



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

Fostering Services

London Borough of Haringey Fostering Service

Childrens Division
40 Cumberland Road
Wood Green
London
N22 7SG

17th January 2005

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Launched in April 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is the single inspectorate for social care in England.

The Commission combines the work formerly done by the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI), the SSI/Audit Commission Joint Review Team and the National Care Standards Commission.

The role of CSCI is to:

- Promote improvement in social care
- Inspect all social care - for adults and children - in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Publish annual reports to Parliament on the performance of social care and on the state of the social care market
- Inspect and assess 'Value for Money' of council social services
- Hold performance statistics on social care
- Publish the 'star ratings' for council social services
- Register and inspect services against national standards
- Host the Children's Rights Director role.

Inspection Methods & Findings

SECTION B of this report summarises key findings and evidence from this inspection. The following 4-point scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The 4-point scale ranges from:

- 4 - Standard Exceeded (Commendable)
- 3 - Standard Met (No Shortfalls)
- 2 - Standard Almost Met (Minor Shortfalls)
- 1 - Standard Not Met (Major Shortfalls)

'O' or blank in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

'9' in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not applicable.

'X' is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

FOSTERING SERVICE INFORMATION

Local Authority Fostering Service?

YES

Name of Authority

London Borough of Haringey Fostering Service

Address

Childrens Division, 40 Cumberland Road, Wood Green,
London, N22 7SG

Local Authority Manager

Ms Rachel Elizabeth Clare Oakley

Tel No:

020 8489 0000

Address

Childrens Division, 40 Cumberland Road, Wood Green,
London, N22 7SG

Fax No:

Email Address

Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)

NO

Name of Agency

Tel No

Address

Fax No

Email Address

Registered Number of IFA

Name of Registered Provider

Name of Registered Manager (if applicable)

Date of first registration

Date of latest registration certificate

Registration Conditions Apply ?

NO

Date of last inspection

02/02/04

Date of Inspection Visit		17th January 2005	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		10:00 am	
Name of Inspector	1	Peter Allcock	080126
Name of Inspector	2	Karen Malcolm	
Name of Inspector	3	Bethanie Salik	
Name of Inspector	4		
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Rachel Oakley [Service Manager for Looked After Children]	

Introduction to Report and Inspection

Inspection visits

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Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State

Implementation of Statutory Requirements from last Inspection

Statutory Requirements from this Inspection

Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection

Part B: Inspection Methods & Findings

(National Minimum Standards For Fostering Services)

- 1. Statement of purpose**
- 2. Fitness to carry on or manage a fostering service**
- 3. Management of the fostering service**
- 4. Securing and promoting welfare**
- 5. Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers**
- 6. Records**
- 7. Fitness of premises**
- 8. Financial requirements**
- 9. Fostering panels**
- 10. Short-term breaks**
- 11. Family and friend carers**

Part C: Lay Assessor's Summary (where applicable)

Part D: Provider's Response

D.1. Provider's comments

D.2. Action Plan

D.3. Provider's agreement

INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Independent and local authority fostering services which fall within the jurisdiction of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) are subject to inspection, to establish if the service is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and the requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000, the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and the Children Act 1989 as amended.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of London Borough of Haringey Fostering Service. The inspection findings relate to the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services published by the Secretary of State under sections 23 and 49 of the Care Standards Act 2000, for independent and local authority fostering services respectively.

The Fostering Services Regulations 2002 are secondary legislation, with which a service provider must comply. Service providers are expected to comply fully with the National Minimum Standards. The National Minimum standards will form the basis for judgements by the CSCI in relation to independent fostering agencies regarding registration, the imposition and variation of registration conditions and any enforcement action, and in relation to local authority fostering services regarding notices to the local authority and reports to the Secretary of State under section 47 of the Care Standards Act 2000. The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

- Inspection methods used
- Key findings and evidence
- Overall ratings in relation to the standards
- Compliance with the Regulations
- Notifications to the Local Authority and Reports to the Secretary of State
- Required actions on the part of the provider
- Recommended good practice
- Summary of the findings
- Report of the Lay Assessor (where relevant)
- Providers response and proposed action plan to address findings

This report is a public document.

INSPECTION VISITS

Inspections will be undertaken in line with the agreed regulatory framework with additional visits as required. This is in accordance with the provisions of the Care Standards Act 2000. The following inspection methods have been used in the production of this report. The report represents the inspector's findings from the evidence found at the specified inspection dates.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

The Haringey fostering service recruits, assesses, trains and supports a range of fostering resources to meet the diverse needs of Haringey's Looked After Children. At the time of the inspection the fostering service provided fostering placements to 174 children and recruited 19 new foster carers in the last year. The fostering service is divided into three teams, the Under 11's, the Over 11's and the Long Term and Kinship Care team. Each team has a manager and supervising social workers. A Senior Team Manager oversees the work of the three teams and an independent reviewing officer. There is a Family Link team, which provides fostering, and respite support to children with disabilities. There are two administrative posts within the teams and a designated Panel administrator for the Fostering and Adoption panels. There are two support worker posts, which are currently vacant.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

Inspector's Summary

(This is an overview of the inspector's findings, which includes good practice, quality issues, areas to be addressed or developed and any other concerns.)

This is the third inspection of the Haringey fostering service, which began on 17th January 2005 and was completed on 28th February 2004. The inspector found that managers, staff and foster carers were extremely helpful and cooperated in a professional, positive, and open manner, which was supportive of the inspection process. The inspector would like to commend the quality of the pre-inspection material presented by the Looked After Children Manager. This information was clearly laid out, comprehensive and clearly indexed considerably aiding the conduct of this inspection.

At the previous inspection two requirements were made. Both these requirements have been met. There are no requirements made following this inspection. Six practice recommendations are made. This reflects the achievements of management and staff as they continue to develop the service within a performance culture. The fostering service has developed a network of contacts both within the local authority and with colleagues in other local authority services.

Questionnaires received by the inspector demonstrated that children and young people felt that they lived in good or very good foster homes, that foster carers felt supported by the fostering service and that placing officers felt that children and young people were in safe placements.

The fostering service has good quality policies and procedures, and it is important that the service maintains a focus on their demonstrably consistent implementation. This should be enhanced by the implementation of computerised child care records and the creation of an integrated children's service from the social services and education departments.

1] Statement of Purpose (standard 1) This standard is met.

The statement of purpose has been reviewed and adopted by the Council. There is a new Children's Guide, which is a child friendly document and has been circulated to the children and young people who are fostered by the service. A recommendation is made that the children's guide is developed in a way that makes it accessible to children and young people who may have difficulty reading English.

2] Fitness to provide or manage a fostering service (standards 2-3) 2 of

the 2 standards are met.

The fostering service is provided and managed by those with appropriate skills and experience. The person managing the service is qualified and experienced as a manager and all recruitment checks seen by the inspector are in order.

3] Management of the fostering service (standards 4-5) 2 of the 2 standards are met.

There are clear procedures for monitoring and controlling the work of the fostering service. The fostering service is managed efficiently and staff are clear about the roles and responsibilities of managers and senior managers.

4] Securing and promoting welfare (standards 6-14) 9 of the 9 standards are met.

Children and young people placed by the fostering service believe that they live in good foster homes. The fostering service strives to ensure appropriate matches between children and young people and foster carers. There is evidence that foster carers provide a safe and nurturing environment in which diversity is valued and equality promoted.

Foster carers take an active interest in the health and education of the children and young people who are placed with them, and contact with family and friends is generally supported, although a recommendation is made with regard to children and young people's friends visiting their placement.

Liason with the leaving care team promotes support for young people entering adulthood. Foster carers feel that in general they are given adequate information about the children and young people who are placed with them.

5] Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers (standards 15-23) 7 of the 9 standards are met.

There are clear written recruitment procedures based on sound employment practices. Staff are suitably qualified, organised and managed, with appropriate training identified and provided. Staff and foster carers have access to a range of advice and support systems.

There is a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers. The inspector commends the improvements in the quality of reports submitted to Panel by the supervising social workers.

6] Records (standards 24-25) 2 out of the 2 standards are met.

Records of checks and references for staff are complete. The administrative records contain all the necessary information. A recommendation is made with regard to the provision of a Personal Education Plan for all children and young people of school age. Further recommendations are made that the decisions of reviews are monitored to ensure that they are undertaken in a timely fashion, and to the filing of material concerning allegations against foster carers.

7] Fitness of Premises (standard 26) *This standard is met.*

The premises are fit for purpose.

8] Financial Requirements (standards 27-29) *3 of the 3 standards are met.*

The fostering service, which is part of the London Borough of Haringey, has sufficient resources to meet its obligations. The fostering service follows the accounting procedures set down by the local authority, which are externally audited.

Foster carers allowances are reviewed annually and a payment for skills scheme recognises the development of foster carers.

9] Fostering Panels (standard 30) *This standard is met.*

There are clear written policies and procedures for the conduct of the fostering panel, which is assertive in the exercise of its quality control function. Recommendations have been made that the fostering service recruit a care leaver to the panel, and with respect to the provision of documentation to the panel and the timely presentation of foster carers reviews.

10] Short-term breaks (standard 31) *This standard is met.*

Short-term breaks are provided to carers.

11] Family and Friends as carers (standard 32) *This standard is met.*

The particular needs of family and friends are met by the long term and kinship care team.

Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State

(Local Authority Fostering Services Only)

The following statutory Reports or Notifications are to be made under the Care Standards Act as a result of the findings of this inspection:

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(3) of the Care Standards Act 2000 that the Commission considers the Local Authority's fostering service satisfies the regulatory requirements:

NO

Notice to the Local Authority under section 47(5) of the Care Standards Act 2000 of failure(s) to satisfy regulatory requirements in their fostering service which are not substantial, and specifying the action the Commission considers the Authority should take to remedy the failure(s), informing the Secretary of State of that Notice:

NO

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(4)(a) of the Care Standards Act of a failure by a Local Authority fostering service to satisfy regulatory requirements which is not considered substantial:

NO

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(1) of the Care Standards Act 2000 of substantial failure to satisfy regulatory requirements by a Local Authority fostering service:

NO

The grounds for the above Report or Notice are:

Implementation of Statutory Requirements from Last Inspection

Requirements from last Inspection visit fully actioned?

YES

If No please list below

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Identified below are areas not addressed from the last inspection report which indicate a non-compliance with the Care Standards Act 2000 and Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

No.	Regulation	Standard	Required actions	

Action is being taken by the Commission for Social Care Inspection to monitor compliance with the above requirements.

COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION (IF APPLICABLE)**(Registered Independent Fostering Agencies only)**

Providers and managers of registered independent fostering agencies must comply with statutory conditions of their registration. The conditions applying to this registration are listed below, with the inspector's assessment of compliance from the evidence at the time of this inspection.

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Lead Inspector	Peter Allcock	Signature	_____
Second Inspector	_____	Signature	_____
Regulation Manager	Frank Clarke	Signature	_____
Date	11 March 2005		_____

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS IDENTIFIED DURING THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The appropriate Officer of the Local Authority or the Registered Person (as applicable) is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how requirements are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Identified below are areas addressed in the main body of the report which indicate non-compliance with the Care Standards Act 2000, the Children Act 1989, the Fostering Services Regulations 2002, or the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services. The Authority or Registered Person(s) is/are required to comply within the given time scales in order to comply with the Regulatory Requirements for fostering services.

No.	Regulation	Standard *	Requirement	
			There are no statutory requirements made following this inspection.	

GOOD PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS INSPECTION

Identified below are areas addressed in the main body of the report which relate to the National Minimum Standards and are seen as good practice issues which should be considered for implementation by the Authority or Registered Person(s).

No.	Refer to Standard *	Recommendation Action
1	FS1	It is recommended that the fostering service develop the accessibility of the children's guide to children and young people who have difficulty reading English, and that this work is undertaken over the next year.
2	FS10	It is recommended that the fostering agency explore visits to foster homes by children and young people's friends with foster carers in either their individual supervision or support/learning groups.
3	FS24	It is recommended that the service manager use the fortnightly performance meetings to highlight and resolve the absence of Personal Education Plans, and that review decisions are discussed in supervision and have a clear audit trail of their implementation.
4	FS25	It is recommended that the filing of material relating to allegations in foster carers files is checked using the file auditing procedures of the fostering service.
5	FS29	It is recommended that the system for supplying equipment is monitored through the supervision system to ensure the timely provision of equipment.
6	FS30	It is recommended that the recruitment to the panel of somebody with personal experience of care is prioritised, and that the performance management systems of the fostering service address issues of incomplete paperwork presented to panel and the timely presentation to panel of foster carers first reviews.

* Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix e.g FS10 refers to Standard 10.

PART B INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS

The following inspection methods have been used in the production of this report
London Borough of Haringey Fostering Service

Number of Inspector days spent	8
Survey of placing authorities	YES
Foster carer survey	YES
Foster children survey	YES
Checks with other organisations and Individuals	YES
• Directors of Social services	YES
• Child protection officer	NO
• Specialist advisor (s)	NO
• Local Foster Care Association	NO
Tracking Individual welfare arrangements	YES
• Interview with children	YES
• Interview with foster carers	YES
• Interview with agency staff	YES
• Contact with parents	NO
• Contact with supervising social workers	YES
• Examination of files	YES
Individual interview with manager	YES
Information from provider	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group discussion with staff	YES
Interview with panel chair	YES
Observation of foster carer training	YES
Observation of foster panel	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	YES
Date of Inspection	17/01/05
Time of Inspection	10:00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	54

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the CSCI assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards have been met. The following scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The scale ranges from:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 4 - Standard Exceeded | (Commendable) |
| 3 - Standard Met | (No Shortfalls) |
| 2 - Standard Almost Met | (Minor Shortfalls) |
| 1 - Standard Not Met | (Major Shortfalls) |

"0" in the "Standard met?" box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

"9" in the "Standard met?" box denotes standard not applicable.

"X" is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

Statement of Purpose

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- There is clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and the fostering service ensures that they meet those aims and objectives.

Standard 1 (1.1 - 1.6)

There is a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and of what facilities and services they provide.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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The statement of purpose provides a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service, and is reviewed annually in February and approved by the Council. Staff confirmed that they had their own copies and had been consulted on recent revisions, which included further detail on CRB procedures and an updating of the recruitment procedures to acknowledge the role of the internet in job applications. The statement of purpose is also available on Harinet, the council's intranet site.

The children's guide is a child friendly document, which is in a format that can be easily updated. There are two versions available, one for over 11's and one for under 11's.

Discussion with managers of the service and the manager's self assessment form acknowledge the need to develop the accessibility of the guide to children and young people who have difficulty reading English. It is recommended that the fostering service undertake this work over the next year.

Fitness to Carry On or Manage a Fostering Service

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The fostering service is provided and managed by those with the appropriate skills and experience to do so efficiently and effectively and by those who are suitable to work with children.

Standard 2 (2.1 - 2.4)

The people involved in carrying on and managing the fostering service possess the necessary business and management skills and financial expertise to manage the work efficiently and effectively and have the necessary knowledge and experience of childcare and fostering to do so in a professional manner.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The fostering service is divided into three teams, and each team has a manager currently in post. A senior manager and service manager oversee the work of the teams. All five managers were interviewed during this inspection, and the inspector has observed them supporting staff at the fostering panel and in strategy meetings. All the managers are suitably qualified and have substantial experience of professional work with children.

Standard 3 (3.1 - 3.4)

Any persons carrying on or managing the fostering service are suitable people to run a business concerned with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The inspector examined six staff files during this inspection. All files contained the required information as set out in regulation 7 schedule 1. The service manager has confirmed that all the staff of the fostering service who have contact with children have an appropriate enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau.

Management of the Fostering Service

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The fostering service is managed ethically and efficiently, delivering a good quality foster care service and avoiding confusion and conflicts of role.

Standard 4 (4.1 – 4.5)

There are clear procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the fostering service and ensuring quality performance.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Budgetary control for the fostering service is held by the service manager for looked after children. There are clearly set out budgetary and financial procedures operated by the local authority, which are audited on a regular basis to ensure compliance. These procedures are reviewed on a regular basis.

Rules governing the declaration of any possible conflicts of interest are clearly set out in the written employee information given to all staff on the commencement of their employment with the local authority.

The fostering service has a payment for skills system, and the operation of this system and the level of allowances to be paid are set out in the written information folder given to foster carers.

Number of statutory notifications made to CSCI in last 12 months:

0

Death of a child placed with foster parents.

0

Referral to Secretary of State of a person working for the service as unsuitable to work with children.

0

Serious illness or accident of a child.

0

Outbreak of serious infectious disease at a foster home.

0

Actual or suspected involvement of a child in prostitution.

0

Serious incident relating to a foster child involving calling the police to a foster home.

0

Serious complaint about a foster parent.

0

Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.

8

Number of complaints made to CSCI about the agency in the past 12 months:

0

Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:

X

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.4)**The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

There are clearly set out job descriptions for the managers of the service, which set out both their duties and responsibilities. There is a clearly stated hierarchy of responsibilities and clear lines of accountability within the service.

There are clear arrangements in place to identify the person in charge when the manager is absent.

Information in the pre-inspection questionnaire describes the introduction in 2003 of monthly performance monitoring meetings for managers, which are now held on a fortnightly basis. One of the aims of these meetings is to improve communication across team boundaries. The service manager told the inspector that these meetings had resulted in fostering being seen more as part of the wider whole of children's services within the authority, and had resulted in increased placement stability.

Securing and Promoting Welfare

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The fostering service promotes and safeguards the child/young person's physical, mental and emotional welfare.

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.9)

The fostering service makes available foster carers who provide a safe, healthy and nurturing environment.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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To assess this standard, the inspector visited three placements, read the case records, interviewed the team managers and attended a foster panel. The three homes visited were maintained to a good standard, clean and adequately furnished. The young people in these placements had their own bedrooms. Six files seen during this inspection contained a health and safety assessment of the foster home, which is undertaken annually as part of the foster carer review process. The induction training for new carers includes safe caring as a key theme, and is mandatory training for new foster carers.

The inspector received 24 questionnaires from children and young people, and eighteen stated that there were no issues in the home that compromised their privacy. The inspector noted that only 9 children and young people stated that they had a choice in regard to furniture and decoration in the home. The fostering service may find it beneficial to discuss this area of practice with foster carers in support group meetings, particularly in respect of the decoration of children and young people's bedrooms.

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)

The fostering service ensures that children and young people, and their families, are provided with foster care services which value diversity and promote equality.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The fostering service operates in a diverse community, and the Commission for Social Care Inspection annual review of the local authorities performance noted that the authority had achieved level 2 of the Equality Standard. A total of 15 of the children and young people's questionnaires made positive comments about the support they received from foster carers in meeting their cultural and religious needs. A significant number of young people in making positive comments about the food in their foster home noted that the food they received was appropriate to their cultural background.

The inspector noted that anti-discriminatory practice is a permanent agenda item in team meetings, and that there is a foster home that is equipped to provide a service for up to three children and young people with disabilities.

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.7)

Local authority fostering services, and voluntary agencies placing children in their own right, ensure that each child or young person placed in foster care is carefully matched with a carer capable of meeting her/his assessed needs. For agencies providing foster carers to local authorities, those agencies ensure that they offer carers only if they represent appropriate matches for a child for whom a local authority is seeking a carer.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Children and young people are placed by the Haringey Placement and Review team. The six files seen by the inspector as part of the case tracking process contained copies of the essential information records and a placement plan. The foster carers spoken to during this inspection were knowledgeable as to the reasons for the placement of the children and young people who were currently living with them.

The placement and review team attempt where possible to place children and young people with carers from the same ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious background. Where such a match is not available, the fostering service offer support to foster carers in meeting the specific needs of the children and young people, which includes access to relevant community resources. There are a number of other factors that are taken into consideration, which include the skills and experience of the foster carers to meet the needs of young people, the preferred location to maintain contact with family and friends, and to minimise disruption to the child or young persons education.

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

The fostering service protects each child or young person from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

The fostering service provides training in safe caring for all new foster carers, and this is a feature of the annual training programmes provided. This training is based on the Fostering Networks 'Safe Caring' guidance. As stated elsewhere in this report, this training is mandatory for all new foster carers. Staff and carers can attend training on child protection provided by Haringey Area Child Protection Committee, and for foster carers the need for such courses is assessed, as part of their annual training needs review. The fostering service follows the London Child Protection Procedures (2003), and there is a link worker in the child protection team who can give specific advice to the fostering service.

The fostering service provides written guidance for foster carers, which describes positive and acceptable methods of discipline, and clearly states the unacceptability of corporal punishment. The children and young people's questionnaires demonstrated that most young people (18 out of 20) thought punishments given by their carers were fair, and 21 stated that they had not been physically restrained, with 14 stating that foster carers discussed punishments with them.

The fostering service has written policies and procedures to guide foster carers if children and young people go missing or if there is a suspicion that they may be involved in prostitution.

Where there has been an allegation against a foster carer, or a child protection strategy meeting, the foster carer review following this is presented to the panel. Twenty-one of the children and young people's questionnaires stated that foster carers gave them advice about keeping safe.

Percentage of foster children placed who report never or hardly ever being bullied:

92

%

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.9)

The fostering service makes sure that each child or young person in foster care is encouraged to maintain and develop family contacts and friendships as set out in her/his care plan and/or foster placement agreement.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Contact with families is set out in the fostering agreement and the foster carers spoken to during this inspection were aware of the importance of this for the children and young people that they care for. Responses to the foster carers questionnaire demonstrated a good awareness of a number of ways in which children and young people can remain in contact with their families. The fostering service provides training on the importance of contact called 'keeping in touch', and 12 foster carers attended the last presentation of this course.

In the children and young people's questionnaires sent to the inspector, twenty one of the children and young people stated that they were able to visit friends, however this number fell to thirteen when asked if friends were able to visit them in their foster home. It is recommended that the fostering agency explore this area of practice with foster carers in either their individual supervision or support/learning groups.

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.5)

The fostering service ensures that children's opinions, and those of their families and others significant to the child, are sought over all issues that are likely to affect their daily life and their future.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The opinions of children and young people are listened to via regular visits from their own social worker and the foster carers supervising social worker, the statutory review system and foster carers reviews. Children and young people are told how to complain (confirmed by 19 out of 23 questionnaires), and are given the access details to the children's rights officer.

The pre-inspection documentation describes how the children's rights service is establishing a range of different consultation methods. The children and young people's questionnaires returned to the inspector stated that their opinions are listened to (18 out of 22) and sometimes listened to (4 out of 22).

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.8)

The fostering service ensures that it provides foster care services which help each child or young person in foster care to receive health care which meets her/his needs for physical, emotional and social development, together with information and training appropriate to her/his age and understanding to enable informed participation in decisions about her/his health needs.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Children and young people placed with the fostering service are registered with a local GP. The fostering service has established links with a consultant paediatrician and community nurse who have responsibilities for looked after children. Two social workers from the over 11's team attend practice forums, one on teenage pregnancy and the other a multi agency forum on general health issues.

During the last year, foster carers have attended a number of courses on health related matters such as first aid (31), drugs and alcohol (12), sexual health and well being (10), HIV/Aids and hepatitis (39), nutrition (27).

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.8)

The fostering service gives a high priority to meeting the educational needs of each child or young person in foster care and ensures that she/he is encouraged to attain her/his full potential.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Information on the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that two young people are currently without a school place. The fostering agency has supplied computers to foster carers to support young people's education. The local authority has a looked after team in the education department which focuses on the needs of looked after children and young people, and foster carers receive opportunities for training in a number of areas which will develop their abilities to support educational attainment. The inspector noted that an awards ceremony was held at Tottenham Hotspur football club in November 2004 to celebrate the personal and educational achievements of looked after children.

Five of the files examined as part of the case tracking process were of school age children and did not contain a Personal Education Plan, and a recommendation to address this is made under national minimum standard 24. The inspector understands from the looked after children manager that the fostering service is aware of this, and is taking steps to address the situation. It is to be hoped that the creation of a joint children's department in April 2005 will further enhance current joint working between health and social services colleagues for the educational benefit of looked after children and young people. The inspector noted the positive response in the children and young people's questionnaires in which twenty of the twenty-one children who answered this question described how their foster carers positively support their studies.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.5)

The fostering service ensures that their foster care services help to develop skills, competence and knowledge necessary for adult living.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Links with the leaving care team are supported by the provision of a dedicated link social worker in the over 11's team. The fostering service runs a modular course on a number of aspects of leaving care, which this year was attended by 38 foster carers. There is a leaving care handbook given to carers and all care leavers.

Recruiting, Checking, Managing, Supporting and Training Staff and Foster Carers

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The people who work in or for the fostering service are suitable to work with children and young people and they are managed, trained and supported in such a way as to ensure the best possible outcomes for children in foster care. The number of staff and carers and their range of qualifications and experience are sufficient to achieve the purposes and functions of the organisation.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.8)

Any people working in or for the fostering service are suitable people to work with children and young people and to safeguard and promote their welfare.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The local authority has clearly set out policies and procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff, which are followed by the fostering service. The inspector examined six staff files, which were seen to contain job descriptions and evidence that references had been checked. The service manager for looked after children has confirmed in writing that all staff that have contact with children have an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau. Staff files contained evidence of appropriate qualifications to work with children.

At the time of this inspection, there are a total of twenty-six staff working for the fostering service. This includes the senior team manager, three team managers, an independent reviewing officer and administrative support. There are currently 14 supervising social workers employed by the fostering service.

Total number of staff of the agency:

26

Number of staff who have left the agency in the past 12 months:

1

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.16)

Staff are organised and managed in a way that delivers an efficient and effective foster care service.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

The fostering service is divided into three teams, the Under 11's, the Over 11's and the Long Term and Kinship Care team. Each team has a manager and supervising social workers. A Senior Team Manager oversees the work of the three teams and an independent reviewing officer. There is a Family Link team which provides fostering and respite support to children with disabilities. There are two administrative posts within the teams and a designated Panel administrator for the Fostering and Adoption panels. Social workers caseloads are managed.

Independent fostering agencies used by the service are part of the Pan London Agreement, which monitors the quality of care that they provide.

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.7)

The fostering service has an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff and recruits a range of carers to meet the needs of children and young people for whom it aims to provide a service.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

The current vacancies within the teams have been recruited to, and the local authority has a policy to aid the retention of staff. The pre-inspection questionnaire identifies where there are shortages of foster carers for specific groups of children, and recruitment is focussed on prioritising the applications of foster carers from particular sectors of the community and to meet the needs of in particular older teenagers.

The process for the assessment of foster carers is clearly set out in the statement of purpose and meets the requirements of national minimum standard 17.6. The competencies, qualities and aptitudes of potential foster carers set out in national minimum standard 17.7 are assessed via the use of the BAAF (British Association of Fostering and Adoption) Form F.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.7)

The fostering service is a fair and competent employer, with sound employment practices and good support for its staff and carers.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

As noted at the previous inspection, the fostering service follows the sound recruitment practices of the local authority. The inspector saw the recruitment and selection policy and procedures for all applicants for employment with the local authority. The policies and procedures reflect the local authorities commitment to equal opportunities.

The inspector attended a team meeting, which gave an opportunity for staff to be kept up to date and to contribute to the practice of the team. There is a whistle blowing policy, which covers all the local authorities services.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.7)

There is a good quality training programme to enhance individual skills and to keep staff up-to-date with professional and legal developments.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

There is an ongoing programme of management training and support, which was highly valued by the managers spoken to during this inspection.

Social work staff have a personal development plan, which includes training needs, and this is reviewed twice a year as part of the local authorities performance appraisal system. There are opportunities for post qualification study, and a number of social workers were seen by the inspector during the team meeting to express an interest in a new post qualifying training specialising in fostering.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)

All staff are properly accountable and supported.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The inspector attended a joint meeting of the three fostering teams. There is a set agenda, which includes matters such as anti-discriminatory practice, and the progress of assessment or support groups. Staff spoken to during this inspection confirmed that they receive regular supervision and an appraisal twice a year. The staff files seen by the inspector during this inspection contained job descriptions.

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.6)**The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The fostering service sets out in the statement of purpose how it will support foster carers, and formal visits are made every six weeks. More frequent visits are made where additional support is required. There is a format for these visits, which covers the roles and responsibilities of foster carers, and the team managers audit the records of these visits.

The fostering service has built on the improving communication between foster carers and children's social workers noted at last year's inspection by developing alternate joint visits, so that foster carers meet their supporting social worker and the child's social worker together on a quarterly basis. This is a commendable initiative. 18 of the 19 foster carer questionnaires were positive about the support that they received from the fostering service.

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.10)**The fostering service is a managed one that provides supervision for foster carers and helps them to develop their skills.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The inspector examined six foster carer files, which all contained a signed and dated foster carers agreement. The files also contained the records of regular contact visits between the foster carer and supervising social worker. The foster carers questionnaires demonstrated that it is these visits, which are seen as the most significant form of support. A small number of foster carers questionnaires described periods when their support worker had left, and the lack of support until a new support worker is in place. In response to these views the fostering service may wish to see this as an opportunity to re-examine how support is provided to foster carers without an allocated supervising social worker.

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

The fostering service ensures that foster carers are trained in the skills required to provide high quality care and meet the needs of each child/young person placed in their care.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

The fostering service provides an extensive programme of training and development to ensure that foster carers have the skills required to meet the needs of the children and young people placed in their care.

The statement of purpose sets out in detail the training available and that foster carers and staff will train together whenever possible. There is initial induction training for all foster carers, whose further training needs are assessed through supervisory visits and as part of the annual review process. There is an expectation that foster carers attend at least two training sessions per year.

The fostering service has established four action learning sets which involve a total of 21 carers, and social workers have received training in the facilitation of these groups, and receive support in a regular meeting with colleagues. The fostering service intends to evaluate the impact of this approach on practice in March, by employing an external consultant.

Foster carers can also access training on teenage pregnancy through a local agency, and can self refer to the supporting foster care project run by the Tavistock and Portman Clinic. This project focuses on supporting foster carers to understand and manage challenging behaviour.

It is clear that the efforts made by the management and staff of the fostering service to encourage foster carers to attend training have had success, given the consistently high numbers of carers who have attended training over the past year.

Records

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- All appropriate records are kept and are accessible in relation to the fostering services and the individual foster carers and foster children.

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.8)

The fostering service ensures that an up-to-date, comprehensive case record is maintained for each child or young person in foster care, which details the nature, and quality of care provided and contributes to an understanding of her/his life events. Relevant information from the case records is made available to the child and to anyone involved in her/his care.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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Children's files are held in the district teams and the fostering service holds the foster carers files. There is a written policy on case recording, which sets out the information to be included on foster carers files. In order to ensure the security of files, both children's and foster carers files are filed under a numerical index in lockable cupboards. The inspector examined six children's files and six foster carers files as part of the case tracking process.

The children's files were seen to be in order, with copies of the relevant looked after children forms. It is disappointing that there were no personal education plans for any of the school age children. Although this file sample is small and may not be representative of the overall picture, it is recommended that the service manager use the fortnightly performance meetings to highlight and resolve this problem.

All the foster carers files contained a signed and dated copy of a foster carers agreement as required at the last announced inspection. As noted at the last inspection, some review decisions are not always followed through, and the inspector noted that on one file the same decision was made in three consecutive reviews. The recommendation that reviews are discussed in supervision and have an audit trail is therefore restated.

The council are introducing electronic social care records later this year, and the inspector attended a presentation of this system to staff during this inspection.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.13)

The fostering service's administrative records contain all significant information relevant to the running of the foster care service and as required by regulations.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The foster carers files seen during this inspection had separate sections for complaints and allegations, although some material relating to allegations was filed elsewhere in two of the inspected files. It is recommended that the filing of material relating to allegations is checked using the file auditing procedures of the fostering service.

There are leaflets available, which explain the access to files policy, and the statement of purpose provides a record of complaints made about the service during the previous year. The system for keeping records is congruent with the looked after children system.

Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:

176

Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months:

117

Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months:

67

Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months:

26

Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months:

1

Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £

322

Maximum £

373

Fitness of Premises for use as Fostering Service

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- The premises used as offices by the fostering service are suitable for the purpose.

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5)

Premises used as offices by the fostering service are appropriate for the purpose.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The fostering service is located on the fourth floor of an office building, which is located close to an underground station and the comprehensive bus network that serves Wood Green in North London. The offices are accessible by wheelchair.

The accommodation is primarily open plan with a number of smaller offices occupied by senior staff or available for meetings. At the last inspection, it was noted that interview rooms lacked soundproofing which compromised the confidentiality of sensitive meetings held in these rooms. The council has installed soundproofing in a number of rooms and between desks where this is possible, but the lack of soundproofing remains a problem in rooms where this has not been possible.

Financial Requirements

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The agency fostering services are financially viable and appropriate and timely payments are made to foster carers.

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3)

The agency ensures it is financially viable at all times and has sufficient financial resources to fulfil its obligations.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The London Borough of Haringey provides the fostering service, and financial viability was confirmed by the budget monitoring information supplied by the fostering service in the pre-inspection information.

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.7)

The financial processes/systems of the agency are properly operated and maintained in accordance with sound and appropriate accounting standards and practice.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The local authority, which operates the fostering service, has clearly documented financial systems in place.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.2)

Each foster carer receives an allowance and agreed expenses, which cover the full cost of caring for each child or young person placed with him or her. Payments are made promptly and at the agreed time. Allowances and fees are reviewed annually.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Information on the annually updated foster care allowance is sent to all foster carers. Foster carers spoken to during this inspection told the inspector that their payments are paid directly into their bank accounts. One foster carer told the inspector that she sometimes has to wait for payment following an emergency placement. This foster carer also told the inspector that she had waited since November for a new fireguard. It is recommended that the system for supplying equipment is monitored through the supervision system to ensure its timely provision.

Fostering Panels

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- **Fostering panels are organised efficiently and effectively so as to ensure that good quality decisions are made about the approval of foster carers, in line with the overriding objective to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in foster care.**

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.9)

Fostering panels have clear written policies and procedures, which are implemented in practice, about the handling of their functions.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The inspector read the minutes of three previous foster panels, attended the February meeting of the foster panel, and interviewed the chair of panel as part of this inspection.

The panel has an independent chair, with considerable experience of fostering, adoption and child protection practice. The chair is also the chair of the adoption panel. The panel includes members with educational and medical expertise, but as yet have been unable to recruit an ex care leaver as a panel member. This matter has been outstanding since the last inspection, and it is recommended that it is resolved as a matter of priority.

At the last announced inspection, the inspector noted various recurring themes. The quality of form F's presented to panel are now of good quality, and the training and support of management and the efforts of staff to achieve this are to be commended.

Observation of panel demonstrated that matters that continue to require attention are the lack of information from some district social workers in foster carers reviews, and the presentation of incomplete sets of papers. The inspector was also disappointed to see that some first reviews for foster carers were being presented to panel some nine or ten months after they had taken place. It is recommended that the performance management systems of the fostering service focus on the resolution of these issues as a matter of priority.

Short-Term Breaks

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- When foster care is provided as a short-term break for a child, the arrangement recognises that the parents remain the main carers for the child.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.2)

Where a fostering service provides short-term breaks for children in foster care, they have policies and procedures, implemented in practice, to meet the particular needs of children receiving short-term breaks.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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Short-term breaks are provided by the Family Link Service for families who have a child with a disability, and by the fostering service for task centred or long term foster carers.	3
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Family and Friends as Carers

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- Local authority fostering services' policies and procedures for assessing, approving, supporting and training foster carers recognise the particular contribution that can be made by and the particular needs of family and friends as carers.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.4)

These standards are all relevant to carers who are family and friends of the child, but there is recognition of the particular relationship and position of family and friend carers.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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The fostering service has a long-term and kinship team, which recognises the particular contribution that can be made by, and the particular needs of family and friends as carers. This was confirmed by discussion with the team manager.

The fostering service currently has 24 children and young people placed with family or friends. The inspector visited one family who had been caring for a young person for a number of years. The young person told the inspector that he was very happy in his placement, and very much felt that he was part of the family. The foster carer told the inspector that they had been well supported by the fostering service, as they had a lot to learn when the young person was first placed.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____
Date _____

D.1 Registered Person's or Responsible Local Authority Manager's comments/confirmation relating to the content and accuracy of the report for the above inspection.

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection of London Borough of Haringey conducted on 17th January 2005 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

NO COMMENTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FROM THE PROVIDER.

WE ARE WORKING ON THE BEST WAY TO INCLUDE PROVIDER RESPONSES IN THE PUBLISHED REPORT. IN THE MEANTIME RESPONSES RECEIVED ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST.

Action taken by the CSCI in response to the provider's comments:

Amendments to the report were necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments were received from the provider	<input type="checkbox" value="NO"/>
Provider comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provider comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note:

In instances where there is a major difference of view between the Inspector and the Registered Provider responsible Local Authority fostering service Manager both views will be made available on request to the Area Office.

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 8 April 2005, which indicates how statutory requirements and recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

Status of the Provider's Action Plan at time of publication of the final inspection report:

Action plan was required	<input type="checkbox" value="YES"/>
Action plan was received at the point of publication	<input type="checkbox" value="YES"/>
Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion	<input type="checkbox" value="YES"/>
Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provider has declined to provide an action plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: <enter details here>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Public reports

It should be noted that all CSCI inspection reports are public documents. Reports on children's homes are only obtainable on personal application to CSCI offices.

D.3 PROVIDER'S AGREEMENT

Registered Person's or responsible Local Authority Manager's statement of agreement/comments: Please complete the relevant section that applies.

D.3.1 I David Derbyshire of London Borough of Haringey for London Borough of Haringey Fostering Services, confirm that the contents of this report is a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I agree with the statutory requirements made and will seek to comply with these.

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

Or

D.3.2 I David Derbyshire of London Borough Of Haringey for London Borough of Haringey Fostering Services am unable to confirm that the contents of this report is a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) for the following reasons:

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

Note: In instance where there is a profound difference of view between the Inspector and the Registered Provider both views will be reported. Please attach any extra pages, as applicable.

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