



Inspection Report on

Fostering Solutions Limited

**Fostering Solutions
57 Regent Street
Wrexham
LL11 1PF**

Date Inspection Completed

28/02/2024

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2024.

You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.

About Fostering Solutions Limited

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of care provided | Fostering Service |
| Registered Provider | Fostering Solutions Limited |
| Registered places | 0 |
| Language of the service | English |
| Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection | 24 August 2017 |
| Does this service promote Welsh language and culture? | This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture. |

Summary

Fostering Solutions has a culture of openness and transparency which ensures the best possible outcomes are achieved for children using the service. Children engage in their care planning and a rights-based approach is evident. They are consistently consulted for their views about how the service is run, and how it can be improved. They participate in meaningful activities which enhance their well-being and quality of life. Foster carers advocate for children and support them to be independent, active and to achieve their individual goals and outcomes.

There is effective management oversight of the service, which supports its successful operation. A very strong, consistent management team are committed to continuous improvement. The vision for the service is based on setting high standards and learning from best practice. Foster carers are supported by trained and experienced staff who provide regular supervision. There has been a recent change to the Responsible Individual (RI) at the service; they are proactive and have identified areas within the service for further development.

Well-being

Children are regularly asked for feedback on the care they receive and if there is anything they may want to do or change for the future. These views are taken seriously and inform the development of the service they receive. The service provider employs family support workers who form positive and meaningful relationships with children. They organise activities and hold participation groups so that children can meet with others to share experiences. They have devised an independence programme and undertake well-being discussions with children to promote their confidence and safety. Children use an app to record how they are feeling about the areas in their lives that affect their well-being. The information is used to track children's progress and the managers meet regularly with the head of outcomes and quality assurance to analyse the results. Children's well-being is also monitored through daily interactions with their foster carers, and supervising social workers engage children during home visits, and as part of foster carers' annual reviews. Children are supported to attend local authority reviews of their care and their foster carers and supervising social workers advocate on their behalf. The service is working towards providing an active offer of the Welsh Language and promotes equal opportunities. Foster carers support children to be physically and emotionally healthy by encouraging a healthy lifestyle, and ensuring they have prompt access to health services. Children's behavioural support, physical, emotional, and mental health well-being needs are promoted and monitored. Children benefit from receiving well-planned, individualised care that meets their needs effectively. The service's therapist supports foster carers to understand the issues experienced by children, by talking to them about concerns they have and providing strategies to resolve any issues.

The service provider is committed to support children to succeed. The service values education and consults with children to identify the best form this should take. The service provider employs an education officer who assists in identifying suitable education provision and works in partnership with foster carers and education professionals. The service works with each child to build their emotional resilience and self-confidence and prepare them for independence. Children have access to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Programme and can join expeditions through the British Exploring Society.

The service ensures children are protected from abuse and neglect. Foster carers and staff are trained in safeguarding and understand their responsibilities. When concerns arise, these are referred on promptly. The service works collaboratively, to share information and safeguard children.

Care and Support

There are pre-admission processes in place to assess whether the service can meet children's needs and support them to achieve personal outcomes. Information is sought in advance from the commissioning local authority, and the information is checked by a referrals manager who assesses how the children's care and support needs can be met by the service's foster carers. Discussions take place with the team manager, supervising social worker and the foster carers. Foster carers told us this process is very thorough, and they are provided with all the information they need to decide whether they can care for a child. We found the recording of this process could be developed to better evidence what areas are considered before a placement is made.

The service provider employs a carer recruitment officer to ensure recruitment is a focus for the service. Assessments of foster carers are of a consistently good quality and contain all the required information and checks to ensure their suitability to care for children. These are mostly undertaken by supervising social workers with quality assurance processes in place to check the quality of assessments and timescales for completion.

The service ensures children have placement plans, risk assessments and safer care plans in place to support foster carers to provide good standards of care and support for children. Pen pictures within plans provides information about the children's backgrounds, where they are today in terms of their development and progress and what they need to receive to reach their well-being outcomes. Safer care plans are specific to individual foster carers and children have their own version. These are created when children move into their foster home and are reviewed regularly. Risk assessments are in place to reflect children's needs, and these are shared with foster carers to ensure they have a good understanding of how to support children and manage risk.

Foster carers understand children's needs and provide responsive care. They are committed to ensure children achieve and experience stability, warmth, and a sense of belonging. Foster carers have access to a broad range of training opportunities, and these are available via online learning or classroom-based training. They told us the standard of the training is excellent and can be tailored to meet children's individual needs. The service organises group activities every half term and foster carers said these are valued by them and the children. Foster carers spoke highly about the standard of support they receive from their supervising social workers and the service as a whole. Groups are organised for them to attend, including a men's group and a menopause group, which are highly valued by participants. The management team are consulting with foster carers to find out what other groups would provide support. Recognition for foster carer's achievements is supported through awards and appreciation at annual events.

Environment

The office premises are suitable, fit for purpose and provide good space for delivering training and holding meetings. Childrens artwork and photographs of activities and events are on display. There is suitable space within the premises to provide privacy for the supervision of staff. Foster carers' homes are assessed when they are recruited to determine their suitability in meeting children's needs. Supervising social workers visit homes routinely during announced and unannounced visits, which provide opportunity to assess the home environment. Standards of health and safety in foster carers' homes are considered as part of the formal annual review process, together with pet assessments to assess safety. Actions to mitigate risks are agreed, recorded and reviewed as required. Children who live with foster carers full time personalise their bedrooms to their tastes, which provides them a sense of belonging.

Leadership and Management

The service is operating in line with the statement of purpose. Children are provided information about the service and their rights and entitlements, in a variety of formats to suit their age and level of understanding. A written guide provides information on the care and support they will receive, how their voices are heard and how to raise a complaint.

Robust recruitment processes are in place for foster carers and staff working at the service. The staff team includes a registered manager, team manager, supervising social workers, two family support workers, carer recruitment officer and a business support team. Staff working at the service feel supported by their managers. The team manager supervises the team, and the quality of supervision records is high. Those who returned Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) surveys rated the support and training they receive as excellent. A supervising social worker commented: *“As an organisation they value their employees and work hard at promoting their emotional well-being in the working environment.”*

Staff meet monthly to share children’s positive experiences and discuss the current needs of children and foster families who require additional support. All staff know the children, foster carers and their families. Foster carers told us they find this reassuring and know, when they call the office, they will speak with someone who knows their situation. At the time of inspection, there were 51 fostering households providing care for 77 children. CIW issued surveys and most of the 29 foster carers who returned them rated the support they receive and the standard of training as excellent. A foster carer stated: *“The support from our supporting social worker is absolutely outstanding.”* And *“The supporting services provided by the service are also excellent. They are always there with the appropriate and effective knowledge and support.”*

The fostering panel carefully consider information presented in foster care assessments and determine foster carers are safe, suitably fit, and competent to undertake the role. Decision making is robust and panel records demonstrate careful consideration of issues. Prospective foster carers attend panel and receive confirmation of their approval status. Panel members have experience relevant to their roles and the membership is of a suitable and varied composition of expertise. They receive appraisals, supervision and attend training. Recommendations of panel to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) are timely. The ADM is part of a team of ADMs that meet regularly to discuss good practice and identify improvements.

There is very strong leadership and management at the service. The staff team is supported through a clear line management structure and by the organisation at a local and national level. Foster carers told us the service they receive feels local and many described it as “being part of a family” but also value the benefits of being part of a larger organisation. The responsible individual (RI) has been in post for three months and we received positive feedback about them being approachable and responsive. The RI is getting to know the

service including carers and engaging in discussions regarding future development. The registered manager and team manager have been in post for a number of years and understand the service well and the needs of children they support. Quality assurance systems are thorough and effective. The responsible individual, team manager and staff spoke passionately of their desire to promote the stability of the children placed with foster carers, and we saw examples of creative measures successfully supporting children and foster carers and sustaining placements.

Summary of Non-Compliance

| Status | What each means |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| New | This non-compliance was identified at this inspection. |
| Reviewed | Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection. |
| Not Achieved | Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved. |
| Achieved | Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved. |

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people’s well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)

| Regulation | Summary | Status |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| N/A | No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection | N/A |

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement

| Regulation | Summary | Status |
|------------|---------|--------|
|------------|---------|--------|

| | | |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| N/A | No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection | N/A |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

Was this report helpful?

We want to hear your views and experiences of reading our inspection reports. This will help us understand whether our reports provide clear and valuable information to you.

To share your views on our reports please visit the following link to complete a short survey:

- [Inspection report survey](#)

If you wish to provide general feedback about a service, please visit our [Feedback surveys page](#).

Date Published 17/04/2024