as stated in their statement of purpose.
- Leaders and managers have not effectively monitored and reviewed records. The internal quality assurance process is unclear and as a result the manager failed to identify an incident of concern and raise this with the appropriate professionals.
- Support for staff through supervision and annual appraisals, and the timeliness and recording of supervision, is of a variable and inconsistent quality.
- Levels of delegation, and the responsibilities and lines of accountability of the manager and members of the board of directors, are not clearly defined and have led to inefficiency and ineffectiveness.

The adoption support agency's strengths:

- Leaders and managers have continued to provide families and children with support despite a period of financial instability.
- Highly skilled and experienced staff, including therapists and administrators, provide consistently good quality support for families and children.
- Overwhelmingly, parents speak positively of the impact the agency has on their family, the progress their children have made and the support they have received.

What does the adoption support agency need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Ensure that the agency's system for recruiting staff and others includes an effective system for reaching decisions as to who is to be appointed and the circumstances in which an application should be refused in relation to staff or others, in the light of any criminal convictions or other concerns about suitability that are declared or discovered through the recruitment process. (21.5)
- Ensure that there are clear and effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the agency. This includes the financial viability of the service, any serious incidents, or allegations or complaints about the service and ensuring quality of the agency. (NMS 25.1)
- Ensure that the agency's policies, procedures and any written guidance to staff and volunteers accurately reflect the statement of purpose. (NMS 18.4)
- Ensure that the adoption agency/registered person of the adoption support agency formally approves the statement of purpose and children's guides, and reviews them at least annually. (NMS 18.3)
- Ensure that all adoption agency and adoption support agency staff and volunteers understand what they must do if they receive an allegation or have suspicions that a person may have: behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child. (NMS 22.1)
- Ensure that the adoption agency and adoption support agency has a clear statement of purpose which is available to and understood by staff, volunteers, children, birth parents and guardians, prospective adopters and adopters, and is reflected in any policies, procedures and guidance. (NMS 18.1)
- Ensure that the manager regularly monitors all records kept by the agency to ensure compliance with the agency'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. (25.2)
- Ensure that management of the agency ensures that all staff's work and activity is consistent with adoption regulations and NMS and with the service's policies and procedures. (NMS 25.3)
- Ensure that managers, staff and volunteers are clear about their roles and responsibilities. The level of delegation and responsibility of the manager and the lines of accountability, are clearly defined NMS 25.4)
- Ensure that the executive side of the Adoption Support Agency's board members monitor the management and outcomes of the services in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users, and satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration.

(NMS 25.6)

- Ensure that a qualified accountant certifies that the annual accounts indicate the service is financially viable and likely to have sufficient funding to continue to fulfil its statement of purpose for the next 12 months. (NMS 20.1)
- Ensure that the adoption agency/adoption support agency has a written development plan, reviewed annually, for the future of the agency, either identifying any planned changes in the operation or resources of the agency, or confirming the continuation of the agency's current operation and resourcing. (NMS 20.2)
- Ensure that where the agency, for any reason, cannot adequately and consistently maintain its services which comply with regulations or NMS, an effective plan must be established and implemented either to rectify the situation or to close the service. (NMS 20.3)
- Ensure that the people involved in carrying on and managing the adoption agency or adoption support agency: have business and management skills to manage the work efficiently and effectively and have financial expertise to ensure that the agency is run on a sound financial basis and in a professional manner. (NMS 19.1(b)(c))
- Ensure that the manager exercises effective leadership of the staff and operation, such that the agency is organised, managed and staffed in a manner that delivers the best possible childcare (in respect of adoption agencies)/service provision for the agency's service users (in respect of adoption agencies/adoption support agencies). (NMS 19.6)

Inspection judgement

Overall experiences and progress of service users: requires improvement to be good

The overall experiences and progress of children and families have remained consistently positive. A range of therapeutic interventions have continued to be available for children and families despite the agency experiencing periods of critical financial instability.

The adoption support work provided shows that the staff are committed and dedicated in providing a service to adopted children and families. Parents spoke highly of the support they have received and the direct impact on their child and family. 'Going the extra mile' and 'always there for you' are just some of the comments made by parents.

Since the last inspection, assessments of need continue to be carried out by the agency. Plans of intervention with the family and other professionals, including school staff, demonstrate a holistic approach to each family. However, monitoring by leaders and managers has failed to ensure that all therapists are working in line with the agency's statement of purpose. For example, three therapists work with three adults that have been adopted. The agency has failed to recognise this and ensure that there are clear protocols, procedures and training to support the therapists.

Parents and children are consulted well and are provided with initial assessments and progress reports that assist them with their applications to the adoption support fund. However, written records and reports produced by the therapists are of a variable quality and there is little evidence of how this feedback is used to inform the development of the agency.

How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The agency provides a service to children and families that is safe but requires improvement to be good.

The agency has a range of safeguarding policies. However, some of these require updating to reflect working with adults and to include up-to-date research in child protection and child abuse.

Staff know and follow procedures for responding to concerns about the safety of children. Safeguarding concerns and allegations are rare and except for one recorded incident of a suspicion of harm, they are shared appropriately with the designated safeguarding lead.

Complaints, while very few, are dealt with in line with the agency's complaint

process. However, there are no procedures or policies available in the event of an allegation by an adult that receives direct therapy from the agency.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers have failed to meet all the adoption national minimum standards. Despite these failings, children and families have continued to receive a service and have been protected from the impact of poor leadership and management.

A (planned) re-registration of the agency to enable better access to charitable grants and several investments from directors will help ensure that operational activity will continue. However, leaders and managers have failed to prevent the agency from being at times in a financially critical state.

Leaders and managers have not applied enough rigour in the recruitment and induction of new staff. Staff personnel files are disorganised, verification of references is not always noted and the recording of the induction of staff is variable. Some staff who have recently been employed by the agency spoke of beginning work without a planned induction.

The manager has failed to provide some staff with regular supervision and annual appraisals. Records kept of supervision fail to accurately reflect the supervision session, they are not shared with the supervisee and are not signed. One audit record of supervisions taken place was inaccurate and did not relate to the actual sessions that had taken place.

The quality of assessment reports and sessional records is variable. This shows that any quality assurance checks by the manager fail to identify these shortfalls. As a result, records do not reach a consistently high professional standard.

Leaders and managers are in the process of stabilising the agency following what has been a financially challenging period. A business plan is in draft and directors report of their commitment to safeguarding the agency through further investment and improved management and leadership.

Information about this inspection

During this inspection, the inspector looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, young people and adults. The inspector considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children, young people and adults. They watched how professional staff work with children, young people, adults and each other and discussed the effectiveness of the help provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people, adults and their families. In addition, the inspector has tried to understand what the adoption support agency knows about how well it is performing and what difference it is making for the children, young people and

adults whom it is trying to help.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, using the 'Social care common inspection framework', to assess the effectiveness of the adoption support agency, how it meets the core functions as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Adoption Support Agencies (England) and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2005 and the national minimum standards.

Adoption support agency details

Unique reference number: SC067034

Registered provider: Catchpoint Consultancy CIC

Registered provider address: Vassal Centre, Gill Avenue, Bristol BS16 2QQ

Responsible individual: Mr Thomas Pyne

Registered manager: post vacant at time of inspection

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Inspector

Linda Bond, social care inspector



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