



Foster Care Group Wales



Foster Care Group Wales, Unit 6 Cleeve House, Lambourne Crescent,
Cardiff, CF14 5GP



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www.fcgw.co.uk

The inspection visits for this service took place between 27/04/2026 and 01/05/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Foster Care Group Wales Cyf
Care Type:	Fostering Service
Registered places:	0
Main language(s):	English
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service.

Themes:



Well-being



Care & Support



Environment



Leadership & Management

Summary:

Foster Care Group Wales (FCGW) is a small independent fostering service responsible for the recruitment, assessment, training, supervision and support of foster carers. The service works effectively with placing local authorities to match children with foster carers and support stability. At the time of inspection, the service had 27 approved fostering households caring for 47 children.

Children's well-being is effectively promoted by the service. Staff place a clear focus on children's achievement of positive outcomes and ensure children's views are central to decision-making. Children feel safe and have access to advocacy where needed. Staff and managers follow safeguarding procedures when required. The service promotes trauma-informed practice and uses external therapeutic support when needed, which strengthens placement stability.

The environment is suitable and supports service delivery. Office premises are secure and well maintained, and foster homes provide safe and welcoming environments for children.

Leadership and management are strong; they provide effective oversight and promote a clear vision for the service. The service at all levels is underpinned by strong values which promote

positive relationships, empathy and a sense of family and belonging. Foster carers feel valued and receive regular, responsive support from a stable, skilled and experienced workforce.

Findings:



Well-being

Children's well-being is promoted by the service. The service demonstrates a strong and consistent commitment to supporting positive outcomes for children. Practice is child centred and staff actively seek and promote children's views. Children contribute to decisions about their lives through focused visits, fostering panel processes and participation opportunities. Children are supported to attend their local authority statutory reviews, which helps them influence decisions about their care. Advocacy services are available and children are encouraged to access these where appropriate.

The service promotes children's rights effectively. Children receive guides which are age appropriate and accessible, with versions adapted for different developmental stages. These are available bilingually in Welsh and include additional translations, which supports children to understand their rights and the service they are receiving.

Children's health and well-being outcomes are maximised. Foster carers support children to access and attend appointments with primary health professionals and they address emerging health needs. The service identifies when additional support is needed and facilitates access to therapeutic services for children and foster carers. This helps carers understand trauma-informed approaches and supports placement stability. Additional guidance is provided through regular therapeutic drop-in sessions.

Children benefit from positive education outcomes. Children are supported to attend education, make progress and achieve their potential. Where children experience barriers to suitable education provision, foster carers and staff actively advocate for children and work in partnership with placing authorities and partner agencies to achieve more suitable education provisions. The service monitors progress effectively, and management oversight of educational data is strong. Foster carers maintain positive relationships with schools who provide valuable feedback for foster carer's annual reviews.

Children take part in a wide range of activities and experiences, including holidays and shared activities, which promote social development and strengthen relationships. Children are supported to maintain important relationships in line with their care plans. Foster carers play an active role in supporting family time and helping children maintain a sense of identity and connection. Young people experience continuity of relationships and support as they prepare for adulthood and the service actively promotes foster carers to continue to support young adults in their home post 18 years old in When I'm Ready arrangements.

Safeguarding arrangements are generally effective, and referrals are made appropriately. Children feel safe and have trusted adults they can talk to. One foster carer described the service as *'Like a*

little family, everyone knows each other and help and support each other.'



Care & Support

The service sets out clear expectations for the care and support of children in its Statement of Purpose (SOP) and related policies and procedures. Foster carers receive clear guidance about their role and the support available to them through accessible information and resources. The service places a strong emphasis on building positive and trusting relationships with children, foster carers, families and professionals. Regular visits to foster carers and separate visits to children, means staff know foster carers and children very well. As a result, foster carers feel supported and valued and staff build up a clear assessment of children's needs, which informs their work with foster carers. Children and foster carers experience continuity and a sense of belonging from this practice.

The service provides a high level of support to foster carers. Supervising social workers offer regular supervision, frequent telephone contact and access to out-of-hours support. Supervision is responsive to children's and foster carer needs. Although service documents refer to fortnightly supervision, staff tailor arrangements to individual circumstances. This flexible approach supports foster carers to meet children's needs effectively.

The service plans and supports arrangements for children living with foster carers well. Staff gather detailed information about children's needs and use risk assessments to inform decisions. They consult with foster carers, placing authorities and managers before confirming a positive match. Foster carers told us they are not pressurised within matching processes. This careful approach supports increased stability for children. The service provides proactive and intensive support when there are risks to stability. We also saw evidence of positive outcomes for young people in "When I am Ready" arrangements, which supports continuity for children through into adulthood.

Supervising social workers maintain regular contact with foster carers. Supervision provides reflective and responsive support. Foster carers value this support. A foster carer told us, '*My supervising social worker is really amazing understanding and always there for us all as a family.*' Annual foster carer reviews take place in line with the service's policy. These are thorough, competency-based and include feedback from a wide range of sources. The fostering panel provides effective scrutiny and oversight.

Safeguarding arrangements are appropriate and staff and foster carers understand their responsibilities. Safeguarding and behaviour management policies are in place and are regularly reviewed. Individualised safer caring plans and risk assessments are in place which support children's safety and well-being.



Environment

Environment arrangements support the effective delivery of the fostering service. The service operates from office premises in Cardiff, which provide a secure and professional working environment for staff. Dedicated rooms are available for supervision, meetings and training and there is ample parking to support office attendance. The premises are well maintained and suitable for the needs of the service.

Access to the office is secure, and appropriate health and safety arrangements are in place, including fire safety procedures. Staff are able to work flexibly through hybrid arrangements, with suitable office space available when required. Staff use laptops and mobile phones to support flexible working. The service stores records electronically within secure, password-protected systems, which promotes confidentiality and effective information governance.

Foster carers and professionals take part in meetings, training, reviews and panels both in person at the office and virtually. This supports accessibility and participation for those involved in children's care.

The service has suitable arrangements to ensure foster carer homes provide safe, welcoming and child-focused environments. We saw from records of visits that foster homes are generally safe and well maintained. The service completes health and safety assessments as part of the foster carer assessment process, these are reviewed in line with requirements and set clear expectations about household safety. Supervising social workers visit foster homes regularly, including unannounced visits, to monitor standards and children's living environments. These arrangements support children to live in safe and appropriate homes.



Leadership & Management

Leadership and management arrangements are strong. The service is well led and effectively governed by an experienced and stable management team. There are clear lines of accountability and governance, with suitable management and contingency arrangements in place. The SOP is reviewed regularly and reflects the service. Management have a clear vision for the service, underpinned by a strong set of values which promote positive relationships, empathy and a strong sense of family and belonging. These values are consistently applied across the service and contribute to high levels of foster carer retention and stability for children.

Oversight arrangements include regular management meetings, safeguarding oversight and review of key performance information, which supports monitoring of practice and outcomes. The registered manager demonstrates a detailed and comprehensive knowledge of the service. They know all children, foster carers and staff well. Staff report feeling valued, listened to and well supported, and morale across the team is high. Flexible working arrangements are promoted, which supports staff wellbeing and retention. Staff benefit from low caseloads, enabling them to provide high levels of support to foster carers and children.

There are strong and effective working relationships across the service. Communication is good and staff are supported through regular meetings, which contribute to the development of practice. Out of hours support arrangements are particularly effective. Foster carers have access to support 24 hours a day, with a named manager providing oversight. Foster carers report this as a valuable and reliable source of support.

Quality assurance and governance arrangements are in place and contribute to service development. Quality of care reviews are detailed and transparent, identifying strengths and areas for development and they inform service improvement. Management seek feedback from children, foster carers and staff, and use this information to shape and develop the service.

Foster carer annual reviews are completed within required timescales and demonstrate how foster carers support children to achieve positive outcomes. The service benefits from an independent chair for foster carer annual reviews to be presented at panel, which provides an additional level of scrutiny. Panel arrangements are robust, with appropriate quoracy, detailed consideration of information and comprehensive records.

The service has identified and managed potential conflicts of interest appropriately, with clear risk assessments in place. Leadership is strong and provides a stable foundation for the continued development of the service.

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

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