Happy Hearts Foster Care

Happy Hearts Foster Care Limited

Radclyffe House, N3, 66–68 Hagley Road, Birmingham B16 8PF

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

The fostering agency was registered with Ofsted in April 2022.

At the time of the inspection, the agency had six approved fostering households and 12 children in placement.

The agency provides short-term, long-term, permanent, respite and emergency placements.

The manager has been in post since December 2022. She has submitted her application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 3 to 6 April 2023

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: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This is the first inspection of the fostering agency since it was registered in April 2022.

Foster carers feel welcomed into this agency. Assessments of foster carers are detailed, analytical and timely. The preparation and training of prospective foster carers is thorough. This enables them to become strong advocates and set high aspirations for the children they care for.

Good-quality support to foster carers, that enables them to promote the well-being and stability of the children, is central to the aims of this agency. Foster carers receive regular reflective support and supervision as well as access to regular support groups. A programme of virtual and face-to face-training is under way. A support worker, who is due to start in post in May 2023, will undertake one-to-one and group sessions directly with the children. This will provide additional support to the children and foster carers.

Children are making good progress. They attend education and are meeting academic targets. They are active members of clubs and community-based activities. They are supported to maintain family links and sustain relationships that are important to them. Foster carers work closely with other professionals, such as teachers, social workers and health consultants. As a result, the children's needs are being identified and met and they are experiencing positive achievements from their starting points.

The achievements of the children and foster carers are recognised and celebrated. For example, all newly approved foster carers receive welcome hampers. All the children receive acknowledgements of successes, for example when they have learned a new skill, such as riding a bike, or on the completion of an exam. There are also plans for there to be an annual award ceremony for foster carers that will recognise their professional skills and contributions to the agency. These initiatives and events make people feel valued by the agency, which enhances their sense of belonging and personal value.

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

Managers and foster carers ensure that the safety and well-being of the children are paramount. This practice is embedded throughout foster carers' assessment, approval, training, supervision sessions and support groups.

Foster carers help the children learn through day-to-day discussions and experiences. Foster carers get to know the children's friends and family members to help manage risks and keep them safe. Where appropriate, the children are enabled to access external agencies to provide them with additional specialist support. This

helps the children develop knowledge that helps them to make informed decisions to keep themselves safe and healthy as they become adults.

There is careful recruitment and regular monitoring of staff and foster carers that prevent unsuitable staff or foster carers from being recruited and having the opportunity to harm the children or to place them at risk.

Foster homes are safe and secure and protect the children from harm or the risk of harm. They provide comfortable and welcoming environments in which the children feel safe and can grow and develop.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Experienced and appropriately qualified managers have good oversight of the agency. They have a clear plan and vision for the service. They are reflective and are driving the pace of the agency's development to ensure continuing good-quality support to foster carers.

There is a successful foster carer recruitment strategy. Recruitment targets for this first year have been exceeded and have resulted in a positive cultural and age-diverse foster carer cohort.

The number of foster carers has increased, and in turn the agency has recruited more staff. There are policies, procedures and systems in place to ensure the appropriate induction, supervision, appraisal and training of the new staff.

Managers and foster carers work proactively and positively with other agencies and professionals. They build effective working relationships with social workers from placing authorities and with the local authority where they are located to secure positive outcomes for the children.

The agency's fostering panel is challenging and effective. Its members provide good quality assurance functions. The agency decision-maker makes reasoned decisions, with comprehensive qualifying determinations. The agency decision-maker, the fostering panel chair and agency managers plan to meet regularly to further enhance the quality assurance process.

The panel includes a good range of qualified and experienced professionals. There are processes in place to ensure that panel members have annual appraisals. They are receiving planned training sessions that help them fulfil their roles and responsibilities. This ensures that they keep up with developments in practice.

There are two areas that require development. Some records and minutes of meetings do not record effectively the good practice described by managers, foster carers and local authorities. The agency's manager is not receiving regular professional supervision to support her to develop and reflect on her practice. The agency's managers are currently completing their first full annual review and audit of

the service. They intend to pick these matters up as part of this process. All actions identified will feed into the revised agency development plan.

What does the independent fostering agency need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that managers and staff regularly monitor all records to ensure compliance with the service's policies, to identify and act on any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 25.2, page 50)
- The registered person should ensure that suitable arrangements exist for professional supervision of the agency's registered person. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 24.3, page 49)

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: 2649488

Registered provider: Happy Hearts Foster Care Limited

Registered provider address: Radclyffe House, N3, 66–68 Hagley Road, Birmingham B16 8PF

Responsible individual: Nayla Khan

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Inspector

Dawn Bennett, Social Care Inspector

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