

Tree House Care Fostering Solutions

Tree House Care Fostering Solutions Ltd

Tree House Care Fostering Solutions, The Old Vicarage, 17 Heneage Road, Grimsby,
North East Lincolnshire DN32 9DZ

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

Tree House Care Fostering Solutions is a privately run independent fostering agency which registered in March 2004. The agency provides emergency, short-term, long-term and respite placements. The agency also provides sibling group placements.

At the time of the inspection, the agency had 58 approved fostering households and 73 children living with foster carers.

The registered manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2017

Inspection dates: 1 to 5 December 2025

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: 5 December 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are provided with good-quality care. Children benefit from stable and nurturing placements. Sibling groups are supported to remain together. Carers feel supported and have frequent communication with staff which has resulted in stable placements even when challenges arise.

Children make positive progress and feel included in their own plans. Carers know the children well, prioritise their individual needs and support their interests. Carers provide opportunities for children to enjoy a range of experiences, supported by the agency. Older children are supported to develop independence skills, including learning how to drive. The agency promotes aspirations for all children to have equal access to opportunities, and carers embrace this approach.

Children are supported to maintain a sense of identity and emotional well-being. Children maintain relationships with people who are important to them. Carers and staff work together to ensure these connections are safe and meaningful.

Children's views are listened to and their engagement is encouraged and celebrated, helping them feel valued and included. Children are consulted and encouraged to take part in activities that help them feel part of a wider network. Children are involved in shaping aspects of their own care. One child wrote her own risk assessment. Another child wrote a letter to share with children moving into a foster family for the first time.

Carers feel valued and well supported. They describe the agency as a strong, inclusive community, with some carers referring to it as an extended family. Carers feel listened to and involved in decision-making. They participate in assessments and support groups.

Carers say that staff are available and responsive, including through access to the out-of-hours service, which helps them feel confident and never alone in their role. As a result, children experience a sense of security and belonging, and carers feel supported.

The agency promotes education and prioritises children's learning and progress. Carers and staff advocate for children to access education. They work together to ensure children are enrolled in school and attend regularly. Carers provide practical support for attendance including transport to school and challenge decisions when necessary to secure the best outcomes for children. One carer strongly advocated for a child who was not in education to access an education setting close to the carers home. Carers for another child at risk of exclusion have been supported to challenge education staff around their decision-making.

Children make progress and are supported to achieve their aspirations. Where barriers arise, the agency takes steps to address these. Older children are

encouraged to pursue further education. As a result, children are supported to learn, achieve and develop their aspirations for the future.

Children's physical and emotional health needs are supported. Carers receive training to help them meet children's individual health needs. Carers are helped to understand children's emotional needs. The agency provides a therapeutic offer, including monthly consultations for carers to access.

The agency is ambitious in developing external partnerships to provide emotional support for children's well-being. Children can access specialist assessments, with plans in place to evaluate and extend this offer. However, there are some inconsistencies in how carers engage with therapeutic support. As a result, not all children benefit fully from the therapeutic support offered. This represents a missed opportunity to strengthen placement stability and emotional resilience.

Children are placed with carers who can meet their needs. However, some assessments of need lack curiosity and detail regarding cultural aspects and identity. This is a missed opportunity to fully reflect children's identity needs and could impact placement stability. Greater attention to cultural identity would strengthen practice and further promote positive outcomes for children.

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

Carers receive support to manage challenging situations and keep children safe. The agency provides a responsive out-of-hours service. Carers say that they use this service regularly and feel well supported. Out-of-hours staff have access to relevant information about children. This enables staff to provide guidance that helps carers respond safely and appropriately when situations arise.

Carers receive training in de-escalation. This has reduced carers needing to hold children to ensure safety. Incidents where children are held to keep them safe are minimal and only occur as a last resort. When physical intervention is used, records are completed promptly. Follow-up discussions take place with carers and children to review the incident, identify additional support, and ensure oversight. As a result, carers are confident in managing challenging behaviour.

Safer recruitment practices promote children's safety. The managers follow their safeguarding processes to ensure that suitable and appropriately vetted staff are employed. Panel members are subject to the same checks; this supports the integrity and credibility of the panel.

The fostering panel is effective in its role. Panel provide appropriate challenge to the agency when required. The agency recognises that panel members would benefit from greater diversity and is actively seeking to recruit to address this. Recruitment and panel arrangements are safe and effective; the agency demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement.

Incidents of children going missing are rare. When children do go missing, carers understand the expectations and respond appropriately. Individual plans are in place to promote children being found and returned home. Carers are proactive in supporting children to return safely and will go out to look for a child. However, there is no escalation or challenge to the local authority for return home interviews being completed. As a result, the lack of recorded return home interviews reduces the opportunity to understand a child's risks and prevent recurrence.

Assessments and plans lack consistency and vary in quality. The panel provide quality assurance and feedback as a learning tool. Some assessments lack curiosity and fail to explore the impact of children's needs or the circumstances of their care arrangements. This limits the understanding of how carers will respond to specific needs.

Allegations are responded to promptly to safeguard children. Relevant professionals are informed, and actions are taken to protect children from harm. However, on one occasion, the agency did not recognise and act on a pattern of allegations. This resulted in the child's voice being diminished and children not being fully protected. The agency acknowledged this shortfall and commissioned an external case audit to identify lessons learned. The agency has begun to implement the recommendations from this audit and is embedding changes to strengthen practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The agency benefits from a stable and experienced management team. Managers are visible and accessible to children, carers and staff. This contributes to a strong sense of support and community within the agency. Feedback from carers and staff is overwhelmingly positive. They describe the agency as 'inclusive' and 'connected', despite being spread across different regions. Carers, children and staff consistently report feeling part of the 'Tree House family'.

Carers feel listened to and involved in decision-making, including matching processes. They have regular contact with their allocated workers. Carers spoke positively about the out-of-hours service, describing it as 'consistently helpful' and 'reassuring'. They shared examples of informal support, carers stated they visit the office and feel welcomed.

Carers have access to training to ensure they are knowledgeable. Expectations for training are set from the start of a carer's journey with the agency. Carers are supported to complete mandatory training within the required timescales. Training is reviewed regularly; delays are challenged with additional support offered where needed.

The training programme reflects the needs of children and carers. The agency offers a varied calendar of training, monthly therapeutic input from the agency therapist, and refresher sessions. Staff have access to all carer training and opportunities for progression. As a result, carers and staff feel supported, valued and equipped to meet children's needs.

Panel meetings are held regularly; they have returned to a face-to-face format. The panel offers quality assurance for all information presented. Feedback from panel regarding the quality of reports is welcomed by the manager and used to inform further improvement. Panel decision-making is ratified by the agency decision-maker, ensuring decisions are robust and well considered.

Supervision for staff and carers is regular. Carers said that supervision includes reflective discussions and explores aspects of care in depth. Staff encourage carers to think critically and explore issues on a deeper level. Staff also benefit from regular supervision, which they describe as reflective and detailed. This supports staff to be effective in their roles. However, there is some inconsistency in the recording of supervision sessions, particularly for staff. Some records are brief and lack sufficient detail. This is a missed opportunity to evidence reflective thinking and progress.

Staff ensure safeguarding incidents are reported. When concerns arise, relevant agencies are informed, and actions are taken to reduce risk. However, notifications to the regulator are not always made within the required timescales. The delays reduce the regulator's ability to be assured that risks have been addressed promptly. Notifications must be made within expected timescales to ensure transparency and promote children's safety.

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, The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and the national minimum standards. The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person in respect of an independent fostering agency must ensure that—</p> <p>the welfare of children placed or to be placed with foster parents is safeguarded and promoted at all times, and</p> <p>before making any decision affecting a child placed or to be placed with a foster parent due consideration is given to the child's—</p> <p>religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background.</p> <p>(Regulation 11 (a) (b)(ii))</p>	20 March 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are provided with personalised care that meets their needs and promotes all aspects of their individual identity. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 2.1)
- The registered person should ensure that the fostering service works effectively in partnership with other agencies concerned with child protection, e.g. the responsible authority, schools, hospitals, general practitioners, etc., and does not work in isolation from them. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 4.7)
- The registered person should ensure that the manager regularly monitors all records kept by the service to ensure compliance with the service's policies, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. Immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 25.2)
- The registered person should ensure that there is a system in place to notify, within 24 hours, persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrence of significant events in accordance with regulation 36. The system includes what to do where a notifiable event arises at the weekend. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 29.1)

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: SC033189

Registered provider: Tree House Care Fostering Solutions Ltd

Registered provider address: 107 Cleethorpe Road, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN31 3ER

Responsible individual: Hugh Mellett

Registered manager: Claire Rogers

Telephone number: 01472 598334

Inspectors

Kate Jackson, Social Care Inspector

Shirin Khan, Social Care Inspector

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