Jane Foulkes

Inspection report for adoption support agency

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Inspector                        Vivien Slyfield
Type of inspection               Key
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About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough
Not judged: this aspect of the provision was not judged
Service Information

Brief description of the service

Jane Foulkes provides therapeutic and training services for adults, children and their families, and advice and consultation for those working with them. The majority of her referrals are from local authorities or voluntary adoption agencies. The work she does addresses issues where there are concerns about trauma and attachment difficulties.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

This is a key announced inspection, which was informed by surveys and information from service users and local authorities using the service.

This is an outstanding service. The service provided is very clearly child focused and supports parents in meeting the needs of their children. Service users comment on the professional yet friendly approach they receive. One service user stated: ‘We are absolutely delighted with the service we receive from Jane! She provides us with an exceptional service for which we are very thankful indeed!’ Local authorities who have commissioned the service to undertake work are positive about the results they identify. Ms Foulkes has a strong commitment to her own training which she uses to enhance the service she provides to all those who approach her service. The policies and procedures in place provide an effective structure for a safe and effective service.

What the service does well

Ms Foulkes works well in partnership with the commissioning local authorities and service users. Local authorities commented on the quality of the service as being exceptional and one stated that it: ‘Involved the adoptive parents and liaised well with other professionals, keeping the focus at all times on the safety and welfare of the young person. Her work with the young person has been commended by the consultant neuro-psychiatrist involved.’ All the comments from service users are extremely positive and some state the support from the service as being influential in being able to maintain the children in their adoptive families. She is a skilled, experienced and knowledgeable practitioner, who is seen by families as supportive, available and as someone who listens. One adoptive parent commented: ‘The support we are receiving from Jane is absolutely meeting our needs’, and another said: ‘I know that our child has benefited from her support (through her therapeutic parenting techniques). We wanted to provide a safe, secure and happy home but we needed to know how best to do this. Jane has been able to help us define what
comprises a loving relationship with a child who has been neglected and suffered a difficult life. She was also able to help us maintain our own sanity during some quite difficult times. We were grateful to find her and I am very happy to recommend her to anyone.' This statement summarises the views of others about the service and confirms it as a responsive service which has a positive impact on young people and their families.

**What has been improved since the last inspection**

There were three recommendations and one requirement made at the last inspection. All of these have been addressed. Written policies and procedures are now in place, including a child protection policy and a complaints and representations policy and procedure. The children's guide has been amended to include the contact details of the Children's Right's Director.

**What they could do better**

No actions or recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection.

**What sort of service is it?**

**Statement of purpose**

The provision is outstanding.

The agency has a clear, written Statement of Purpose which outlines its aims and objectives and the services it provides. This was reviewed in August 2010. A children's guide is in place, which is a user-friendly and useful document for young people to read. It now includes the details of the Children's Rights Director in case young people wish to contact him.

**Safeguarding and promoting welfare**

The provision is outstanding.

The agency has a written child protection and safeguarding policy, which makes reference to reporting and recording any allegations of possible child abuse. The procedures include situations of historical abuse. The provider demonstrates a strong awareness of the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation and ensures the safety of children is promoted and safeguarded. She has effective knowledge of local safeguarding procedures and has made referrals to the appropriate local authority when aware of disclosures of abuse.
User focused services

The provision is outstanding.

The agency is clear about the service it can offer, which is detailed in its Statement of Purpose. This information is given to service users, and includes the complaints procedure, and is followed up by a discussion. The provider always offers a consultation to anyone who is thinking of using her services, to enable both parties to decide whether it is appropriate for their needs. If the provider feels she cannot help the service users, she will suggest an alternative resource. Service users are treated with respect, honesty and openness to ensure they receive an appropriate service. If Ms Foulkes can offer a service, she is able to respond quickly. Feedback from service users is requested and takes place as part of the on-going work she undertakes. Written feedback from service users' surveys indicates a very high level of satisfaction with the service received. One local authority which has used the service stated: 'We have been impressed with the service Jane has provided to a very troubled young person with attachment, identity and gender issues. Her work has been commended by the consultant neuro-psychiatrist involved.'

All the information available indicates the service is responsive to the needs of each individual and their family. The work undertaken addresses these needs in an open, respectful and professional manner. If there is a requirement for an interpreter or different means of communication the user-focused service policy statement states these will be arranged to ensure the service provided meets the individual's needs. Service users state that their needs are well met by the service and that they are happy to recommend it to others.

Service delivery

The provision is outstanding.

Ms Foulkes is the sole provider of this adoption support service, and as such is fully aware of all the work which is being undertaken. The assessments undertaken are fully informed by other services and appropriate use is made of these if indicated through the assessment. The provider undertakes regular reviews of the work she is undertaking and documents this.

Service users repeatedly comment on the professionalism of the service they receive. One survey commented: 'She manages the fine line between professional and friendly very well and we are very grateful for her counsel,' and another stated: 'She responds quickly to requests, is on time for appointments, and keeps careful notes.' Comments from service users and commissioning authorities state that the service succeeds in the vital work of supporting adoptive parents in their care for their children. One parent stated: 'Without her support we would not have been able to
continue. Before we met Ms Foulkes we were at the point of considering disrupting with our adopted children due to the severity of the behaviour and emotional needs, and through her work with us and with our children we are now a totally changed family! Ms Foulkes helps us to make sense of it and to better understand our children and gives us strategies and advice to help them to heal.

**Fitness to provide or manage an adoption support agency**

The provision is outstanding.

The adoption support agency is provided and managed by a suitably qualified, knowledgeable and experienced person. Ms Foulkes has relevant qualifications, is a member of four appropriate professional associations and has worked in this field for a number of years. She has regular consultation and supervision with a variety of colleagues from other disciplines and professions and this enables her to keep up to date with current practice. Ms Foulkes has a current Criminal Records Bureau check in place and is aware of the need to have this updated on a three-yearly basis.

Ms Foulkes values training to enhance the service she provides and has successfully completed courses that are relevant to the service she provides.

**Management of the adoption support agency**

The provision is outstanding.

The agency has developed a system for monitoring its work. As a sole provider Ms Foulkes reviews all the work she undertakes and provides written reports and reviews of her service.

The agency has clear financial procedures and written information about its charges. These systems ensure that service users have a clear understanding of the financial commitment and that the service is monitored to maintain sound professional standards. Service users see the service as well managed and of great value. One survey stated: 'We believe Jane provides excellent value for money and truthfully you cannot put a price on her work.'

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The service user is at the centre of all its work and their needs comprehensively addressed.

**Employment and management of staff and volunteers**

The provision was not judged.
Individual practitioners

The provision is outstanding.

The agency has a sufficient level of office equipment to undertake its service efficiently and effectively. Ms Foulkes is in the process of reviewing her office arrangements and updating her computer system to further enhance the communication systems for the service. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy, risk assessments and fire plans are in place and appropriate insurance cover, including professional indemnity, has been taken out. A disaster recovery plan is in place and all information is stored securely.

Complaints and representations

The provision is good.

The agency has a complaints procedure which is given to service users at the start of their engagement with the service. The Statement of Purpose, which is also given to service users, makes reference to other routes open to complainants. There have been no complaints but the provider is aware of the need to maintain a written record of these and how they are resolved. Any complaints would be used to make improvements to the service as a response to listening to service users.

Records

The provision is good.

The agency maintains a case record for each service user. There is a written procedure on case recording which covers the content, confidentiality, storage and access to case records. Case records are stored securely in a locked cabinet. Appropriate security arrangements are in place for electronic case records.

Fitness of premises

The provision is good.

The agency has suitable premises to carry out its services. No service user visits the premises as they are all seen at other venues. The administrative and security systems are appropriate for the nature and size of the service provided. IT systems are password protected and backed up. There is a security system and appropriate arrangements for fire prevention. The risk of any breaches of security is therefore minimised.
Financial requirements

The provision is good.

The financial arrangements which are in place are sufficient and appropriate for the agency. There is a clear statement of charges which are notified in advance to any service users. Invoices are clearly itemised, as one service user commented: 'Invoices are clearly laid out, so we always understand the costs.' Accounts are reviewed and indicate that the agency is financially viable. There is an effective and supportive input from the service accountant, which ensures the financial operation of the service is secure.