

Select FosterCare Services

Select FosterCare Services Ltd
Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London E11 2LW
Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

Select FosterCare Services is a privately owned independent fostering agency based in East London. The fostering service specialises in providing the following types of foster care: long term, short term, bridging, respite, emergency, and child and parent placements. The service also offers placements for children who have disabilities and/or complex health needs.

At the time of the inspection, the fostering service had 19 approved fostering households with 19 children and one young person in a staying put placement. This agency was registered with Ofsted in August 2013. The manager was registered in September 2016.

Inspection dates: 13 to 17 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The independent fostering agency provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 31 October 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive highly effective and individualised support from tenacious foster carers who strongly advocate for them. Children flourish in these nurturing placements, which has a positive impact on their physical and emotional well-being. They are happier and more confident, and have increased self-esteem and a sense of belonging.

Children quickly feel part of the immediate and extended foster family. A child stated, 'I love it here', and another child told the inspector that they are 'doing brilliantly'. Children enjoy new experiences and they receive continual encouragement, which helps them develop a positive personal identity.

Foster carers are highly ambitious for children, and they strongly advocate for additional resources and the best schools. All children are in education and are aspirational for their futures. Two children are currently at university.

Older children are able to stay with their foster carers beyond the age of 18. They also maintain their relationships once they move on, which provides them with valued ongoing support. Foster carers highlighted that they have a 'lifetime commitment' to children.

Foster carers understand the importance of children maintaining relationships with their families. Children's contact is prioritised, and a commendable example was seen of a child being reunited with their sibling. Birth parents praised the care, and a father complimented the 'loving care' shown to his child.

Children, their friends and any young children in the fostering household enjoy social events organised by the agency. The agency is working towards being more inclusive through the introduction of the children's champion and the fostering ambassador roles. There are plans to develop these roles to enable children and foster carers to further influence the agency.

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

Children benefit from good safeguarding arrangements. Children feel safe and they know how to complain. During their discussions with the inspector, children could not highlight anything which could be improved.

Foster carers raise children's awareness regarding personal safety and healthy personal relationships. Foster carers have a good understanding of the trauma children have experienced and the need for contextual safeguarding. There are currently no children who go missing from care or who are involved in sexually or criminally exploitative relationships.

The agency has a good risk management system, which demonstrates an awareness of children's complex needs and their personal triggers. Attention is given to the monitoring of placement stability and causes for concern. This ensures that issues are promptly and efficiently addressed.

Children benefit from consistent, firm boundaries, which helps them develop socially acceptable behaviour. Children's mental health has improved, and they are becoming more reflective and self-aware. They are learning relaxation techniques and how to manage frustrating emotions.

The agency has its own clinician, who is able to provide efficient personalised therapeutic support to children and foster carers. This therapeutic intervention particularly helps foster carers with developing effective strategies to manage children's behavioural issues.

The well-considered respite arrangements among foster carers positively benefit children. Where needed, respite is organised at regular intervals with a specific foster carer. The agency additionally provides financial support and bespoke support work, which enhances children's lives and helps with the stability of each placement.

Foster carers and staff benefit from a wide range of training focused on safeguarding children. This training includes 'advanced safeguarding' and 'preventing radicalisation'. Training also helps to raise foster carers' awareness of county lines and gangs.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The main strengths of this agency are its child-centred approach and its highly committed, insightful, resilient and professional foster carers. Social workers praised foster carers' 'emotional warmth', and other professionals described them as 'inspiring'. Good matching arrangements clearly identify how foster carers can positively meet the needs of each child.

Children benefit from effective leaders and managers and a committed, culturally diverse staff team. The agency is owned by a qualified social worker who has extensive experience of providing a good residential service to children. This individual has been invited to share his experience in the forthcoming parliamentary review of social care.

The agency additionally benefits from highly experienced involved professionals who assist with the agency decision maker, panel chair, assessment and clinician roles. The effective fostering panel ensures that all decisions focus on children's best interests. The fostering panel and all the involved professionals also contribute to improvements in the agency.

Staff strongly advocate for children, and when appropriate they challenge local authorities to provide the necessary resources. Children's social workers praised the strong partnership working and the fact that staff attend all the children's meetings.

Foster carers are well supported through a wide range of training opportunities, support groups and regular supervisory visits. They said that they find the latter particularly helpful, valuing the links made between research and theory, which has improved their practice. Foster carers enjoy high-quality social events, and their achievements are celebrated.

The recruitment strategy and the business plan do not have measurable objectives within specific timescales. Although the agency has a website, staff do not innovatively use information technology or digital marketing. This results in a missed opportunity to connect with children, potential foster carers and existing foster carers.

Foster carers and staff appreciate the agency's small family-style atmosphere and the professional and personal support that they receive. The small staff team invokes a lot of informal discussions, resulting in infrequent formal team meetings and staff supervision. Despite this, annual appraisals are not recorded for all staff, and some staff have also highlighted that they would like a team awayday.

Leaders and managers have addressed the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection. They are aware of the agency's strengths and the areas requiring development. Shortfalls identified in this inspection do not have an impact on the good quality of care children receive.

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>Employment of staff</p> <p>The fostering service provider must ensure that all persons employed by them receive appropriate supervision and appraisal. (Regulation 21 (4)(a))</p>	01/03/2020

Recommendations

- Ensure the wishes, feelings and views of children and those significant to them are taken into account in developing the foster service. ('Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards', 1.7)
- Ensure the written development plan is reviewed annually, for the future of the service, either identifying any planned changes in the operation or resources of the service, or confirming the continuation of the service's current operation and resource. ('Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards', 18.2)
In particular, this plan must include formalising meetings, measurable objectives and greater consideration of information technology in the digital age.

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: SC459667

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Registered provider address: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London E11 2LW

Responsible individual: Patrick Clarke

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Inspector

Sharon Payne, social care inspector



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