

Fostering Ltd

Suite 8, New Hall Hey Business Centre, New Hall Hey Road, Rawtenstall, Rossendale
BB4 6HL

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

This independent fostering agency provides long-term and short-term foster care, including emergency and parent and child placements, for children from birth to 17 years.

At the time of the visit, the agency had 28 fostering households caring for 48 children and young people.

The registered manager's post is currently vacant.

Inspection date: 3 October 2019

Date of previous inspection: 12 August 2019

This monitoring visit

At the full inspection on 12 to 15 August 2019, serious shortfalls were found in some areas of the agency's safeguarding practice. This was particularly in relation to parent and child placements. The agency was judged inadequate, and a compliance notice was issued under section 22A of the Care Standards Act 2000. The concerns raised in the notice were in relation to regulation 11, the agency's duty to secure welfare.

The purpose of this monitoring visit was solely to evaluate the progress made by the agency to comply with the notice.

Following the full inspection, the agency took decisive action, and referrals for parent and child placements were put on hold. At the time of this visit, the agency was not providing any parent and child placements.

The agency swiftly devised a comprehensive action plan and took significant steps to address the shortfalls raised in the compliance notice. There is now a greater focus on promoting and monitoring the welfare and safety of babies and young children

placed with the agency. Foster carers who have children under the age of two years are now visited weekly by the supervising social workers. Additionally, fortnightly unannounced visits are undertaken, with alternate visits being carried out by a manager. As a result, the agency has greater scrutiny and oversight of the care and protection provided to babies and young children.

The agency has developed a training plan to increase foster carers' and staff's knowledge and expertise in parent and child placements. Once this training is undertaken and embedded into practice, the agency will be in a position to resume providing parent and child placements safely. Additionally, the newly devised parent and child contract will ensure that parents and carers have a clearer understanding of their roles, their responsibilities and the expectations of the placing authority.

The health and safety checks of all foster carers' homes and caravans have been revised and updated. As a result, the agency can evidence that all children are being cared for in a safer and suitably equipped environment.

The agency has taken steps to improve how it assesses and responds to high-risk behaviour, for example when children go missing from home. All children's risk assessments have been updated and now clearly identify the safeguarding procedures that carers and staff must follow. However, the assessment of risk can be further strengthened by ensuring that any new risks, for example potential substance misuse, is reflected in the child's risk assessment. Furthermore, any discussion around safeguarding incidents should be clearly documented in the carers' supervision records and/or case notes.

The system for auditing staff's and carers' car documents has been revised and has improved. Managers can demonstrate that those driving for the purpose of the agency are doing so safely.

The agency has taken sufficient steps to meet the compliance notice, therefore no further enforcement action is planned. A further inspection will take place to assess how the agency has addressed the other requirements and recommendations that were raised at the full inspection in August 2019.

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
The fostering service provider must provide a copy of the statement of purpose to the Chief Inspector and place a copy on their website. (Regulation 3(2))	20/09/2019
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, 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. (Regulation 8(1)(a)(b))	20/09/2019
The fostering service provider must promote the educational achievement of children placed with foster parents. In particular, the fostering service provider must implement a procedure for monitoring the educational achievement, progress and school attendance of children placed with foster parents. (Regulation 16(1), (2)(a))	20/09/2019
The fostering service provider must provide foster parents with such training, advice, information and support, as appears necessary in the interests of children placed with them. The fostering service provider must ensure that, in relation to any child placed or to be placed with a foster parent, the foster parent is given such information, which is kept up to date, as to enable them to provide appropriate care for the child, and in particular that each foster parent is provided with a copy of the most recent version of the child's care plan provided to the fostering service provider under regulation 6(3)(d) of the Care Planning Regulations. (Regulation 17(1), (3))	20/09/2019

<p>The fostering service provider must ensure that all persons employed by them receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal. (Regulation 21(4)(a))</p>	<p>20/09/2019</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.</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 the placing authority). (Regulation 35(1), (2), (3))</p>	<p>20/09/2019</p>

Recommendations

- Checks are carried out in line with regulation 26 and prospective foster carers understand why identity checks, relationship status and health checks, personal references and enquiries are undertaken about them and why DBS checks are made on them and adult members of their household. (NMS 13.5)
- The fostering service only suggests foster carers to local authorities as a potential match for a child if the foster carer can reasonably be expected to meet the child's assessed needs and the impact of the placement on existing household members has been considered. Where gaps are identified, the fostering service should work with the responsible authority to ensure the placement plan sets out any additional training, resource or support required. (NMS 15.1)
- The fostering service can demonstrate, including from written records, that it consistently follows good recruitment practice, and all applicable current statutory requirements and guidance, in foster carer selection and staff and panel member recruitment. All personnel responsible for recruitment and selection of staff are trained in, understand and operate these good practices. (NMS 19.2)
- Foster carers maintain an ongoing training and development portfolio which demonstrates how they are meeting the skills required of them by the fostering service. (NMS 20.4)
- The manager regularly monitors 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. (NMS 25.2)

- 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, other than necessarily confidential or third-party information, and to correct errors and add personal statements. (NMS 26.6)

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: SC488290

Registered provider: Fostering Ltd

Registered provider address: Suite 8, New Hall Hey Business Centre, New Hall Hey Road, Rawtenstall, Rossendale BB4 6HL

Responsible individual: Najam Asghar

Inspectors

Marina Tully, social care inspector

Mandy Williams, social care inspector

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