

# Fostering to Inspire

Homes2inspire Limited

1 Red Hall Court, Wakefield WF1 2UN

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this independent fostering agency

Fostering to Inspire is an independent fostering agency which was registered in October 2017. The agency currently only has carers who offer short-term placements but intends to provide a range of long-term, short-term, respite and parent and child placements in the future. At the time of inspection, the agency has two fostering households caring for two children with a number of prospective carers due to be presented to the panel for approval.

**Inspection dates:** 22 to 24 October 2018

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The independent fostering agency provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** n/a

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** none

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Key findings from this inspection

This independent fostering agency is good because:

- Carers show good insight into the experiences and behaviour of the children in their care. Children's emotional well-being improves because of the consistent and sensitive way that carers respond to them.
- Children are making good progress in education due to the close partnerships between the carers and agency and school staff.
- The recruitment and training of carers place a strong focus on safeguarding children.
- The manager has a clear vision for the future of the agency to ensure that it provides high-quality care for children. She is making positive progress towards this goal.

The independent fostering agency's areas for development:

- The agency has not sought the views of the local police about its policy setting out the measures to be followed to prevent children from going missing from the agency's placements, and the procedures to follow if they do.

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and the national minimum standards. The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Due date</b>
<p>The fostering service provider must prepare and implement a policy, which is agreed with the local police, setting out—</p> <p>the measures to be followed to prevent children placed with foster parents from going missing from their placement, and</p> <p>the procedure to be followed when a child is missing from a foster parent’s home without permission. (Regulation 13(3)(a)(b))</p> <p>Specifically, that the agency must consult with the local police about its missing from home policy.</p>	<p>30/11/2018</p>

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

This is a new agency which is currently in the process of expanding the number of placements it offers to children. At present, it provides short-term care to a limited number of children. The slow rate of expansion has enabled the management team to ensure that new carers are thoroughly prepared, and that support systems are fully embedded to provide stable and successful placements to children.

The children in placement have quickly built trusted and secure relationships with their foster carers, which is having a positive effect on their lives. The agency ensures that children's needs are carefully assessed prior to placement and that they are matched with carers who can meet these needs. Carers are fully involved in the consideration of potential matches with children.

Children coming into new placements are helped to feel less anxious by receiving a photo of their carers, the home and their new bedroom. They also receive a copy of the agency's children's guide along with other appropriate welcome gifts.

The carers are well prepared to understand the impact that children's experiences may have on their behaviour. The attachment training that carers received during their assessment period provides them with insight enabling them to support children sensitively from the start of the placement. The children are flourishing because of the care that they receive. One child was described as a 'different child who has made great progress' since going to live with his carer.

The children's educational outcomes are improving because of the partnerships that exist between the carers, supervising social workers and school staff. One child's behaviour has improved to such an extent that a placement in a mainstream school is now being considered. This demonstrates a significant achievement for him.

The children benefit from the positive input and nurturing care available to them from the foster carers and their extended families. They have a range of positive experiences including holidays, joining local youth clubs and attending family events. The children develop new interests which contribute to their emerging self-confidence and well-being. For example, one child has developed an interest in growing vegetables with her carer.

Children are helped to maintain their identity through the creative ways carers promote relationships with birth families. One carer has made cushions from material given by a family member. The carers build relationships with the children's birth family where appropriate to maintain vital family links for children.

Foster carers benefit from very professional and supportive relationships with the agency staff. Supervising social workers form strong relationships with them and they are also able to access support through the out of hours service. This help has been important in stabilising placements.

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

Clear safeguarding policies and procedures inform care practice. However, the agency has not sought the opinion of the local police about its missing from care policy to ensure that its contents meet with police protocols.

The carers are well prepared to ensure that children are safeguarded effectively. They receive enhanced training around safe care practice as part of their initial training. They devise 'safer care practice' plans with their supervising social workers which outline behaviour and expectations in the home.

Before children are placed, the staff gather information from their placing authorities and consider any risks. These risks, along with actions needed to reduce them, are documented clearly for the carers to follow. The risks to children are reducing due to the actions that the carers are taking in line with these plans.

The well-developed strategies and training support carers to keep children safe online. The carers put appropriate safeguards around online activity in place.

The recruitment and assessment of foster carers have a strong focus on safeguarding. The agency completes a full range of background checks including social media. This helps to ensure that children are living in households where they are protected.

The agency staff assure themselves that children are happy and safe in their placements by making unannounced visits and giving children regular opportunities to speak to the supervising social worker alone. Health and safety assessments of the foster carer's home are undertaken annually.

The carers use restorative ways to help the children to understand the impact of their behaviour. This helps children to improve their relationships and increase their sense of responsibility.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The agency is managed effectively by an appropriately qualified manager who has a wealth of experience and knowledge about fostering. She was registered in October 2017. She receives effective support from the registered individual who also acts as the agency decision-maker.

The manager demonstrates high aspirations for the service. The intention is to develop the provision using the 'Mockingbird' model when a sufficient number of carers have been approved. Her practice demonstrates a passionate commitment to improving the outcomes for children.

Although there is only a small number of children in placement, the agency has been successful in recruiting several prospective carers who are currently in the assessment process. The agency currently uses independent social workers to undertake assessments. The quality of assessments is monitored well by the manager to ensure that they are focused on the skills and attributes needed to provide high-quality care for children.

The agency takes positive action through its advertising and publicity to attract a

range of carers who can meet the diverse needs of children. Images reflect a range of different lifestyles and advertisements state, 'We celebrate diversity, our main focus is to find stable, loving carers – without limits on gender or sexual bias.' All carers complete training around equality and diversity as part of their initial preparation.

The agency is well resourced to meet the needs of the carers and children. Supervising social workers provide the carers with regular supervision which supports them to provide good-quality care. The agency staff are also supported well by the manager through regular reflective supervision and team meetings which focus on the needs of the carers and the children in placement.

There is an appropriate range of training on offer for carers, agency staff and panel members. The manager's active role in a national fostering organisation ensures that practice is based on current research. It also ensures that all staff and carers are suitably supported to meet the needs of the children in their care.

The manager has thorough oversight of the service provided by the agency and regularly makes improvements in response to her findings. Consultation mechanisms are in place; however, these are in their infancy due to the short time the agency has been operating.

The fostering panel promotes safe, secure and stable placements. The panel chair has the necessary knowledge and expertise to support members to make child-centred decisions in relation to the cases before them. The panel members have a range of diverse backgrounds and professional experience. They consider the strengths and potential vulnerabilities of applicants coming before them carefully and reflect this scrutiny in the recommendations they make. The panel provides an effective quality assurance function through its feedback about the quality of the assessments it considers.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the independent fostering agency knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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:** 1259729

**Registered provider:** Homes2inspire Limited

**Registered provider address:** Homes2inspire Limited, Prospects House, 19 Elmfield Road, Bromley, Kent BR1 1LT

**Responsible individual:** Simon Goulding

**Registered manager:** Claire Dracup

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## **Inspector**

Janet Black, social care inspector



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