



## Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

### Care Standards Act 2000

#### Inspection Report

#### Cariad Fostering Ltd

Sony UK Centre  
Pencoed Technology Park  
Pencoed  
CF35 5HZ

**Type of Inspection – Focussed**  
**Date(s) of inspection – 6, 7 and 22 May 2014**  
**Date of publication – 17 July 2014**

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## Summary

### About the service

Cariad Fostering Limited was registered as an independent fostering agency in February 2009. The agency is based in an office in the Sony UK centre, on the Pencoed Technology Park, on the outskirts of Bridgend, near to the M4. The agency is managed by two directors, one of whom is the responsible individual, Yvonne Krip, who manages the administration of the agency. The other director, Susan Richardson is the registered manager, who is responsible for the day to day management of the fostering agency. Cariad is a small agency with 16 sets of foster carers at the time of the inspection, with 6 in the process of being assessed. The agency provides a range of services for 'looked after' children between the ages of 0-18 years with 13 children in placement. Cariad is a member of the Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru Framework Agreement as a Tier 1 provider. The agency has also achieved the Investors in People award.

### What type of inspection was carried out?

An announced focussed inspection was undertaken as part of CSSIW's schedule of annual inspections on 6, 7 and 22 May 2014. Methodology used included:

- Meeting with a group of foster carers (7)
- Meeting with the registered manager and the responsible individual.
- Brief discussion with one of the supervising social workers.
- Examination of three foster carer's files and three children's files.
- Attendance at foster panel, interview with the chair of panel and examination of the last three panel minutes
- Examination of the review of quality of care report undertaken in February 2014.

### What does the service do well?

- The agency is small and staff have an in depth knowledge of the foster carers and children in placement.
- Foster carers we spoke with were highly complimentary of the support they received from the agency
- Matching is a high priority and although the agency has a number of vacancies, some would not be filled because it would not be in the best interest of children that were already placed, to have children placed alongside them.
- The agency provides stable placements and promotes permanency for the young people placed. Two children are in process of adoption by their foster carers and foster carers had been granted a special guardianship order on two other children.
- Children and young people are provided with an excellent range of activities during the school holidays which staff are fully involved with.

### What has improved since the last inspection?

Assessments of foster carer's were now being undertaken within the staff team.

### What needs to be done to improve the service?

No areas of non-compliance were reported.

## Quality of life

Overall, we (CSSIW) found that the welfare and needs of young people is central to the care which is provided at this agency. The child centred approach by Cariad promotes the emotional and physical well being of the children and young people in placement. Children have a voice and are encouraged to speak up. We found that very good arrangements were in place for ensuring that young people, foster carers and significant stakeholders were consulted with and listened to, ensuring that the well-being of young people was promoted and protected. The agency actively sought the opinions of young people and carers as part of the foster carer's annual review which gave them an opportunity to voice their views on the care provided. One young person had commented 'I couldn't be happier in the home that I am in'. Another young person described his foster carers as fantastic and brilliant. Young people were also consulted with as part of the agency's review of quality of care. We saw that out of nine questionnaires sent to young people, six were returned. They provided positive feedback on the care they received. The agency also met every half-term at a 'Kids club' which gave them an opportunity to discuss any 'worries' they might have as well as undertaking activities.

Children are encouraged to achieve educationally as education is viewed as important by the agency and foster carers are given clear expectations about their roles in promoting the educational attainment of young people. This includes helping children and young people to develop self-esteem and build positive relationships with schools. We saw several examples in files examined of comments from social workers on the positive difference that foster carer's had made to promote the educational needs of the children and young people placed. One example seen was of a young person who it was said was doing remarkably well in school and the school had praised the massive improvements that had been evidenced in both his behaviour and academic achievements. We were told by one 'proud' foster carer that the young person placed with her was top of the class in German and French, having achieved 100%. Another young person had received an award for being 'pupil of the year'.

Children experience warmth, attachment and belonging. We saw evidence in children's files of comments from children's social workers of positive relationships that children have with their foster carers. One example we saw indicated that the young person's relationship with the carer's was positive and affectionate and that the young person was reassured that he would remain with them long term and saw himself as an integral part of their family. Another said that the foster carers had provided the young person with a loving and settled home which had clearly made the young person feel happy and settled in their care and part of the family.

Children experience stability because the majority of the placements with Cariad foster carers are long term and the agency promotes permanency for the young people placed. It was commendable that the agency had promoted and supported the adoption of two children by their foster carers and that the agency had supported their foster carers in applying for a special guardianship order on two other children, ensuring permanence for those children.

Children and young people are active, positively occupied and stimulated because the agency promotes access to a range of activities which promote their overall health and wellbeing. Cariad strived to ensure that children and young people were happy and felt included and had a sense of belonging to the agency. The agency had arranged 'fun' days during the school holidays, BBQ's, trips to Folly Farm and Oakwood, ice skating, Christmas parties and award ceremonies which recognised their achievements. We were told about several achievements that young people had made which included, one young person coming 2<sup>nd</sup> in a National Horse Vaulting championship and another excelling in athletics and rugby. We saw evidence that young people were very involved in family activities and able to pursue their individual interests with support from their foster carers.

Children remain healthy because their needs are anticipated because foster carers are provided with good information about young people's health needs and are given clear information about how these should be addressed. Young people had access to health care as required and were supported to attend any health related appointments. The health care needs of young people were closely monitored by the agency and action taken to address these and to promote healthy living. The agency had achieved the Bronze level of the Public Health Wales award, which provided opportunities to promote healthy living to foster carers and monitor the lifestyle provided to children and young people.

## Quality of staffing

This inspection focused on the quality of life for children placed with the agency. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look at the quality of staffing in detail on this occasion because:-

- The service has a good history of compliance
- Previous inspections evidenced that foster carers are supported by competent experienced and motivated staff that are knowledgeable about the foster carers and children in placement
- There had not been any changes to the staff team since the last inspection
- Consultation documents we saw from social workers in foster carers files indicated that staff employed by Cariad met the needs of young people and foster carers in the agency to a high standard
- Foster carers experience good communication and engagement with staff because foster carers we spoke with were highly complimentary of the support they received from the agency and the staff team

However, this theme will be considered during future inspections.

## Quality of leadership and management

This inspection focused on the quality of life for children placed with the agency. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look at the quality of leadership and management in detail on this occasion because:

- The service has a good history of compliance
- Previous inspections evidenced that foster carers and children and young people benefitted from a service that is clear about its purposes, committed to improvement and managed effectively
- All foster carers had undergone an annual review
- The agency has a robust quality assurance system in place which actively ensures they consult with foster carers, young people and local authorities as seen in the review of quality of care report completed in February 2014
- Cariad had achieved the Evolve Exemplar Employer award from Chwarae Teg, which said 'This outstanding achievement recognises your commitment to recruiting, retaining and nurturing a diverse, skilled and flexible workforce'.
- Cariad achieved the Investors in People Award in 2012
- We attended foster panel, met with the panel chair and examined minutes of the last 3 panel meetings which indicated that the panel was robust in its decision making.

However, this theme will be considered during future inspections.

## Quality of Foster Carers

This inspection focused on the quality of life for children placed with the agency. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look at the quality of Foster Carers in detail on this occasion because:

- The service has a good history of compliance.
- Previous inspections evidenced that children and young people benefitted from being cared for by foster carers who are motivated and promote the physical, emotional and social development of the children placed with them.
- We found that the foster carers we met with had provided very positive and stable placements for the children and young people they cared for.
- We saw positive comments from the children's social workers on the quality of placements in foster carer's annual reviews which indicated that the foster carers for the agency met the needs of the children in placement to a high standard.

However, this theme will be considered in future inspections.

**How we inspect and report on services** We conduct two types of inspection; baseline and focussed. Both consider the experience of people using services.

- **Baseline inspections** assess whether the registration of a service is justified and whether the conditions of registration are appropriate. For most services, we carry out these inspections every three years. Exceptions are registered child minders, out of school care, sessional care, crèches and open access provision, which are every four years.

At these inspections we check whether the service has a clear, effective Statement of Purpose and whether the service delivers on the commitments set out in its Statement of Purpose. In assessing whether registration is justified inspectors check that the service can demonstrate a history of compliance with regulations.

- **Focussed inspections** consider the experience of people using services and we will look at compliance with regulations when poor outcomes for people using services are identified. We carry out these inspections in between baseline inspections. Focussed inspections will always consider the quality of life of people using services and may look at other areas.

Baseline and focussed inspections may be scheduled or carried out in response to concerns.

Inspectors use a variety of methods to gather information during inspections. These may include;

- Talking with people who use services and their representatives
- Talking to staff and the manager
- Looking at documentation
- Observation of staff interactions with people and of the environment
- Comments made within questionnaires returned from people who use services, staff and health and social care professionals

We inspect and report our findings under 'Quality Themes'. Those relevant to each type of service are referred to within our inspection reports.

Further information about what we do can be found in our leaflet 'Improving Care and Social Services in Wales'. You can download this from our website, [Improving Care and Social Services in Wales](#) or ask us to send you a copy by telephoning your local CSSIW regional office.