

Father Hudson's (Adoption Support Agency)

Father Hudson's Society

St George's House, Gerards Way, Coleshill, Birmingham B46 3FG

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this adoption support agency

The adoption support agency, known as the Origins Service, is part of Father Hudson's Society. The adoption support services include access to records held by the agency and intermediary services for adopted adults and members of their birth family.

Although the agency is registered to provide adoption support services for children, it does this through a service level agreement with Adoption Focus. This is in relation to the adoptive families who were approved by Father Hudson's Society when it operated as a voluntary adoption agency. Adoption Focus is a voluntary adoption agency which was formerly provided by Father Hudson's Society under a different name until it became a separate entity in 2009.

The registered manager undertakes all the work in relation to adoption support, assisted by a part-time administrative member of staff.

Due to COVID 19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 9 to 11 February 2022

Overall experience and progress of service users, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The adoption support agency provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the adoption support agency

contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for service users.

Date of last inspection: 25 July 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgement

Overall experiences and progress of service users: outstanding

The registered manager provides an outstanding support service to adopted adults, adoptive families, birth parents and other relatives, that is bespoke and tailored to their individual needs. She provides them with a comprehensive understanding of their background and personal history.

The registered manager recognises that individuals who use the service to explore their life history will find this a potentially challenging and significant experience. As such, the registered manager responds to any enquiries to access adoption records or to locate birth relatives promptly, often on the same day. The registered manager is diligent and thorough in the research she conducts into historical records. As a result, she provides individuals with information about their life and family history.

The registered manager challenges other agencies for the information she needs to enable her to complete her work effectively. At times, the registered manager has faced delays that are out of her control in gathering required information, for example identifying if there is a registered veto on an individual's adoption file. This has been exacerbated due to COVID-19 and offices being closed. The registered manager takes all reasonable steps to overcome these issues.

The registered manager provides individualised support to service users, depending on their level of need. She is skilled at managing individuals' expectations and preparing them for the potential outcomes prior to starting intermediary work. This helps service users feel prepared and supported through the process.

The registered manager presents information in an extremely sensitive manner. Service users are given a well-organised bound folder with all the required information, including original documentation relating to their history. One service user said, 'The bound book you sent was amazing and we are forever grateful.'

The registered manager's personal input is fundamental to the success of the service. The feedback from service users is exceptionally positive. During a nine-month period, the registered manager received over 45 compliments about the service she provides. Comments included, 'I am so grateful for what you have uncovered for our family' and 'Thank you so much for your research and help'.

How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected: outstanding

There have been no safeguarding concerns or complaints since the last inspection. The registered manager has access to detailed policies and procedures including child protection and adults who disclose historical abuse. This information helps inform the registered manager's practice and promotes a safeguarding culture.

The registered manager keeps up to date with safeguarding training to inform her practice. This includes online safety. Professionals in other organisations seek the registered manager out for advice and guidance on a range of issues including safeguarding and relevant legislation. The registered manager disseminates her knowledge to inform other people's practice.

The registered manager completes risk assessments prior to starting intermediary work with service users. These assessments take into consideration a wide range of factors that might affect individuals receiving a service. This well-thought-out process ensures that potentially vulnerable adults are protected from harm.

The registered manager is diligent in making sure identity checks are completed before any information is disclosed. Confirmation is always received that no veto has been registered. At all times, confidential information is sensitively managed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is an experienced and committed leader who is an expert in her field of work. She has high expectations for those she provides a service to. As such, the standard of work with birth families and adoptees is carried out to an exceptionally high standard.

The registered manager is not deterred by setbacks and difficulties when researching family histories for the intermediary service. She is tenacious in her search for information to provide to families. The registered manager has over 20 years' experience in researching family histories. This insight often means she can locate information that others have struggled to find.

The registered manager has excellent relationships with service users. Her timeliness in responding to enquires is exceptional. She understands the emotional impact on individuals who contact her, and she delivers a service that takes that into consideration. People feel at ease and comfortable with her and she shares information in a compassionate and kind way.

The registered manager is keen to take on all opportunities to develop her practice. She is involved in a wide range of professional networks and conferences to continually share information and improve her own knowledge. She researches new developments in the field, for example Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) testing and the impact on intermediary work.

Case records are well organised and demonstrate the quality of the work undertaken. The service responds to the diverse needs of individuals accessing the service and consistently provides an excellent service, which benefits individuals.

Since the last inspection, the registered manager now receives supervision from a suitably qualified individual. This is alongside supervision from a senior manager in the organisation.

The registered manager provides regular reports to the board of trustees. This ensures that there is ongoing monitoring of the service and intermediary work is overseen.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, young people and adults, using the 'Social care common inspection framework'.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 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: SC397224

Registered provider: Father Hudson's Society

Registered provider address: St George's House, Gerards Way, Coleshill,
Birmingham B46 3FG

Responsible individual: Mr Andrew Quinn

Registered manager: Mrs Josephine Clemons

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Inspectors

Lisa O'Donovan, Social Care Inspector
Anne Daly, Social Care Inspector

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