

Orange Grove Fostercare Southern Counties

Orange Grove Fostercare Ltd
9 Victoria Way, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 9NF
Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

Orange Grove Fostercare South Coast Office is a privately run independent fostering agency, originally registered with Ofsted in December 2011 as Orange Grove Fostercare. The organisation re-registered as Orange Grove Fostercare South Coast Office in December 2015, after being purchased by Hillcrest Care Ltd in 2009. In July 2014, it was integrated into Partnership in Children's Services (PICS) and demerged from Hillcrest. The agency is based in Burgess Hill, West Sussex, in the south east region, and covers Kent, West Sussex, East Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire.

Inspection dates: 14 to 18 January 2019

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: 1 February 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This independent fostering agency is outstanding because:

- The assessment process is robust. An independent social worker and quality assurance manager ensure that only suitable applicants are put forward to the foster panel.
- The foster panel is highly effective. The chair and panel members provide a high level of scrutiny and challenge, and safeguarding is embedded into practice.
- The process for matching children is strong. Children benefit from being placed with foster carers who can meet their individual needs and identity.
- Children's day-to-day experiences are excellent. They are supported to participate in a wide range of out-of-school activities in their local community.
- Children make significant progress in all areas of their lives, particularly education.
- Training for staff and foster carers is effective. The learning and development consultant is highly experienced and delivers bespoke training to meet individual needs.
- Foster carer retention is excellent. Foster carers benefit from around the clock support from agency staff and managers.
- The theoretical model of care outlined in the statement of purpose runs through the organisation's policy, procedure and practice.
- The registered manager is forward thinking and strives for continual improvement.
- Monitoring arrangements are excellent. Detailed information from a range of sources helps leaders and managers maintain high standards.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The agency has an excellent recruitment strategy in place that attracts a diverse range of foster carers. This, together with the robust assessment process carried out by an independent social worker and overseen by a quality assurance manager, ensures that only suitable applicants are put forward and considered by the foster panel. Because of this, all children benefit from being placed with foster carers who are committed to providing a stable and nurturing home.

The process for matching children with foster carers is strong and effective. Formal matching documents clearly show how decisions are made and that they are child-centred. A lot of thought and consideration go into ensuring that foster carers have the right skills, experience and training to meet children's individual needs, as well as including the impact, if any, on other children and family members. Foster carers themselves are fully involved in the decision-making process and ultimately have the final say. This makes foster carers feel valued and contributes to successful placements.

The model of care promoted by the agency underpins the relationships children have with their foster carers. Strong attachments are evident in the way foster carers talk about their children, the records they keep, feedback from key people in their lives, and through direct observation of the interactions between them. Supervising social workers support this model of care by helping foster carers make the relevant theoretical links to their parenting style and their approach to the day-to-day care of the children.

Foster carers and staff have high aspirations for the children in their care. Attendance and engagement in education are actively promoted and all children are making progress. Children are also given opportunities to experience things that they may not have done before. This includes trying a range of out-of-school activities from karate to national citizen programmes and volunteering. Children spoken with at the time of the inspection were keen to share their experiences. Their participation in such schemes helps boost children's confidence and improve their self-esteem.

Foster carers and children benefit from supportive relationships with their supervising social workers. Foster carers and children spoken with during the inspection described their supervising social workers as being available day and night for advice and guidance. Regular support groups are organised, which are highly valued by the foster carers.

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

Safeguarding children is embedded into all areas of practice, particularly with regards to the foster panel. The panel chair and the agency decision maker are independent and very experienced. Both have a clear understanding of their roles and tasks, which is reflected in the membership of the panel. The panel itself is well managed and paperwork is received in advance, giving members time to assimilate the information and formulate questions beforehand, leaving time to focus on any key issues.

Staff are alert to the possibility of abuse and, consequently, any concerns are responded to immediately. This includes allegations against foster carers. The whole-team approach, following issues and/or concerns, results in work being done with children and carers as well as updating risk assessments and care plans. Feedback from the local authority designated officer supports this. She is very positive about how these situations are managed. Formal and informal support mechanisms are also in place for foster carers after incidents.

Leaders and managers have excellent oversight and scrutiny of critical incidents. The system used for monitoring significant events is regularly discussed in the registered manager's supervision. This ensures that things are followed up and dealt with in a timely manner and that cases are not closed until there is a clear outcome. Notifications to Ofsted are clear and concise and demonstrate that appropriate action is taken.

The agency benefits from access to an extremely skilled and knowledgeable internal learning and development consultant. His knowledge of the foster carers and his understanding of the children's needs are excellent. As a result of him working closely with leaders and managers, training is tailored to meet individual needs. Geographical challenges are also being dealt with creatively and training is delivered on a one-to-one basis where necessary. This includes promoting safeguarding and the underpinning theoretical model.

Staff supervision is prioritised and takes place on a regular basis. Leaders and managers are kept up to date about foster carers and children. Detailed records show that social workers and foster carers are working within the therapeutic model and actions are clear and child-focused. Staff receive feedback on their performance. However, there is no evidence of reflective conversations, which is not consistent with the culture and ethos of the service. This is a missed opportunity to capture the quality of the work being undertaken in these meetings.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager has been instrumental in developing the agency since the last inspection. This has been achieved by working collaboratively with other leaders and managers from within the organisation who have different roles and

responsibilities. Through a system of regular meetings with them, he has maintained effective oversight and scrutiny of these functions. This has had a hugely positive impact on the overall quality of the service and outcomes for the children.

The registered manager has a clear, child-focused vision that runs through all areas of practice. He is both aspirational and forward thinking and draws on research to drive a continual process of improvement. His approach permeates through the organisation and motivates staff. He also uses consultation effectively to develop the service.

The agency staff team benefits from working in a culture where continual professional development is promoted. Regular development days, team meetings and practice groups across all areas of the business ensure that the staff's skills and knowledge are kept up to date. Staff spoken with during the inspection value these opportunities and described how they enhance communication among colleagues who work remotely and facilitate good team working.

The registered manager, with the support of a competent deputy, has excellent oversight and scrutiny of the service. Effective quality assurance systems provide them with good-quality information that helps them to monitor compliance with the agency's policies, procedures and practice. Because of this, work is of a high standard and records are up to date. Their willingness to learn, particularly from placement endings and/or breakdowns, contributes to placement stability.

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: SC485748

Registered provider: Orange Grove FosterCare Ltd

Registered provider address: Wavendon Tower, Ortensia Drive, Milton Keynes
MK17 8LX

Responsible individual: Bridgid McCaig

Registered manager: Andrew Purnell

Telephone number: 01444873360

Email address: bmccaig@picscare.co.uk

Inspector

Amanda Harvey, social care inspector



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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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