

Placement Support

Placement Support Ltd

Placement Support Ltd, 12 Princess Road West, Leicester LE1 6TP

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this adoption support agency

This adoption support agency is privately owned. It is located in Leicester, but it offers support to adoptive families in other parts of the country, dependent, in part, on the location and suitability of therapists. Therapists are self-employed practitioners who are contracted to undertake therapeutic interventions with families. This is usually funded through the adoption support fund.

At the time of the inspection, the agency was providing adoption support to 11 adoptive families. Adoption support is only one aspect of the agency's remit, but only adoption support was considered during this inspection.

Inspection dates: 1 to 3 July 2024

Overall experience and progress of service users, taking into account **good**

How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The adoption support agency provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 2 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgement

Overall experiences and progress of service users: good

Adoptive families benefit greatly from the bespoke therapeutic support that is offered by this service. Support packages are thoughtfully considered in terms of what is best for each different family member. For siblings, children can be given separate therapists, to recognise each child's individuality. Adoptive parents can also have different individual therapists from their children.

The diversity needs of children are well understood and reflected on by the service. Therapists are mixed in terms of their heritage, gender, and theoretical knowledge base. Consideration is given to how children may perceive online therapy as opposed to face-to-face meetings. Therapists will often use a hybrid approach with families to try to reaffirm meaningful connections. Children's neurodiversity needs are factored into managerial planning and decision-making.

Children are supported to understand their complex identity as an adopted child. Being care experienced has a significant impact on each child and their family. For some children, they can struggle with certain aspects of life due to past traumatic experiences. The service is good at supporting adoptive families to recognise the uniqueness of their family and to understand that progress looks different for each child. The service shows commitment to families, and the span of therapeutic work often happens over several years. Therapists continue to work with children into adulthood.

Although the children's guide is on the agency's website, children are not initially directed to this when they access the service. Similarly, although the complaints process is outlined, the manager and responsible individual's details are not listed under people who children could contact.

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

Adoptive families shared many examples of how the service has helped them to navigate challenging situations over many years. Some families explained that their family may not have been able to cope without the dedication and expertise of the service. This service supports children to remain as part of an adoptive family and reduces the risk of family breakdown and children coming into care.

Adoptive parents will contact the service when feeling out of their depth and unsure of what to do. After asking for help, adoptive parents feel that some of their children's behaviours start to make more sense. Adoptive parents are given the tools to respond to children in a therapeutic way. This reduces the risk of difficult situations escalating unnecessarily.

Children see the value in attending therapy. Children can explain how this has helped them to make healthier, safer choices. Although not easy, some children have learned to implement coping mechanisms for when they feel angry. Children are supported to recognise the emotions behind their anger and how these may be manifesting in their behaviour.

The manager recognises that adoptive families sometimes need support to work alongside other professional networks. There was a good example of the manager working alongside a child's school to help the school staff better understand the impact of trauma. This intervention made a positive difference, and it helped the child to feel safer at school.

When situations have the potential to become unsafe, the manager is clear about when to share information as a way of keeping all people safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager and responsible individual have a broad range of professional and theoretical experience. This is directly relevant to their roles. As a management team, they are fully committed to helping adoptive families. They recognise the privileged role that they have in supporting families to stay together. The manager knows each family well and cares a great deal about their well-being.

The service uses therapists from a wide geographical location and so most supervisory discussions take place online. Therapists are confident that they can talk to the manager if anything arises that they wish to discuss. Although this is useful, there is no record of therapists receiving supervision. Without records of supervision, it is difficult to assess how well objectives are being met. It also hinders an evidence-based approach to practice.

Information received from involved professional agencies is overwhelmingly positive. Social workers describe this service as their 'go to' agency. It is described as having an excellent reputation and that the quality of work is delivered to a high standard. Although feedback is positive, the manager does not yet do enough to obtain and reflect on feedback. This is important because it informs management oversight. The service is not yet critically reviewed in a way that is evidence-based.

The financial viability of the service is an area that the manager keeps under regular review. This is important so that the service can remain financially sound and operational.

It is clear from professional feedback that the manager has been instrumental in the unwavering support that he offers to families. He is described as an excellent communicator and down to earth, and he is routinely relied on to hold families together, even through times of crisis. His commitment to families is commendable.

What does the adoption support 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, The Adoption Support Agencies (England) and Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2005 and the national minimum standards. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person shall ensure that all persons employed by the agency—</p> <p>receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal. (The adoption support agencies (England) and adoption agencies (miscellaneous amendments) regulations 2005, regulation 20 (2)(a))</p>	<p>30 September 2024</p>

Recommendations

- The children’s guide to adoption support services is provided to the child by the adoption agency or adoption support agency who is providing adoption support. The guide is appropriate to the child’s age and understanding and includes a summary of what the service sets out to do for children and is given to all children and/or their representatives. The children’s guide also contains information on how a child can find out their rights, how they can contact their independent reviewing officer, the children’s rights director, or Ofsted, if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors, and how to secure access to an independent advocate. (Adoption: national minimum standard 18.6)
- The manager exercises effective leadership of the staff and operation, such that the agency is organised, managed and staffed in a manner that delivers the best possible childcare for the agency’s service users (in respect of adoption agencies/adoption support agencies). (Adoption: national minimum standard 19.6)
- The executive side of the local authority, the voluntary adoption agency’s/Adoption Support Agency’s provider/trustees, board members or management committee members: receive written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency every six months; monitor the management and outcomes of the services in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children and/or service users; and satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of registration. (Adoption: national minimum standard 25.6)

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: SC369714

Registered provider: Placement Support Ltd

Registered provider address: Placement Support Ltd, 21 The Point, Rockingham Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 7NU

Responsible individual: Mr Philip Faulkner

Registered manager: Mr Mark Waddington

Telephone number: 07751702814

Email address: mwaddington@placementsupport.co.uk

Inspector

Andi Lilley-Tams, Regulatory Inspection Manager

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2024