

ISP Enfield

Integrated Services Programme

ISP, 64a Church Street, Enfield, Middlesex EN2 6AX

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

This independent fostering agency registered in 2006 and is part of a limited company. It has several offices registered with Ofsted; two of the offices share a registration to form the agency's London service. One office is based in Enfield, and the other is in South London. The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2022.

The agency provides long-term, short-term, respite care, parent and child and emergency placements. At the time of this inspection, 79 fostering households were caring for 88 children. Thirteen children spoke with inspectors, and another two children provided feedback via email.

Inspection dates: 16 to 20 June 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The independent fostering agency provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 13 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The agency provides high-quality care to children, and as a result, their outcomes are positive. Most children have lived with their foster families for a significant length of time, have developed secure attachments with their foster families and have a very strong sense of belonging. A child said, 'Being with [name of foster carer] has made us feel safe, cared for and supported. She is understanding and always makes sure we have what we need. She listens to us and genuinely cares about our feelings. The [name of fostering agency] has supported us throughout our time here, not just day to day, but also emotionally and educationally.'

The fostering agency values children's views and opinions. They work hard to ensure that children's voices, including the birth children of foster carers, are heard and that children have an influence in shaping the agency's development. A good illustration of this is the children's 'Chill and Chat' group. Staff and foster carers place the well-being of children at the centre of their practice.

Children receive personalised care that meets their needs well. The agency pays good attention to equality, diversity and inclusion, and children's identity needs are met. Children say that they feel listened to and share trusted, loving relationships with their families. Children are aware of how to make complaints but generally do not do so.

Children benefit from the agency's success in identifying suitable foster carers. Children settle in quickly with their new families. Careful placement planning means that children receive good information about their prospective foster families, where they are going to live and some of the things they can expect to do. Introductions between children and their prospective foster carers are sensitively managed. This supports placement success; unplanned endings do not happen often.

Children live healthy lifestyles. Foster carers and staff promote children's physical, emotional and social well-being. For example, children attend primary healthcare appointments and receive advice and support from specialist health services as needed.

Children benefit immensely from the agency's therapeutic model of care. Qualified therapists work directly with children, their foster families and staff to support placement stability. Therapists provide staff and foster carers with training and group reflective space to explore therapeutic parenting approaches. This therapeutic approach to care underpins the agency's practice and is central to all the work it does with and for children.

Children's learning outcomes are very good. Most children attend school or college regularly and make good progress from their starting points. Some older children are involved in apprenticeships and some have jobs, while other young people attend university. Foster carers are advocates for children's educational success. The

agency's advisory teachers are instrumental in tracking children's learning and development needs, and they ensure that there is consistent and effective liaison with educational professionals to promote children's learning. The entire agency routinely acknowledges and celebrates children's academic and more general achievements. This acts as further motivation for children to do well.

Foster carers and staff work with older children to prepare them for adulthood. A number of young people remain living with their foster families after turning 18 in 'staying put' arrangements.

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

The agency protects children from neglect, harm, abuse and bullying. Children say that they feel protected by their families, and there is a strong and proactive response to safeguarding concerns that helps to reduce the risk of harm.

Staff and managers monitor safeguarding concerns, which are understood and managed well. They meet regularly to review the stability of placements and explore how best to manage any concerns. Where there are safeguarding issues, managers, staff and foster carers devise effective safety plans that help keep children safe. However, the quality of risk assessments is variable. A small number of children's risk assessments have not been appropriately updated, and some fail to highlight all known or suspected risks.

The assessment, preparation and supervision of foster carers have a strong focus on child protection. This supports their safe care of children. Foster families and child-specific safe care policies outline how fostering households will keep children safe. However, managers do not ensure that there are safe care plans in place for parent and child placements so that there is a mutual understanding of safe boundaries in these fostering households.

Foster carers set clear and consistent boundaries for children, which promotes positive behaviour. Therapists are highly effective in supporting foster carers to develop sensitive, trauma-informed approaches to care. They provide foster carers with effective guidance to manage difficult issues. Children receive support, training and resources to help keep themselves safe.

Managers and leaders monitor, reflect and report on all safeguarding concerns. Following a serious incident, managers and leaders identified clear learning. This led to the development and revision of key care policies and practices. The management of complaints and allegations against foster carers is fair and robust, and children's welfare is at the centre of investigations. Staff work in effective partnership with safeguarding professionals to ensure that children are protected from harm and abuse.

The fostering agency's recruitment and vetting of staff and panel members are robust and in accordance with safe recruitment practices. This ensures that staff are suitable to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The leadership and management of the fostering agency are strong. The management team demonstrates the continued ambition and commitment to provide and maintain foster care placements that meet the needs of children. The management of the fostering service is efficient, and the service is well run. The registered manager is skilled, qualified and experienced to manage the service with positive effect.

The fostering service has good monitoring systems in place for most aspects of the service's operation. These include the review and evaluation of the outcomes for children and the regular review of safeguarding protocols. As a result, leaders have good insight into the quality of the fostering service, including areas for improvement. However, the auditing of some case files is not fully effective. For example, a small number of records of staff's home visits when children are spoken with, are not appropriately updated. Furthermore, the agency's placement suitability form is not always explicit about gaps or support needs that might challenge the placement.

The service's fostering panel operates effectively. Its membership is drawn from a range of professional backgrounds. The panel undertakes clear and appropriate analysis of the work that is presented at fostering panel meetings. The quality of foster carers' assessments presented at the panel is consistently high.

The fostering service's preparation of foster carers is effective, and the training available to foster carers is well received. This includes accredited specialist therapeutic training. Foster carers have personal development plans, which help to identify how their development needs are to be met. However, not all foster carers complete core, mandatory training within expected timeframes, and a small number of foster carers have failed to complete Training, Support and Development Standards within 12 months of their initial approval.

Leaders and managers provide foster carers and staff with excellent support and regular supervision. A foster carer said, '[Name of fostering agency] has not only met but consistently exceeded my expectations in terms of support and training. Their dedication to fostering excellence is evident in every interaction, and I am deeply grateful for the positive impact they have had on my fostering experience.'

The support, training and supervision of staff are also excellent. Staff receive meaningful inductions when they are newly appointed, and managers consistently conduct staff and panel members' annual appraisals. The staff team is skilled and highly motivated.

Children benefit from the good partnership working between their foster carers, fostering service staff and other professionals. Communication is regular and effective. This supports good coordination of children's care and means that children make progress and have very positive experiences.

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
<p>The fostering service provider must provide foster parents with such training, advice, information as appears necessary in the interests of children placed with them. (Regulation 17 (1))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that foster carers complete core, mandatory training as expected.</p>	1 August 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that foster carers are able to evidence that the Training, Support and Development Standards have been attained within 12 months of approval. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 20.3)
- The registered person should ensure that the service implements a proportionate approach to any risk assessment. In particular, ensure that staff explore fully the risk of child criminal exploitation if there is indication that previous concerns are re-emerging for children. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 4.5)
- The registered person should ensure that children's safety and welfare are promoted in all fostering households. In particular, ensure that safe care plans are in place for parent and child placements. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 4.1)
- The registered person should regularly monitor all records kept by the service to ensure compliance with the service's policies. In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff record home visits where children are spoken with and placement matching forms are kept up to date. ('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: SC067431

Registered provider: Integrated Services Programme

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Inspectors

Sandra Jacobs-Walls, Social Care Inspector
Richard Wyper, Social Care Inspector

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