Family Futures CIC

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440A Hornsey Road, London N19 4EB

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this voluntary adoption agency

Family Futures CIC is a not-for-profit community interest company that registered with Ofsted in May 2013. The agency provides a number of different services for children, families and adults who have been fostered, adopted or placed under special guardianship arrangements.

Through the i-adopt service, the agency recruits, prepares and assesses prospective adopters, primarily for children with a significant history of developmental trauma. At the time of this inspection, four families were going through the assessment process and three families were waiting to be matched. Two children have been adopted through i-adopt in the last 12 months.

The agency provides specialist multi-disciplinary assessments and treatment services for children with a history of early trauma who are fostered, adopted, placed under special guardianship arrangements or who live with their birth families. At the time of the inspection, the number of children in assessment and therapy was 141. The agency also provides adoption support for adults.

The agency provides a training and consultancy service.

The manager has been in post since September 2019.

Inspection dates: 15 to 19 December 2025

Overall experiences and progress of service users, taking into account	**outstanding**
How well children, young people and adults are helped and protected	outstanding
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding

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

Date of previous inspection: 12 December 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of service users: outstanding

Children and adults benefit from an exceptionally high-quality service that is innovative and insightful. The multidisciplinary approach is highly effective in preparing prospective adopters and supporting children and families post-adoption. The service is delivered by social workers and therapists who are exceptionally passionate about their work and know the children and their families very well.

Adopters benefit from very thorough joint preparation and training that provides them with a good understanding of the impact of trauma. This contributes significantly to the ability of adopters to provide safe and secure placements that meet children's complex needs. One recently approved adopter said, 'I don't think we could have been better prepared for this; the staff are very thorough, and we now know why we needed to do that work.'

The agency is highly effective and continues to provide a high-quality service. Children and their families receive holistic care of exceptional quality, which results in excellent experiences and progress. The agency has an in-depth understanding of children with complex needs and specialises in providing therapies for them. Children who spoke to inspectors rated the support that they receive at 10/10; they report that they can contact the team at any time if they have any worries.

Children feel safe and secure in their adoptive families and there have been no reported disruptions. The agency prioritises early intervention to ensure that any concerns are addressed at the earliest opportunity. The team provides consistent support that is highly individualised to reflect individual needs.

The agency works with children who enter adoption at a later life; their highly innovative practice ensures that children who have experienced significant trauma are successfully placed with adopters. The agency provides individualised support to help adopters to manage any presenting behaviour. Adult adoptees remain in contact and can access support at any time in their lives, whenever they have any concerns. One adult adoptee provided very positive feedback about their experiences with the service.

Feedback from children and parents is exceptionally positive about their experiences and how the agency has changed their lives. In particular, they appreciate the care, warmth, passion and consistency of the team and their commitment to positive outcomes for children. One parent said that she and the children had received exceptional support and that her adopted children have been able to return to formal education and make friendships. She hoped that other families would have the same experiences and outcomes.

The agency provides high-quality post-adoption support. Staff provide adopters with the individualised and child-centred help that they need to carry on caring for their

children. For example, staff work with schoolteachers to help them to understand the needs and background of individual children within their educational environment, to help them to manage any presenting behaviours of concern.

The agency's office is spacious, child centred and well equipped with a variety of therapeutic tools, such as toys, arts and crafts, sand trays, soft-play and gym areas. This child-friendly environment enables children to settle and engage in therapy when they attend for their individual sessions.

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

Safeguarding practice is both exceptionally strong and also creative. Leaders, managers and staff have a sound understanding of children's vulnerabilities and risks. The team works well with parents to help them to understand presenting behaviour. This understanding, alongside their strong relationships with children, enables the team to provide effective, individualised care in response to any safeguarding issues raised.

The agency's safe and highly supportive therapeutic environment enables children and adults to explore and talk openly about their difficult past experiences. This has included adults talking about the trauma that they have experienced themselves. The neuro-physiological psychotherapy model of treatment specifically considers risk-taking behaviours which may present in children placed for adoption. The agency integrates risk assessment into all its processes and its involvement with children.

The agency's expert knowledge in and application of trauma research means that all children and adults, including the most vulnerable, have a strong sense of safety and wellbeing. Staff know the children and their families very well, and they always aim to address any concerning issues before they escalate.

Staff and managers have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children. They receive safeguarding training as well as training that is more focused on adoption, for example learning from individual examples as a multidisciplinary team.

The agency takes appropriate actions following any complaints. Investigations are thorough and the team learns from these complaints to ensure continual practice improvement. The agency has an effective procedure for sharing safeguarding information. Staff ensure that the appropriate authorities are informed of any significant information without delay.

All safeguarding matters are kept under regular review using quarterly audit processes. These include reviews of low-level incidents, which are tracked and actions monitored to enable an overview of patterns and escalation that may require early intervention. This supports children and adults to be safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The agency is led and managed by highly competent, experienced managers who are committed and passionate about providing the very best quality of care for adopted children and their families. Leaders, managers and staff go above and beyond to ensure that children and families receive the right care that they deserve. For example, managers have continued to provide support to families, despite funding being stopped or reduced by the placing authorities. This enables families to continue with the support to meet their assessed needs and helps to prevent family breakdown.

Despite challenges in the sector, the agency's creative approach enables them to continue to thrive and diversify their services. They have developed creative ways to raise funds to ensure that vulnerable children and their families continue to receive support, following changes to the funding. Following funding from a thoughtful donor, the agency now provides a one-year guarantee of therapy for all children adopted through them, to ensure that the right support is provided promptly without any delays.

Staff and managers advocate endlessly to ensure adopted children and the families receive lifelong evidence-based therapy to meet their needs and to enable them to lead positive and fulfilling lives.

The team is highly passionate about the work that they do. They are committed to children and to their families. There is highly effective communication within the team, which means that everyone has good oversight of the families and can support the families and professionals whenever they make contact with the agency. The staff have exceptionally strong relationships with the families they support and remain in touch over many years. One adult adoptee confirmed that they had received exceptional support from the agency that enabled them to live a fulfilling life.

Feedback from other professionals shows that the agency is highly regarded in the field of adoption. They talk about the agency's research model in the treatment of complex trauma. This research and the resulting treatment make a significant difference to the lives and experiences of children and adults receiving support from the agency. Managers and staff strengthen family support networks by sharing their expert knowledge of adoption and trauma. Multidisciplinary partnership working is a strength. For example, the agency's occupational therapist works closely with the occupational therapist based in a child's school to ensure that their needs are well understood.

Leaders and managers know the agency's strengths and weaknesses well. They take a comprehensive approach to auditing, monitoring and evaluating their work and commission external consultants to review their practice. A strong learning culture is promoted throughout the team. For example, in addition to their regular supervision, they have monthly case supervision which involves their case consultants. The

agency makes effective use of feedback from children and families who use the service.

Feedback from the staff team is excellent regarding leaders and managers, and their experience of working for the agency. They feel very well supported, both professionally and personally. Staff wellbeing is very well promoted by leaders and managers. For example, there is a weekly self-care session for all staff. This helps to support staff wellbeing and resilience. Staff report that all the leaders are very accessible whenever help is needed and there is a culture of mutual support.

The adoption panel provides excellent scrutiny of all the agency's work, with a very experienced panel chair and agency decision-maker. The panel has a diverse membership, all of whom take their responsibility very seriously. It is well administered, with clear minutes, which are prepared in a timely way to support prompt, efficient, yet thoughtful decision-making.

Induction is thorough and supports staff to understand the organisation's values and ethos. All staff who spoke to inspectors expressed great satisfaction with the working environment and felt highly valued by the managers.

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 Voluntary Adoption Agencies and The Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2003, The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005, any other relevant legislation, and the national minimum standards.

Voluntary adoption agency details

Unique reference number: SC462984

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Inspectors

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