

Inspired Fostering

Inspired Fostering Limited

82 Mortimer Street, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 5PS

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

This agency registered with Ofsted in December 2021 and is privately owned.

The registered manager has been in post since December 2021.

The agency provides a range of fostering households for children, including emergency, short-term and long-term homes. At the time of this inspection, the agency was providing care for 13 children in 10 fostering households.

Inspection dates: 15 to 19 December 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The independent fostering agency is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 12 September 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children are settled with their foster carers and there is clear evidence of them making progress. Children report that they are happy and enjoy spending time with their foster carers. They feel that their foster carers listen to them and respond to their views. One child reported that their foster carer works with them to help them to manage their behaviour and to achieve in school by setting rewards that they can achieve.

Children have access to a range of clubs and activities in the community. This supports children's physical and emotional wellbeing. Children are included in holidays with their foster families, and the agency also provides a range of events and outings for foster families that the children enjoy.

Children's relationships with those who are important to them are promoted and the agency provides additional services to facilitate contact. As a result, the children maintain a sense of belonging within their families and benefit from their ongoing support.

Children are supported to attend school, and children make progress in their education. Attendance at school is good and children are rewarded for their efforts.

Children's health needs are appropriately responded to and met. One child's serious health condition was well supported by their fostering family.

While most children are supported with and prepared for adulthood by their foster carers, for some children, the agency's arrangements for preparing and supporting children in their transition to independence are not clear.

For some children, their full information is not gained by the agency or made available to the foster carers prior to placement, which has the potential to impact on the care being provided. The agency does not consistently ensure that foster carers have access to necessary consents when children move in. Clear escalation processes have not been developed or implemented in response to this. Not all children are supported to fully understand when and why they have to move. This means that for some children their transitions are not well planned.

Participation is an area which is under development in the agency. Information for children about their rights and their care is not currently made available in formats that are accessible to all children. Children's views, wishes and feelings are not currently influencing the ongoing development of the service. Leaders have begun to take steps to improve the voice and influence that children have. It is too early to see the impact of this.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Safeguarding incidents in this agency are rare. When incidents do occur, children's social workers report effective communication and consultation. There have been no incidents of the use of physical intervention. The agency has not been subject to any complaints.

Allegations are managed in line with agency policy in the first instance, and the agency works with children's social workers when allegations are made. Any shortfalls in practice that are identified are followed up through standard of care assessments and carers are returned to panel for review of approval. However, the manager's monitoring of post-panel actions from standard of care investigations is not consistently recorded.

In a small number of circumstances, the regulator or the local authority designated officer have not been notified about allegations in a timely way. Although this has not caused any detriment to children, there are missed opportunities for the agency to benefit from external scrutiny of practice and the identification or tracking of any emerging themes or patterns.

Children rarely go missing from their homes. When children do go missing, they are located and returned home quickly by their foster carers. However, risk assessments do not always provide sufficient information or strategies to support foster carers to manage these risks. There are missed opportunities for the agency to learn from missing incidents. Children access return home interviews. However, the agency does not have oversight of these or make attempts to access further information.

The assessment of potential foster carers is weak. There is limited evidence of analysis or professional curiosity evident in assessments, and they do not provide the necessary depth to assure the agency of some applicants' suitability.

The fostering panel does not demonstrate robust quality assurance functions. The central list is limited and lacks diversity. Leaders are aware of this and have taken steps to strengthen panel capacity and capability. It is too early to see the impact of this.

Matching processes do not evidence sufficient consideration of foster carers' circumstances, skills, knowledge and experience and there are missed opportunities for the agency to fully consider how to address gaps, as these are not clearly identified or captured through the current processes. On one occasion, a child was placed with newly approved carers who had not accessed any training. On another occasion, plans for respite placements continued when the agency was aware of significant changes to a carer's personal circumstances. This practice leaves carers vulnerable and has the potential for children's needs to not be fully understood or met.

Safer recruitment practice is generally well managed. However, there are some gaps in consistent practice. This has not had any negative effect but has the potential to do so.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Leaders and managers do not demonstrate a full and comprehensive understanding of the relevant regulations. This impacts on their ability to implement the regulations effectively.

The agency is not meeting the aims and approach set out in its statement of purpose. There is little ambition or vision demonstrated through the agency's current development plan.

Monitoring systems and quality assurance processes are not effective and have failed to identify the shortfalls identified during the inspection. Some recommendations from the previous inspection have not been met and have therefore been restated.

The quality-of-care reports have not been routinely submitted to the regulator. These reports lack sufficient detail to support the development of the service or to improve the quality of care that the agency is providing.

The agency does not have robust processes in place around the operation and functions of the panel. This has recently been identified by the panel chair and the agency decision-maker and plans to address this have yet to be fully considered or implemented. Processes for foster carers subject to exemption criteria have not been followed.

Staff have access to regular supervision. However, staff supervision does not evidence reflective practice or discussions. Staff gaps in knowledge or process are not explored within the supervision process. Staff do not benefit from clear, planned induction processes, and expectations regarding training for staff are unclear.

Team meetings are well attended and follow a clear agenda. Discussions are recorded. However, responses to presenting issues, themes or concerns do not result in clear direction or action. There is a lack of professional curiosity and challenge from the manager in interactions with the wider staff team.

More positively, professionals are complimentary about working relationships with foster carers and staff in the agency. They report effective communication and information-sharing and highlight that the children placed are making progress.

Staff and foster carers are positive about the manager, the support offered and the wider agency. Relationships between staff, carers and managers are a strength of the agency. Carers report feeling well supported and value the availability of known staff members.

The move to the new offices and implementation of the new recording system have been well received by both staff and foster carers.

What does the independent fostering 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 Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and the national minimum standards. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The fostering service provider must provide a copy of the children's guide to the Chief Inspector, to each foster parent approved by the fostering service provider, and to each child placed by them (subject to the child's age and understanding). Subject to paragraph (6), the fostering service provider must ensure that the fostering service is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 3 (4)(5))	28 February 2026
The fostering service provider must provide foster parents with such training, advice, as appears necessary in the interests of children placed with them. The fostering service provider must ensure that, in relation to any child placed or to be placed with a foster parent, the foster parent is given such information, which is kept up to date, as to enable him to provide appropriate care for the child, and in particular that each foster parent is provided with a copy of the most recent version of the child's care plan provided to the fostering service provider under regulation 6(3)(d) of the Care Planning Regulations. (Regulation 17 (1)(3))	28 February 2026
The fostering service provider must review the approval of each foster parent in accordance with this regulation. At the conclusion of the review, the fostering service provider must prepare a written report, setting out whether— the terms of the foster parent's approval continue to be appropriate. (Regulation 28 (1)(4)(b)) In particular, ensuring that foster carers caring for children outside of the usual fostering limits have the correct exemptions in place.	28 February 2026

The registered person must maintain a system for— monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate intervals, and improving the quality of foster care provided by the fostering agency. The registered person must provide the Chief Inspector with a written report in respect of any review conducted for the purposes of paragraph (1) and, on request, to any local authority. The system referred to in paragraph (1) must provide for consultation with foster parents, children placed with foster parents, and their placing authority (unless, in the case of a fostering agency which is a voluntary organisation, it is also the placing authority). (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3))	28 February 2026
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's safety and welfare are promoted in all fostering placements. In particular, risk assessments should be up to date and provide sufficient guidance and advice on how to keep children safe. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 4.3)
- The registered person should arrange a meeting in private between the child and the responsible authority when a child goes missing and there is concern for their welfare, to consider the reasons for their going missing. The fostering service considers with the responsible authority and foster carer what action should be taken to prevent the child going missing in future. Any concerns arising about the foster carer or the placement are addressed, as far as is possible, in conjunction with the responsible authority. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 5.9)
- The registered person should, unless an emergency placement makes it impossible, make sure children are given information about the foster carer before arrival, and any information they need or reasonably request about the placement, in a format appropriate to their age and understanding. Wherever possible, children are able to visit the foster carer's home and to talk with the foster carers in private prior to a placement decision being made. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 11.3)
- The registered person should ensure that there are comprehensive arrangements for preparing and supporting young people to make the transition to independence. This includes appropriate training and support to foster carers

caring for young people who are approaching adulthood. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 12.3)

- The registered person should ensure that panel provide robust quality assurance feedback to the fostering service provider on the quality of reports being presented to panel. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 14.2)
- The registered person should ensure that the fostering service can demonstrate, including from written records, that it consistently follows good recruitment practice. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 19.2)
- The registered person should ensure that all foster carers, fostering service staff and volunteers understand what they must do if they receive an allegation or have suspicions that a person may have: a. behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child; b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or c. behaved towards a child in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with children. The fostering service ensures that the required actions are taken, or have been taken, in any relevant situation of which it is aware. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 22.1)
- The registered person should ensure that the agency has a record of the child's placement plan and other up-to-date records relating to care, education and health, and that these are provided to the foster carers. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 31.2)

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

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Inspector

Cassie Martin, Social Care Inspector

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