

# inspection report

## Fostering Services

### **Ethelbert Residential Family Placements**

The Lodge  
Foxborough Hill  
Eastry  
Kent  
CT13 0NY

18th - 20th & 24th 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?**

NO

**Name of Authority**

**Address**

**Local Authority Manager**

**Tel No:**

**Address**

**Fax No:**

**Email Address**

**Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)**

YES

**Name of Agency**

Ethelbert Residential Family Placements

**Tel No**

01304 621619

**Address**

The Lodge, Foxborough Hill, Eastry, Kent, CT13 0NY

**Fax No**

01304 621836

**Email Address**

enquiries@ethelbertfamily  
placements.co.uk

**Registered Number of IFA**

H050000844

**Name of Registered Provider**

Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

**Name of Registered Manager (if applicable)**

Dave O'Brien

**Date of first registration**

17th March 2004

**Date of latest registration certificate**

15th June 2004

**Registration Conditions Apply ?**

NO

**Date of last inspection**

11/12/03

<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		18 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> & 24th January 2005		<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		10:00 am		
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	Josie McCabe	080135	
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>	Lesley Ball (Support Services Assistant)		
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>3</b>			
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>4</b>			
<b>Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)</b> 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.				
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>				
<b>Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection</b>		Dave O'Brien (Registered Manager)		

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## 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 Ethelbert Residential Family Placements. 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.**

Ethelbert Residential Family Placements provides fostering and supported accommodation for children and young people and is part of Ethelbert Specialist Homes Ltd, which owns registered children's homes and schools.

The fostering service office is situated in Eastry, (near Ramsgate) and it will be moving to new premises in Margate in April 2005.

At the time of the inspection, there were twelve young people placed with the service and two young people in supported accommodation (16 plus scheme). In addition, there were thirteen approved foster carers.

The Registered Manager, Dave O'Brien, holds the Diploma in Social Work qualification, NVQ Level 5 qualification in strategic management and has several years experience of working with children and young people in a residential setting and working with young people leaving care in his own home.

In addition, there are five operational staff (four who are qualified social workers and one who holds a certificate in therapeutic childcare qualification). As the fostering service is expanding, it is planning to increase the administration team.

The Responsible Person, Leslie Davenport, holds the NVQ Level 5 qualification in strategic management and together with the organisations Directors has several years experience of management, fostering and caring for children and young people in a residential setting.

## **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.)

The inspector and support services administrator would like to thank the young people, carers and staff for their time during the inspection. During the inspection, records were examined, a tour of the existing and proposed premises was made and key staff were interviewed. In addition three young people and five carers were visited.

Positive comments have been received from young people, staff, carers and placing social workers about the foster service.

### **Statement of Purpose**

#### **Standard 1**

This standard was met.

The Statement of Purpose has been reviewed in November 04 and meets the criteria of this standard. There is a separate children's guide and young people confirmed they had been given a copy.

### **Fitness to provide or manage a fostering service**

#### **Standard 2**

This standard was met.

The manager of the service has the required childcare and managerial experience and relevant qualifications.

#### **Standard 3**

This standard was nearly met.

Satisfactory staff checks have been completed. The service needs to record telephone enquiries to follow up references received.

### **Management of the fostering service**

#### **Standards 4 & 5**

Both of these standards were being met. All staff were clear about their roles and there is a monitoring and audit system in place.

### **Securing and promoting welfare**

#### **Standards 6 to 14**

All standards were met.

There were systems in place to ensure the welfare of children and young people was being promoted. This includes the provision of education and the preparation for independence. Foster carers agreements, records seen and feedback from placing authorities and young people confirm this. Foster carers have received appropriate training as required by these standards.



## **Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers**

### **Standards 15 to 23**

All standards were met.

Staff and foster carers confirmed that supervision and appraisal systems were in place and they were receiving a lot of support. Annual reviews have been completed for foster carers approval. Training needs are addressed and carers have received pre-approval and induction training. The carer's and staff handbook has been reviewed. An appropriate recruitment procedure is in place.

## **Records**

### **Standards 24 & 25**

1 of these standards was met and 1 of these standards was nearly met.

Record keeping has been reviewed and appropriate records were being kept.

The storage and security of records needs to be reviewed.

## **Fitness of premises for use as fostering service**

### **Standard 26**

This standard was nearly met. The service is relocating in April 05 as it has outgrown the existing premises.

## **Financial requirements**

### **Standards 27 to 29**

All standards were met.

Appropriate financial policies and procedures are in place. Accounts are audited and foster carer's confirmed prompt payments. Activities and holidays for young people have been organised and staff and foster carers receive training provided and paid for by the organisation.

## **Fostering panels**

### **Standard 30**

This standard was met. Advice was given for the service to consider providing an educator and legal representative to the panel. Panel members have received guidelines and are attending training. Recruitment checks are completed.

## **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:**

Not applicable

## 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.

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	
<b>Comments</b>		

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	
<b>Comments</b>		

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	
<b>Comments</b>		

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	
<b>Comments</b>		

**Lead Inspector****Josie McCabe****Signature*****Josie McCabe*****Second Inspector****Signature****Regulation Manager****William Wallace****Signature****Date****28/2/05**

**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	
1	20	FS3	The service needs to record when they make telephone enquiries to follow up written references.	31.03.05
2	23(2)	FS25	Storage of records to be reviewed to provide greater security and risk from fire.	31.05.05

**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

\* 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

Number of Inspector days spent	3
Survey of placing authorities	YES
Foster carer survey	YES
Foster children survey	YES
Checks with other organisations and Individuals	NO
• Directors of Social services	NO
• 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	NA
• 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	NO
Interview with panel chair	NO
Observation of foster carer training	NO
Observation of foster panel	NO
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	YES
Date of Inspection	18/01/05
Time of Inspection	10:00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	18

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?	3
There is a Statement of Purpose, which has been reviewed. There is a children's guide, which is presented in an easy to read, child focussed format and contains information as detailed within this standard. Both documents are provided to children and young people, foster carers, placing authorities and parents. The manager agreed to reflect the change in the Commissions details in all documents provided by the service.		



## 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

The manager has several years experience of working with children and young people and holds the Diploma in Social Work and NVQ Level 5 management qualification. Following the last inspection, there is now an on-call system that is shared by staff. In view of the expansion of the service, it is the intention of the manager to review the responsibilities of the team to be responsible for specific operational duties as required.

### 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?

2

Evidence has been seen of appropriate checks being completed to include CRB checks and references being taken up for the manager, responsible person and staff. The service needs to record when they make telephone enquiries to follow up written references.

## 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

There is a monitoring system in place in line with this standard and the Fostering Service Regulations 2002. The system incorporates consultation with foster carers, children placed with foster carers and the placing authorities of the children being looked after. Reports have been produced that summarise the findings of the monitoring exercise and are available on request. All staff have job descriptions. Staff interviewed had specific roles within the service. Financial procedures are managed and monitored by Ethelbert Specialist Homes finance department and terms and conditions are contained within foster carer and local authority agreements.

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

3

Death of a child placed with foster parents.

X

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

X

Serious illness or accident of a child.

1

Outbreak of serious infectious disease at a foster home.

X

Actual or suspected involvement of a child in prostitution.

X

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

1

Serious complaint about a foster parent.

X

Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.

1

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

X

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

The manager has a job description setting out duties and responsibilities and does not hold a similar position in another organisation. The level of delegation and responsibility of the manager, and the lines of accountability, have been defined. The manager has a deputy who is in charge in his absence and the manager is looking to delegate specific operational responsibilities due to the expansion of the service and to offer greater clarification for the staff team.

## 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

During the inspection, three foster carer's homes were chosen for visits by the inspector. One carer had no placements at the time of the inspection. Young people in placement showed the inspector their bedrooms, which were individual in style. Evidence was seen of personal possessions and one young person showed the inspector family photographs and a hobby he was following.

Young people use the communal facilities in the houses and were seen being treated as part of the family. Houses were clean, warm and home-like and young people had single bedrooms. Foster carer's preparation and training covers health and safety issues and they have been provided with written guidance. The fostering service also carries out health and safety checks of the accommodation to include safe transport. Foster carers were aware that they may be interviewed or visited as part of the Commission's inspection process and welcomed this.

### 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

Foster carers have confirmed that training is provided in valuing diversity and the promotion of equality. Feedback from young people confirms that they are treated in a manner, which respects equality and encourages individuality.

**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**

Evidence was seen of appropriate matching and placement agreements are individualized detailing the child's assessed needs and signed by foster carers. Evidence was found that racial, ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic needs are taken into account in the matching process. The service provides training, support and information to foster carers aiming to ensure that when transracial / transcommunity placements are made young people looked after are provided with care that aims to help them develop a positive understanding of their heritage. Young people are encouraged to have a period of introduction to proposed foster carers.

**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**

Foster carers confirmed to the inspector they have received training in child protection. Training has also been given in child prostitution awareness, managing challenging behaviour, communicating with children, missing children's procedures, risk assessment and bullying. Safe caring guidelines are provided for each foster home, in consultation with the carer and others in the household. It is made clear in the written information provided to foster carers by the service that corporal punishment is not acceptable. Systems are in place to collate and evaluate information on the circumstances, number and outcome of all allegations of neglect or abuse of a child in foster care. Evidence was given to the inspector from a foster carer how he had promoted the independence of a young person placed with him, but being aware of the need to keep him safe from harm.

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

X

%

**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**

The service has a policy promoting contact and this includes arrangements for parents to stay in local overnight accommodation. Evidence was given of contact arrangements and home visits with family and friends in care plans, foster carer agreements and feedback from questionnaires. Foster carers have confirmed they had attended preparatory training, which includes the promotion of contact, and this is also contained in the carers handbook. Information is provided to carers with regard to the financial support provided for transport or other costs involved in ensuring contacts take place. A daily record is kept by carers, which include contact with family and friends, and feedback is given to placing social workers as required.

**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**

Children's opinions and those of families and significant others are sought through the formal care review process, the support worker system, questionnaires and informally between foster carers and young people placed. Communicating with children is included in the foundation training provided to foster carers and there is a foster carers support group. The organisation has introduced children's competitions, which encourages them to give feedback and a children's newsletter. Young people have informed the inspector that they have been able to make choices in activities, room decoration, food and their daily programme. Young people have confirmed they know how to make a complaint and who to speak to if they have any concerns, and that they receive feedback.

**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**

The service places a requirement on foster carers to ensure children / young people placed with them are registered with a local GP, and are supported to access health services according to their identified need(s). This includes dental and optical services. This was confirmed by foster carers and seen in records. Health records are updated during the placement and considered in the planning and review of care. Evidence was given by a foster carer how personal hygiene, diet and health issues had been addressed. Foster carers confirmed they have received training in relation to health promotion and administering first aid and training records are kept.

**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**

Discussions with young people and foster carers confirmed that educational needs were being met and that young people receive support in this area. This includes young people attending mainstream schools where possible and the organisation's own schools and day centers. Further education is also encouraged. Placement agreements require foster carers to take an active role with respect to all matters relating to the educational needs of children / young people placed with them. Records are maintained of the educational attainment of children and young people being looked after. Foster placement agreements identify where financial responsibility lies for all school costs, including school uniform, school trips and school equipment. Foster carers attend school functions and meetings.

**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**

There are written requirements in the foster carers handbook of what is expected of them in terms of preparing young people for independent or semi-independent living and as detailed in the foster carer agreements and care plans. Evidence was given of this in practice, to the inspector, following discussion with a foster carer and young person. This has included independent travel, work experience and help with budgeting.

## 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

There is a company procedure in relation to staff recruitment and selection and evidence was seen of appropriate checks on staff being completed by the service to include CRB checks. The manager confirmed that checks on sessional staff are also completed. Staff have appropriate experience and qualifications or have undergone training and receive supervision relevant to their function. The operational staff team has increased since the last inspection.

Total number of staff of the agency:

7

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

0

### 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

There is a defined management structure; staff and foster carers were clear about whom they were accountable. Job descriptions have been revised; responsibilities and management delegation have been defined. Delegated management responsibilities are being reviewed by the manager due to the expansion of the service. There are procedures in place to review the approval status of foster carers yearly and as required. Review reports are presented to the fostering panel together with any required changes. Carers requiring deregistration are referred back to the panel meeting. The manager has provided supervision and consultation for social work staff. Staff and carers are encouraged to undertake on-going training. Additional administrative staff has been employed. Staff have been provided with appropriate policies from the service. There is an out of hours on-call staff rota which operational staff cover.

**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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Staffing levels have increased since the last inspection with the provision of qualified social workers and a part-time administrator. Staffing levels will need to be monitored as the agency is expanding and new carers are being assessed. The assessment process for foster carers takes into account and addresses all relevant factors following recognised procedures to do so and as required of this standard. Evidence of full assessments was seen on foster carers files.

**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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Evidence given to the inspector from foster carer interviews and in questionnaires received, confirms the service is a fair and competent employer, offering good support for staff and carers. Carers said that they received a lot of support whatever time of the day, and felt that the training provided was of a good standard. They enjoyed working for the service. Carers confirmed they receive supervision and appraisal. A health and safety and whistle-blowing policy is in place and appropriate insurance policy cover.

**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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Staff receive specialist training as required and spoke highly of the training offered. Training needs are ascertained in supervision and through the appraisal system. The training manager then identifies/organises appropriate courses for staff. Joint training is held with staff and foster carers. Staff induction is in the process of being more formalised as the team has expanded. Staff meetings are held.



<b>Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)</b> <b>All staff are properly accountable and supported.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>Personnel records inspected contained written details of the duties and responsibilities expected of each staff member. Policies and procedures of the organisation have been developed by the manager. Records demonstrated that staff members coming into contact with foster carers and prospective foster carers and children/young people receive supervision in line with this standard. Regular team meetings are held that all staff members attend.</p>		

<b>Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.6)</b> <b>The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>Foster carers have reported that they receive a lot of support and guidance from the operational staff team. There is a foster carer support group. Foster carers spoken with demonstrated that they got on well with each other and gave each other support. Each foster carer has a supervising social worker/support worker who they can go to. Annual review reports are prepared and presented to the fostering panel. Placing social workers have confirmed they are kept informed of events by foster carers and the operational staff.</p>		

<b>Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.10)</b> <b>The fostering service is a managed one that provides supervision for foster carers and helps them to develop their skills.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>Foster carer agreements have been written in a way that emphasizes to foster carers what expectations are placed upon them and of what they may expect of the service. Each approved foster carer is supervised by a named social worker (whilst one of the supervising social workers has not attained a recognised qualification in social work they do have substantial experience in their field. The support provided by this worker has been highly commended by foster carers). Records of supervision have been maintained. Foster care agreements comply with regulatory requirements. Foster carers have confirmed they are given a handbook containing policies, procedures, guidance, legal information and insurance details. Unannounced visits by the service to foster homes have been carried out and the outcome of such visits are documented. Procedures for dealing with complaints are included in the foster carers handbook, the Statement of Purpose and the children's guide. Complaints have been recorded and outcomes monitored by the Manager of the agency. Circumstances in which a carer may be removed from the foster carer register are outlined in the disciplinary rules and categories of conduct section of the foster carers handbook.</p>		

**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**

An expectation is placed upon all foster carers by the agency that they attend training and this is monitored by the training manager for the organisation and fed back to the service manager. The manager confirmed that foster carers receive training to meet the needs of the young people placed with them. Pre-approval and induction training is completed, to include safe caring for all members of the household. Training is reviewed and discussed at the annual reviews of foster carers and included in reports.

## 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

Appropriate records were being maintained by the service. There is a written policy on case recording in line with this standard. Foster carers write daily reports and records were seen to being stored in homes securely. Young people are encouraged to contribute to reports as written by foster carers and supervising social workers. Life events are recorded to include photographs and life story work.

### 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?

2

Records inspected included children's, staff and carers' files, incident reports, accident reports and records of complaints. Records have been reviewed by the service since the last inspection to include the keeping of appropriate records of sessional workers. Records in the service were being stored in a locked office. However, the inspector asks this is reviewed to provide greater security and risk from fire. The inspector is mindful of the impending move to new premises and advice has been given to the manager with regard to the storage of records there and in line with the expansion of the service.

Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:

12

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

X

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

X

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

X

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

X

Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £

387

Maximum £

525

## 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?**

2

Due to the expansion of the service, the office accommodation needs to be reviewed. The present premises are too small to accommodate the increase in personnel and records. The inspector visited the proposed new premises in Thanet and has given advice to the manager for its refurbishment in order to meet this standard.

## 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

Financial accounts were not requested for inspection but these areas were looked at for registration purposes. The registered provider has emphasised that financial accounts will be made available following any request made by the Commission. Pre inspection intelligence relating to the operation of Ethelbert Specialist Homes indicates no reason for the inspector to believe the financial status of the service is anything less than the standard requires. Staff and foster carers receive a good level of training provided by the organisation. Young people enjoy holidays and days out and are provided for appropriately. Foster carers confirmed they received payment on time.

### 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

Finances are managed and audited by Ethelbert Specialist Homes. The manager has stated that to his knowledge (and from day to day experience) the financial management systems in place have had no adverse effect on the operation of the service.

**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**

The service has written information relating to fostering allowances that are paid and these are contained in the foster carers handbook and agreements. Foster carers have confirmed they are clear about the allowances and expenses payable and how to access them, before a child is placed. Foster carers confirmed that they receive allowances and expenses as per the written information they have been provided with and that these payments are made promptly and at the agreed time.

## 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

Panel meeting minutes seen, discussion with the manager, and evidence given from the last inspection, shows that the fostering panel is operating within regulatory requirements. Panel members are subject to recruitment checks including Criminal Records Bureau checks at the enhanced level and are attending training. The foster panel has access to and seeks medical expertise in the process of considering the approval or re-approval of foster carers. Quality assurance systems have been incorporated to the operation and review of the functions of the fostering panel. Foster panels receive management information about the outcome of foster carers annual reviews and are involved in the process as a matter of good practice. Advice was given to the manager that the panel could benefit from having an educator and person with legal experience at meetings.

## 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?
This standard is not applicable to the service.	



## 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?
This standard is not applicable to the service.	

**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 conducted on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2005 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

The agency would like to record that the inspection took place in a professional and helpful manner which provided guidance for agency staff and management.

The report specifies that the Inspector gave advice to the manager that the panel would benefit from the inclusion of an educator and a legal representative in Standard 30.

The agency would like to bring to the Commission's attention that the panel currently benefits from the regular attendance of an educator and that discussions related solely to the possible appointment of a legal representative.

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

Provider comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report

YES

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

YES

**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 28<sup>th</sup> March 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

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

Other: <enter details here>

NO

**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 \_\_\_\_\_ of Ethelbert Residential Family Placement confirm that the contents of this report are 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, \_\_\_\_\_ of Ethelbert Residential Family Placement am unable to confirm that the contents of this report are 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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