

Britannia Fostering Agency Limited

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Sir Robert Peel House, Suite 003, 344–348 High Road, Ilford IG1 1QP

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this independent fostering agency

Britannia Fostering is an independent fostering agency. It was registered with Ofsted in September 2021 and the manager registered with Ofsted at the same time.

The agency provides short-term, long-term and emergency placements.

At the time of this inspection, the agency had 23 approved fostering households providing foster care for 27 children. Eight young people are also living with foster carers under 'staying put' arrangements. Two children provided feedback to the inspectors.

Inspection dates: 26 to 30 January 2026

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: 26 September 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 thriving within foster families, who embrace them and give them a sense of belonging. Children are making progress in all areas of their lives, both socially and emotionally. Children are happier and more confident and they have increased self-esteem. Children benefit from a warm welcome to their foster homes, which includes a gift bag and an age-appropriate children's guide in their first language. A child said that they are 'happy with everything and looking forward for a bright future.'

There is a commendable commitment to providing children with long-term homes, which offers stability for children into adulthood. Many young people remain in staying put arrangements, which offers ongoing certainty. Leaders and managers actively encourage this, and the focus for planning is on the best interests of children. A social worker said that their child wishes to stay with his foster family 'until he gets married'.

Fostering is embraced by the entire fostering family, with both partners and birth children demonstrating their caring commitment to the foster child. Additionally, the extended family and close friends of foster carers welcome getting to know children, and many of them become respite carers. This means children are mostly always cared for by people they know.

Children have improved educational and health outcomes. Foster carers actively support children's interests and talents. Foster carers enjoy making a positive difference in children's lives and offering children new experiences. This includes taking children on holiday both within and outside the UK.

Children experience a wide range of activities organised by the agency. Every school holiday, a group activity is planned. Social activities enable foster families to spend quality time together and enable children to positively interact with each other. Activities include going to the seaside, theme parks, bowling and paintballing.

Older children have the opportunity to develop their independent living skills. Some older children can manage their own food budget, and they take pride in preparing traditional meals of their choice. Children have positive aspirations for the future, which includes business and vocational training. Young people receive a personalised gift when they turn 18. The agency also funds driving lessons for older young people.

Mostly, managers plan ahead to consider the most appropriate home for a child to live in, so children can often live with foster carers who reflect their culture and/or religion. This enables children to practise their faith and observe their traditions. A commissioner said: 'Britannia are very considered in their approach to matching.' A social worker described a child's foster placement as being a 'match made in

heaven'. The support to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, in particular, is excellent. Children are quickly learning English, and they receive ongoing support with immigration matters.

The decision-making regarding transcultural placements does not consider how a child will be helped to have a positive identity. The agency does not highlight how inherent identity gaps will be addressed on a deeper level. The agency does not provide additional resources or training to support these placements in the short and long term.

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

Children enjoy trusting, amiable and mutually respectful relationships with their foster families. Foster carers excel in providing a nurturing, safe and stable base for children. The improvements in children's emotional wellbeing have a positive impact on their actions, choices and decision-making.

Children feel safe and they are encouraged to keep safe. They benefit from support groups which address safeguarding risks and their personal safety. Children have a strong bond with their foster carers and they are their first point of contact if they have any issues. Children also know where they can take their concerns externally.

There are good safer recruitment practices for all involved in fostering, which ensures that children are supported by suitable adults. A placement officer praised the partnership working and said that Britannia is a 'reliable, cooperative and professional fostering agency, committed to safeguarding.'

There is a wide range of safeguarding training, which is well attended. This raises foster carers' awareness of the potential risks to children and how to mitigate them. Foster carers demonstrate significant resilience. A strength is having a mental health professional on the staff team. This expertise has positively assisted children and enabled them to remain with their carers during difficult times.

Clear and consistent boundaries contribute to a feeling of wellbeing and security for children. There are currently no children who go missing. No children are involved in sexually or criminally exploitative relationships. There are also no concerns regarding radicalisation.

The agency generally notifies Ofsted of significant events. An exception was an allegation against a foster carer. Leaders and managers liaised with the appropriate agencies, and they regret the oversight of not informing Ofsted.

Risk assessments include strategies to manage risks. However, not all identified risks are recorded. One internal investigation has been undertaken since the last inspection. The report was not completed by an independent person, and there was limited analysis, self-reflection and consideration of children's trauma.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

This agency is led by highly committed and experienced leaders and managers who play an active role in supporting foster carers. The high-quality relationships with involved professionals and foster carers are built on a history of professional trust, respect and shared values. An example of this are foster carers who have followed leaders and managers from their former agency.

Children receive care from foster carers who have access to 24-hour support. Foster carers benefit from a wide range of meaningful training courses, which helps them to better understand and care for children. Foster carers and children benefit from a newsletter and their own support groups. Annual celebrations also provide an opportunity for foster carers' achievements to be individually rewarded.

Feedback from foster carers is excellent. They commend the extensive motivational support, which enables foster carers to embrace the challenges and continue fostering. Feedback from professionals is generally positive. They praise the responsiveness of the agency, recognise the proactiveness of foster carers and value the strong working relationships.

Inconsistent records mean that children do not have a meaningful record of their lives. This shortfall is repeated from the last inspection. There is a need for all involved in the agency to understand the importance and gravity of meaningfully recording children's individuality and memories. Some of the records kept by foster carers and staff do not reflect a trauma-informed approach. Some social workers highlight the lack of progress reports, which means they do not always receive a full, up-to-date picture of children's progress and development.

Leaders and managers and the whole staff team have a passionate and united desire to improve their practice individually and collectively. Quality assurance systems are in place to support managers with monitoring children's progress. A commendable strength of the agency is the high number of foster carers who are recruited by word-of-mouth recommendations from current carers.

The fostering panel focuses on the best interests of children and consists of a range of professionals. Leaders and managers are continuing to look for a care-experienced panel member and recognise the need for more cultural diversity. The panel benefits from good additional training from an external consultant. The highly experienced panel chair contributes to the quality assurance of the agency.

Enthusiastic supervising social workers support foster carers, visiting them regularly. All staff feel valued and they are actively encouraged to use their initiative. Staff positively contribute to the development of the agency. Staff feel supported both professionally and personally. Staff have access to a wide range of training, regular supervision and appraisals.

Leaders and managers have actioned some of the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection. Leaders and managers monitor the necessary regulatory information. However, the required quality of care review lacks analysis, and an action plan. The review does not include their consultation with children, foster carers and placing authorities, which is a missed opportunity to showcase their compliments.

Leaders and managers are aware of their strengths and the areas requiring further improvement. There is a need for more scrutiny of records, accurate panel minutes and improving foster carers' understanding of delegated authority. There is a good vision for the future and plans are centred on improving the lives of children. The agency's strengths significantly outweigh the shortfalls.

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
The registered person must maintain a system for— monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate intervals, and improving the quality of foster care provided by the fostering agency. The registered person must provide the Chief Inspector with a written report in respect of any review conducted for the purposes of paragraph (1) and, on request, to any local authority. The system referred to in paragraph (1) must provide for consultation with foster parents, children placed with foster parents, and their placing authority. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3))	1 March 2026
The registered person must ensure if any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 7 takes place in relation to a fostering agency, the registered person must without delay notify the persons or bodies indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table. (Regulation 36 (1)) In particular, the registered person must notify the regulator and any relevant bodies of any serious complaint about any foster parent approved by the fostering agency	1 March 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff and fostering households understand the nature of records maintained and follow the service's policy for the keeping and retention of files. In particular, recording about children should be meaningful and up to date and provide a good overview of children's experiences. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 26.2)

- The registered person should ensure that they only suggest foster carers to local authorities as a potential match for a child if the foster carer can reasonably be expected to meet the child's assessed needs. Where gaps are identified, the fostering service should work with the responsible authority to ensure that the placement plan sets out any additional training, resource or support required. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 15.1)
- The registered person should ensure that there are clear and effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the service. This includes complaints about the service and ensuring the quality of the service. In particular, reviewing the internal investigation procedure, completing monthly children's progress reports, ensuring that panel minutes are accurate, and that risk assessments contain all risks, recordings are trauma informed and that delegated authority is understood. ('Fostering services: national minimum standards', 25.1)

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: 2637131

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