

Red Kite Fostering

Red Kite Fostering Limited

The Old Surgery, The Meads, Kington, Herefordshire HR5 3DQ

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. The agency provides a range of fostering placements, including long-term, short-term, emergency and respite placements.

At the time of the visit, the agency was providing placements for eight children and has seven fostering households. The agency has started to recruit new fostering households since the last inspection.

A skilled and experienced manager is managing the agency.

Inspection dates: 24 to 28 February 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account requires improvement to be good

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

The independent fostering agency is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 14 May 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

This independent fostering agency was judged inadequate at the last full inspection, conducted between 14 and 16 May 2019. The inspection resulted in four compliance

notices being issued. A monitoring inspection was carried out on 25 June 2019. The inspection 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.

A further monitoring inspection was conducted on 7 August 2019. Inspectors found that one of the four compliance notices had been met. The inspection resulted in three compliance notices being reissued. The agency's registration remained suspended following this visit.

A further monitoring inspection was conducted on 18 September 2019. The three compliance notices had been met and steady progress had been made. Following this visit, the decision was made to remove the suspension notice.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children and young people who are new to the agency are appropriately matched with their new foster families and given a copy of the agency's children's guide. However, this guide does not give children and young people enough information to help them to understand everything they need about the agency and how they will be cared for. This represents a missed opportunity to help children and young people to be more prepared for their move into their new home.

Overall children and young people have good school attendance. However, on one occasion, the agency did not provide sufficient challenge to other professionals to address concerns about a child's schooling.

Foster carers receive good help and support. They can call the agency at any time to seek advice and support and receive regular supervision.

Some foster families are currently exploring special guardianship and 'staying put' arrangements. This willingness to explore additional options helps to give children and young people increased stability and security into adulthood.

Children and young people are seen regularly by their supervising social worker. During these visits, children and young people's views are secured. However, consultation with children and young people does not go beyond these visits. As a result, the views and opinions of children and young people are too limited.

Foster carers are now receiving good-quality training that they enjoy. As a result, foster carers now have improved knowledge and more-informed skills to help them care for vulnerable children and young people. However, there remains a shortfall in foster carers' knowledge regarding protecting children and young people from radicalisation and child exploitation.

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

Children and young people are safe living with their foster carers. The focus on safeguarding has been imperative for the development of the service.

Since the monitoring inspection in September 2019, there have been no safeguarding concerns. The current manager has been reviewing historical safeguarding concerns and has taken appropriate action. This has resulted in making referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service, attending position of trust meetings and making referrals to other professional organisations when necessary.

The recruitment of foster carers has improved and the standard for approval is high. The manager is taking foster carers back to panel who are not adhering to their role

and/or are failing to keep children and young people safe. When necessary, unsafe foster carers are deregistered or clear recommendations are made to aid improvement.

Despite this improved oversight and challenge, the supervising social worker does not always address practice issues with foster carers when following up on recommendations made by the panel. Consequently, foster carers are not given enough professional challenge to help them to improve their practice.

The agency's support worker helps foster carers to be better informed about internet safety. This extra help has improved foster carers' knowledge on how to keep children and young people safe when online.

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

The manager has been in post since July 2019 and has started the process of applying to Ofsted to be the next registered manager.

The manager is open and transparent and is aware of the continued areas of development required to get the service to a good standard. She has a clear action plan in place and uses good reflection to help her to identify the areas that still need further development.

The responsible individual is more involved in the agency and provides increased support to the manager and the staff.

The agency's website is not up to date and contains an out-of-date statement of purpose. The most up-to-date statement of purpose does not detail all the services that the agency provides. This failure to update the statement of purpose means that external services do not have the right information about the agency.

Staff receive regular supervision and, when appropriate, annual appraisals. Overall the staff are motivated and feel inspired by the manager. The manager receives regular monthly supervisions from the responsible individual. However, she would benefit from practice-related supervision from a qualified social worker.

Staff receive ongoing training, although they would benefit from training on protecting children from radicalisation and child exploitation and on safe recruitment.

The manager has a clear foster carer recruitment strategy in place that is realistic and focuses on securing good-quality foster carers. Steady growth of the agency will add further financial security to the service.

The agency's monitoring systems for tracking children and young people's progress still needs to improve.

The manager and responsible individual take complaints seriously and seek to resolve any concerns raised in a timely manner.

Overall professionals are happy with the agency and recognise that children and young people are happy and benefit from living in a stable home.

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 fostering service provider must compile a written statement in relation to the fostering service ('the statement of purpose') which consists of—</p> <p>a statement as to the services and facilities (including any parent and child arrangements) provided by the fostering service. (Regulation 3 (1)(b))</p>	06/04/2020
<p>The registered provider and the registered manager must, having regard to—</p> <p>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)(b))</p>	06/04/2020
<p>The fostering service provider must keep under review and, where appropriate, revise the statement of purpose and children's guide. (Regulation 4 (a))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the statement of purpose is up to date and on the agency's website.</p>	06/04/2020
<p>The fostering service provider must promote the educational achievement of children placed with foster parents.</p> <p>In particular the fostering service provider must—</p> <p>implement a procedure for monitoring the educational achievement, progress and school attendance of children placed with foster parents. (Regulation 16 (1)(2)(a))</p>	06/04/2020
<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 (a))</p> <p>In particular, improve foster carers' knowledge in protecting children from radicalisation and child exploitation.</p>	06/04/2020
<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</p>	06/04/2020

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))

In particular, improve staff knowledge in protecting children from radicalisation and child exploitation.

Recommendations

- 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. This includes CRB checks. All personnel responsible for recruitment and selection of staff are trained in, understand and operate these good practices. (Fostering services: National minimum standards, 19.2).

In particular, ensure that training is provided to staff involved in completing recruitment checks on new employees.

- Suitable arrangements exist for professional supervision of the agency's registered person or manager of a local authority fostering service. (Fostering services: National minimum standards, 16.4).

In particular, ensure that the manager of the agency has clinical practice-related supervision.

- Unless an emergency placement makes it impossible, children are given information about the foster carer before arrival, and any information (including where appropriate, photographic information) they need or reasonably request about the placement, in a format appropriate to their age and understanding. Wherever possible, children are able to visit the foster carer's home and to talk with the foster carers in private prior to a placement decision being made. Children can bring their favourite possessions into the foster carer's home. (Fostering services: National minimum standards, 11.13).

In particular, child-friendly information about foster carers is given to children and young people before they move into their new homes.

- Children communicate their views on all aspects of their care and support. (Fostering services: National minimum standards, 1.3).
- Each approved foster carer is supervised by a named, appropriately qualified social worker who has meetings with the foster carer, including at least one unannounced visit a year. Meetings have a clear purpose and provide the opportunity to supervise the foster carer's work, ensure the foster carer is

meeting the child's needs, taking into account the child's wishes and feelings, and offer support and a framework to assess the carer's performance and develop their competencies and skills. The frequency of meetings for short break foster carers should be proportionate to the amount of care provided. Foster carers' files include records of supervisory meetings. (Fostering services: National minimum standards, 21.8).

In particular, addressing poor practice relating to poor training attendance in supervision.

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: SC417504

Registered provider: Red Kite Fostering Limited

Registered provider address: Rhos House, Old Radnor, Presteigne, Powys LD8 2RP

Responsible individual: Carole Barnes

Registered manager:

Telephone number: 01544 231657

Email address:

Inspector

Lisa O'Donovan, Social Care Inspector

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