

All4u Fostering Ltd

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Wood Farm, Burlings Lane, Knockholt, Sevenoaks TN14 7PF

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

ALL4U Fostering is a private limited company, associated with the Layberry Foundation, a registered charity. It is part of The Fairer Fostering Partnership, which is a group of charitable and not-for-profit fostering agencies. The agency has been registered with Ofsted since 11 June 2017.

The agency operates a therapeutic model of care. It provides a range of placements for children aged up to 18 years, including respite, short-term, long-term, sibling, and parent and child placements, and placements for asylum-seeking children and disabled children.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 8 November 2022.

Inspection dates: 11 to 15 September 2023

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The independent fostering agency provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the independent fostering agency contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people.

Date of last inspection: 23 September 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children in this agency receive exceptional care. The carers who care for them have an extraordinary commitment to ensuring that children are happy, making progress and having positive experiences. There is sustained and very marked improvement in children's lives. Carers know the children well and develop close relationships with them. Because of this, the children settle well. The children speak with warmth and confidence about their experience of life with their foster family.

The highly skilled and experienced supervising social workers provide the carers with regular, reflective and supportive supervision. The therapeutic ethos of the agency consistently underpins the care and support provided to carers and children. Carers receive specialised training that promotes therapeutic parenting. They understand the effect of trauma on the lives of children and support the children in a therapeutic way.

Children have access to therapists who meet their emotional well-being needs. As a result, children make exemplary progress in their emotional and mental health. Strong therapeutic assessment tools are in place. Their consistent use throughout a child's time with their foster carers ensures a strong understanding of the child's needs. Consequently, children receive tailored support that continues to meet their changing needs.

The service places strong value on working together to achieve the best possible outcomes for children. The joined-up working means that children receive bespoke care and support. Regular team-around-the child meetings ensure that everyone has an up-to-date understanding of the child. The agency keeps the children's needs under review. It knows how it can meet the children's changing needs as well as the progress that they have made.

Children have positive day-to-day experiences. Staff and carers support them and show a strong commitment to their continued growth and development. A particular strength of the agency is the contribution of the education consultant. They provide strong and effective advocacy for children's education. They work closely with virtual schools to ensure that children are in the correct education provision to meet their needs. This role is diverse. It includes the education consultant working directly with schools to understand, and respond to, the specific needs of traumatised children. The education intervention has underpinned the extraordinary progress many children have made in their education. This includes moving on to college courses and embarking on university degrees.

The agency shows dedication to the value of life-story work. Staff and carers recognise the importance of helping children and their carers understand the child's life journey. Some staff have specific training in this area of work. This has led to

an exceptional piece of work with one child, which has helped the child to understand their complex background and the experiences that have made them who they are. As a result, this child has a stronger sense of self and identity.

A suite of participatory activities involving children means that they feel valued and part of the agency. Children are involved in the interview process of new staff. The agency recognises all of the children's achievements. In addition to the annual award ceremonies, children also receive immediate recognition through the Marion Awards. These awards recognise even the smallest achievements. This fosters the children's confidence and self-belief.

Staff, carers, children and external professionals place high value on the quality of care that children receive. Without exception, feedback from all is extremely positive. One professional said, 'They [anyone] will have to come through me to move them [the child]!'. Another said, 'This child now has a sense of security and family.' One child said, 'It is nice to feel part of a family, which I never thought I would.' Another said, 'I have always been welcomed.'

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

Supervising social workers and foster carers understand children's needs. They identify and mitigate risk through strong risk assessments and individual safeguarding plans. Carers understand how to keep children safe and work closely with a range of professionals to promote this. Children are involved in the plans to keep them safe. They take part in the reflective interviews that follow any significant incident. This helps them to understand the dangers to themselves and the effect of any risk-taking behaviours on their carers.

Supervising social workers work closely with foster carers to respond to children who may go missing or who are at risk of harm. Carers receive training around this which helps to prepare them for managing such incidents. The child's risk assessment and individual safeguarding plan contain guidance on how to respond. Supervising social workers discuss keeping safe in the monthly carer supervisions. Carers help children to understand the risks that they take when they go missing. The staff know what to do if a child might be involved in extremist activity. On the one occasion such concerns arose, the staff responded quickly and effectively.

Carers receive training around understanding and managing behaviours. Regular and consistent reflective supervisions create space for carers to openly discuss the effect on the family of a child's behaviour. Clear and consistent boundaries and routines make a difference to the children. This has contributed to children feeling safe and secure.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training, which keeps them up to date with developments in this area. They are clear about how to respond when concerned about the safety of a child. Clear processes are in place for the reporting of concerns. There is good working together with a range of professionals to safeguard children.

The agency consistently follows safer recruitment practices. This means that only staff who have demonstrated that they are suitably qualified and of good character are employed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

An exceptionally strong leadership and management team heads this agency. Leaders and managers are highly effective in their development of the service. The manager is ambitious for the carers and the children. She has high expectations of what they can achieve. She ensures that carers have the tools that they need to provide exceptional care and support to children.

The manager is tenacious. She consistently looks for the best possible outcomes for children. She raises complaints to placing authorities and holds them to account. She is strenuous in pointing out where they have fallen short in their commitment to the children. She shows a strong commitment to working together.

The leadership and management team instils a strong culture of learning and development, aspiration and positivity. The team ensures the highest-quality learning opportunities that promote improvement in the children's lives. These opportunities include training and workshops for children to attend, for example in learning about gang culture and the dangers associated with it. Staff benefit from access to training with an institute specialising in systemic therapy.

Leaders and managers facilitate monthly reflective practice for supervising social workers. This is a space for them to review, reflect and understand the influence of the work that they do. This high-quality supervision stimulates staff's continual professional development.

Leaders and managers encourage the involvement of children in the development of the agency. For instance, they have used feedback from children to change the language used by the agency, moving away from the term 'placement' to 'foster parent' and from 'respite care' to 'the place where you stayed'. Children feel listened to and so are happy to provide feedback. Similarly, feedback from carers is used to help develop the agency. This helps them to feel motivated and valued.

The fostering panel receives comprehensive assessments of prospective carers. Applicants' suitability to foster is thoroughly tested before and during panel. The agency decision-maker is an experienced fostering practitioner who provides clear decisions on suitability to foster. This means that the agency only approves well-prepared, safe and suitable carers to provide care to children. The use of an independent reviewing officer to carry out carer reviews offers a further level of scrutiny on carers' ongoing suitability.

Leaders and managers maintain strong professional relationships with external agencies. They do this exceptionally well despite the challenges that they sometimes face. They have effective relationships with commissioners and senior

managers in placing authorities. This enables them to escalate concerns relating to delays in receiving care plans for children.

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

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: 1255143

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Inspector

Vevene Muhammad, Social Care Inspector

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