

# Tutis Foster Care

Tutis Foster Care Limited

13 Duke Street, Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 7ER

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this independent fostering agency

Tutis Foster Care is an independent fostering agency. It was registered with Ofsted in July 2015.

The agency offers a range of foster placements, including long-term, short-term, respite and emergency placements for children. Children who reach the age of 18 years can continue living with their foster carers as young adults. At the time of this inspection, the agency had 11 approved fostering households, 7 of whom were providing care to 11 children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2020. She is also a director of the agency and has been actively involved in the setting up and operation of the agency from the outset.

This inspection involved both on-site and off-site inspection activity. Inspection activity included speaking with managers, supervising social workers, foster carers, children and other professionals.

### Inspection dates: 17 to 20 February 2025

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>outstanding</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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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:** 10 January 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The agency is incredibly child and family focused. Staff and foster carers go 'above and beyond' to provide high-quality and individualised care to children. Children live in settled, loving and stable homes. Foster carers form trusting relationships with children, which enhances children's progress and sense of security and belonging.

Children are making significant and sustained progress in all areas of their lives. They benefit from living with foster carers who receive excellent support, advice and training. This provides foster carers with the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of the children in their care exceptionally well.

Foster carers who are new to the role are made to feel very welcome and prepared. They say they feel valued and listened to. Assessments are carried out within timescales and with sensitivity and respect. One foster carer, who joined the agency last year, described the agency's approach as 'amazing'.

Staff and foster carers effectively promote children's education. If schools are not meeting children's needs, staff and foster carers work together to advocate on the children's behalf to ensure that they achieve the best educational outcomes. One headteacher described the agency's support and communication as 'great'.

When children's needs are significant, specialist support is sought. This provides intensive therapeutic support to children and foster carers. In addition, support workers help foster carers with therapeutic responses when they are struggling to understand children's behaviour. Support workers also work directly with children, using imaginative and creative methods, to help children understand their emotions and behaviours safely.

Children's interests are nurtured, and they are encouraged to try new things. They are attending clubs and taking part in fun activities which enhance their health and emotional well-being. The agency hosts regular events for children and foster carers, such as trips to the seaside, the countryside, art therapy sessions, games events and meals out.

Children are supported to maintain strong and positive relationships with people who are important to them. Foster carers and staff have established positive relationships with family members for the benefit of children. Staff often help to organise and transport children to and from time with family members so opportunities for children to maintain significant relationships are not missed.

The agency supports children to achieve permanence with their foster family. This includes foster carers who have been matched with children for the remainder of their childhood and children reaching the age of 18 who are supported to remain living with their foster carers if they wish to do so. Staff often continue to support

young people who have moved on and now live independently. This ensures that children and young people continue to benefit from these relationships into adulthood.

The agency has developed positive and highly effective working relationships with other professionals for the benefit of children. When decisions are made that may not be in a child's best interests, these are respectfully but confidently challenged and escalated when necessary. One social worker said that the commitment to the children from foster carers and staff is 'amazing' and that 'the progress children make after being placed with foster carers from the agency is incredible'.

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

Supervising social workers have an in-depth knowledge of the children and their foster carers. They are in regular contact with foster carers and provide a high level of professional and child-centred support. Feedback from foster carers about the staff and the agency was overwhelmingly positive. One foster carer described the support as 'fantastic' and another as 'excellent'.

Children have clear and individualised safe care plans in place, which are updated regularly. They outline identified risks and what action foster carers can take to help them keep children safe.

The agency provides regular training and support to help foster carers understand and manage children's behaviour. A therapeutic parenting consultant, a therapeutic support worker and a youth worker provide additional opportunities for foster carers to discuss strategies to provide further support to children. All staff from the agency meet regularly to discuss any safeguarding concerns in order to ensure that children are kept safe, and practice is consistent.

Foster carers benefit from training in subjects that help to keep children safe. Foster carers value the training on offer; they say it is of high quality and useful to them. The agency provides specialist training if required to help carers manage any emerging needs of a child in their care. Training is also delivered to help carers understand the needs of children in relation to their individual identity and culture.

There have been relatively few safeguarding incidents since the last inspection. Children rarely go missing from their foster home and have not needed to be held to keep them safe. However, if they do, they receive an effective response to ensure their safety. Foster carers and staff work swiftly and collaboratively with other agencies to keep children safe.

Children are provided with a children's guide written by the agency, which gives them information about who to contact if they need to make a complaint or are worried. The guides are colourful and age appropriate. However, they have not been shared with the regulator when they have been updated.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The manager is caring, experienced and committed to providing high standards of child-centred care. She is supported by an experienced senior supervising social worker, who shares her motivation and drive to improve outcomes for children placed with the agency's approved foster carers.

The manager and the senior supervising social worker are held in high regard by children, carers, staff and other professionals. One professional described the agency as a 'diamond amongst other agencies' due to the 'phenomenal' care afforded to the children and the agency's child-centred approach. A staff member said they love working for the agency.

Supervising social workers and support staff benefit from regular supervision and team meetings that provide them with the opportunity to seek support and reflect on their practice. Appraisals usually take place annually by a suitably qualified person. However, one did not take place for the manager and neither has she always received supervision at regular intervals. This was a recommendation from the last inspection and has been restated.

Since the last inspection the quality and frequency of reports around reviewing the quality of practice has improved. However, reports have not always been sent to the regulator in a timely manner. This was a requirement from the last inspection and has been restated.

The agency's statement of purpose does not reflect the current staffing arrangements, and neither was it sent to the regulator when it was last updated.

The manager has effective oversight of the service, fostering business and children's outcomes. Children's progress and achievements are regularly tracked and celebrated. The agency's electronic recording systems are generally well maintained and detail the journey for children and foster carers.

Foster carers benefit from regular support groups, which are well attended. One foster carer described the agency as excellent and said the staff are 'supportive, approachable and inclusive'.

The fostering panel and agency decision-maker provide independent scrutiny to approvals and reviews of foster carers. However, recent changes to panel membership means the central list is currently limited. This is something that the manager has taken action to address. There has not been any recent panels so this has not impacted on panel's effectiveness.

Seven of the eight recommendations and two of the three requirements made at the last inspection have been met.

## 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 maintain a list of persons who are considered by them to be suitable to be members of a fostering panel ("the central list"), including one or more social workers who have at least three years' relevant post-qualifying experience. (Regulation 23 (1))</p>	25 May 2025
<p>The registered person must maintain a system for—</p> <p>monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate intervals, and;</p> <p>improving the quality of foster care provided by the fostering agency.</p> <p>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. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2))</p> <p>Specifically, this relates to the registered person ensuring that reports are sent to Ofsted in a timely way.</p> <p>This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.</p>	25 May 2025
<p>The fostering service provider must—</p> <p>keep under review and, where appropriate, revise the statement of purpose and children's guide,</p> <p>notify the Chief Inspector of any such revision within 28 days (Regulation 4 (a)(b))</p>	25 May 2025

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for them to receive professional supervision. (national minimum standards: 24.3). This recommendation was made at the last inspection and is restated.
- The registered person should ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for them to have their performance individually and formally appraised at least annually. (national minimum standards: 24.6)

## 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:** SC489594

**Registered provider:** Tutis Foster Care Ltd

**Registered provider address:** 13 Duke Street, Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 7ER

**Responsible individual:** Robin Lovegrove

**Registered manager:** Marie Devlin

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## **Inspector**

Zillah Brooks, Social Care Inspector

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