Credo Care Fostering Limited

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12 High Street, Lydd, Romney Marsh TN29 9AJ

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

The agency was founded in 2000 and re-registered with Ofsted in March 2025.

The agency is based in Lydd, Kent and covers the South, Midlands and East regions of the UK. The agency specialises in providing care for children with physical disabilities and those who have complex medical needs, learning difficulties and/or autism spectrum disorder. The agency offers short-term, long-term, 'staying put' and specialised respite care placements. At the time of this inspection, 55 children were placed and there were 51 fostering households, some of which offer respite care only.

Inspection dates: 9 to 13 February 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	**outstanding**
How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive exceptionally nurturing, highly individualised care that transforms their lives. Foster homes are carefully adapted to meet each child's needs, helping the children to feel safe, valued and emotionally secure. Carers provide skilled, trauma-informed care that enables children to build trusting relationships and make remarkable progress in their emotional wellbeing, resilience and development. As a result, children consistently thrive and achieve outcomes far beyond expectations.

The agency's specialist expertise enables children with highly complex needs to flourish. Leaders and staff have an exceptionally strong understanding of the realities of caring for the children, and they provide foster carers with the right support at the right time. Skilled support workers, thoughtful matching and well-planned respite ensure that children remain safely within stable, loving, family homes. This wraparound approach creates a powerful sense of being held, nurtured and cared for, which is evident throughout the organisation and results in children making exceptional progress.

Nursing staff work closely with foster carers, providing tailored training and guidance that enable children's healthcare to be delivered safely and confidently. Collaborative working with medical teams and the use of clear, bespoke medication systems further strengthen this practice.

Therapeutic support is embedded throughout the agency. The behaviour coordinator works skilfully with foster carers, enabling them to deliver attuned, trauma-informed interventions that help children to feel understood and secure.

Foster carers, and often their wider families, show extraordinary commitment. They advocate tirelessly for children and consistently go above and beyond to ensure that their needs are met. This dedication leads to exceptional progress. One child, previously not expected to attend school, is now thriving in full-time education, a life-changing achievement, celebrated by her family and professionals.

Children experience an exceptionally inclusive service where their identity, heritage and beliefs are celebrated. Staff and foster carers ensure that children feel seen and valued through thoughtful, accessible resources that promote cultural events and support children to explore and maintain their sense of self.

Children's voices are central to the agency's work. They build trusting relationships with staff and carers, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to decisions that affect them. Initiatives such as the 'home improvers group' give children genuine influence, from recruitment to panel, and foster a strong sense of pride, belonging and responsibility.

The agency creates a vibrant, nurturing community. Events and activities bring children, carers and staff together, strengthening relationships and reducing isolation. Foster carers, respite carers, back-up carers and support workers form an exceptionally cohesive network, often travelling long distances to ensure that children are cared for by familiar, trusted adults. This is underpinned by a meticulous matching process that prioritises stability and emotional security.

Children's achievements are celebrated with creativity and sensitivity. Sensory-based awards and personalised recognition help children to understand their successes and build lifelong confidence. Foster carers show remarkable patience, joy and pride in the children they care for, seeing each child's personality and strengths ahead of their disabilities.

The agency's compassion extends to moments of profound difficulty. The respect and care shown to foster carers, children and families following the death of a child demonstrate an exceptional culture of love, dignity and humanity. Professionals speak with deep admiration for the agency; one social worker said, 'They would be the foster carers I would choose if I were being fostered myself.' A headteacher with over 20 years' experience echoed this, describing the agency as consistently enabling children to thrive.

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

Children benefit from exceptional placement stability, underpinned by strong relationships, proactive support and rigorous oversight. Foster carers understand each child's vulnerabilities and provide tailored supervision. Children are encouraged to explore their surroundings. Foster carers help them to discover the world and do not shy away from the normality of everyday modern life and the challenges that this brings.

Bespoke care packages, multi-disciplinary working and responsive safeguarding systems ensure that risks are managed effectively and in line with individual care plans.

Training is of an excellent standard. Mandatory and specialist sessions are delivered by nurse trainers, behaviour coordinators and peer mentors, embedding therapeutic practice across the agency.

Foster carers speak highly of the support groups and monthly supervision, which strengthen their confidence and deepen their understanding of children's needs.

Palliative mentors provide foster carers with exceptional emotional, practical and experiential support. Their lived understanding of caring for children with life-limiting conditions means that they can offer guidance that is deeply attuned to the realities of the role. Foster carers describe this support as invaluable, particularly during periods of uncertainty or heightened medical need.

The presence of palliative mentors also reinforces the agency's culture of compassion. By working alongside carers through some of the most challenging aspects of fostering, palliative mentors help to sustain carers' resilience, wellbeing and capacity to provide exceptional care. This has a direct, positive impact on children's comfort, emotional security and quality of life.

Safeguarding is threaded throughout the agency. Allegations are managed swiftly and transparently, with thorough recording and learning embedded into practice. Standards of care concerns are handled with rigour, reflection and challenge, with effective oversight by managers to ensure best practice.

Learning reviews strengthen practice across the agency by creating a culture where reflection, curiosity and continuous improvement are the norm. They allow staff and foster carers to examine incidents, challenges or near-misses in a safe, structured way, focusing on what can be learned rather than who is at fault. This promotes openness and transparency, which are hallmarks of outstanding safeguarding practice.

Unannounced visits and strong regulatory relationships provide further assurance. The agency's commitment to continuous improvement and its culture of openness and accountability ensure that children are protected, happy and well cared for.

Recruitment processes are generally strong. However, managers did not fully explore employment gaps for one support worker, meaning that an important element of safer recruitment scrutiny was missed. This oversight reduced the level of assurance about the individual's suitability to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The agency is led by a committed and visionary leadership team whose determination to embed a shared ethos across the workforce has created a culture of excellence. Staff feel valued, supported and proud to work for the agency, and this sense of belonging is echoed by foster carers, who consistently describe the agency as responsive, respectful and deeply child-focused.

Children benefit from high-quality care and exceptional support. Lower caseloads for supervising social workers ensure that children are seen regularly and that carers receive timely, hands-on guidance. Consultations with children, carers and professionals inform service development and promote continuous improvement.

Foster carers are treated as professionals and supported to develop their skills through mandatory training, Level 3 diplomas, and bespoke workshops tailored to individual children's needs.

Support groups are well attended and provide space for reflection, learning and emotional support. Peer mentoring and palliative care expertise further strengthen carers' confidence and resilience.

Staff receive regular, high-quality supervision which supports staff wellbeing and professional development. However, some actions relating to children's safety and future planning are not being escalated at sufficient speed.

Panel processes are rigorous and inclusive, with new leadership showing insight and integrity. The agency responds positively to feedback and demonstrates a clear commitment to learning and improvement.

Assessment of carer suitability is thorough, well-evidenced, and scrutinised through rigorous quality assurance processes and a diverse and impactful panel. The agency is responsive to instruction from the panel and receptive to the insights of the decision maker.

Through effective, dedicated and tenacious leadership, the agency is able to provide exemplary care and improve life chances for children.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the system for recruiting staff and others includes an effective system for reaching decisions as to who is to be appointed and the circumstances in which an application should be refused in the light of concerns about suitability that are declared or discovered through the recruitment process. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 19.5)

- The registered person should regularly monitor all records kept by the service to ensure compliance with the service's policies. In particular, this refers to obtaining children's statutory records from their placing authority. Additionally, ensuring there is no unnecessary delay in the completion of agreed actions and tasks for staff and foster carers and pathway planning for children. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 25.2)

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: 2821699

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