

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 monitoring visit, the agency continued to have its registration suspended.

Inspection date: 7 August 2019

Date of previous inspection: 16 May 2019

This monitoring visit

This independent fostering agency was judged inadequate at the last full inspection, conducted between 14 and 16 May 2019. This inspection resulted in four compliance notices being issued. A monitoring inspection was conducted on 25 June 2019. The visit found that none of the four compliance notices had been met. Following the monitoring inspection on 25 June 2019, the agency had its registration suspended and the four compliance notices were reissued.

The purpose of this monitoring inspection was to review the action taken by managers to meet the four compliance notices. In addition, inspectors reviewed the progress being made by managers in meeting 15 requirements that had been raised at the full inspection.

Inspectors found that managers are abiding by the suspension notice. The agency has not carried out any fostering functions since the suspension notice was issued.

Managers have failed to take enough action to meet three of the four compliance notices. Progress has been made in meeting 10 of the 15 requirements. However,

continued shortfalls in the management oversight of the agency remain apparent. There continues to be a lack of oversight by the responsible individual in the safe recruitment and supervision of staff.

The responsible individual has appointed an acting manager. The acting manager had been in post for five weeks at the time of this inspection. However, the responsible individual is unable to demonstrate that she has suitably vetted this person. In addition, previous omissions regarding the recruitment of the agency decision maker have still not been addressed. There are continued shortfalls in verifying the reasons why staff have left previous roles with vulnerable adults or children. This leaves children vulnerable to people who may not be safe to work with them.

The acting manager has ensured that all staff have received supervision. However, records of two of these meetings were not available during the inspection. The acting manager has not received supervision since taking up her role. This lack of clear management oversight of this significant role means that the responsible individual is unable to demonstrate how she is driving improvement.

Previous omissions in staff appraisals have still not been addressed. The acting manager has started this process and has a plan to ensure that all staff receive an appraisal of their performance within the next six weeks.

Managers have failed to address shortfalls in the agency processes for the safe matching of children's placements. As a result, it is not clear how managers will ensure that the safe matching of children with foster carers will be achieved.

Managers are still in the process of recruiting a new fostering panel. This leaves the fostering agency without an essential component of the service that is required to enable the service to operate in line with regulation.

Staff have received training to increase their knowledge of safeguarding and managing allegations.

The acting manager has carried out a review of the agency's policies and procedures. This has resulted in improvements being made to the process for managing foster carers' reviews and resignations.

Managers have implemented a new electronic recording system. Managers anticipate that this will improve management oversight of the service. As the agency is currently suspended, the impact of these changes is not yet tested.

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 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 undertakes, from time to time, such training as is appropriate to ensure that they have the experience and skills necessary for carrying on the fostering agency. (Regulation 8(1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(3))*</p>	15/09/2019
<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> <p>The provider must ensure that prospective foster carers are prepared to become foster carers in a way which addresses, and gives practical techniques to manage, the issues they are likely to encounter and identifies the competencies and strengths they have or need to develop.</p> <p>The provider must ensure that foster carers have completed the organisation's mandatory training, that their skills gaps are known and that foster carers undertake training that is specific to the needs of the children in their care.</p> <p>The provider must ensure that foster carers receive supervision in line with the agency policy, and where there is a decision to reduce this, that this is documented and reviewed with all parties.</p> <p>The provider must ensure that matching of children with</p>	15/09/2019

<p>foster carers is individual and clearly documents the child's needs and the carers' ability to meet these, and where there are gaps, how the agency will support the carers to meet these.</p>	
<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>	15/09/2019
<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.</p> <p>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>	15/09/2019
<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>	15/09/2019
<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>	15/09/2019
<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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	15/09/2019

the placing authority). (Regulation 35(1)(a)(b)(2)(3))	
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)	15/09/2019

* 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)
- The Children's Guide includes a summary of what the fostering service sets out to do for children, how they find out their rights, how a child can contact their independent reviewing officer, the Children's Rights director, Ofsted if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors, and how to secure access to an independent advocate. (Fostering services: National minimum standard, 16.4)
- 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

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Tracey Coglan Greig, social care inspector

Jo Warburton, social care inspector

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