



Champions for  
Social Care  
Improvement

# inspection report

## **Moments**

Moments Limited

Holme Lodge Farm

Pean Hill

Whitstable

Kent

CT5 3AY

15th, 16th & 17th September & 2nd  
October 2003      This report may only be  
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## **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**

Moments

**Tel No**

01227 479555

**Address**

Moments Limited, Holme Lodge Farm, Pean Hill,  
Whitstable, Kent, CT5 3AY

**Fax No**

As above

**Email Address**

moments@btconnect.com

**Registered Number of IFA**

**Name of Registered Provider**

Moments

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

Mrs Kathleen Lovell

**Date of first registration**

**Date of latest registration certificate**

**Registration Conditions Apply?**

NO

**Date of last inspection**

24/01/03

<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		15th September 2003	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		10:30 am	
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	Mr Geoff Standen	079122
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>		
<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 NCSC. 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>			

**Introduction to Report and Inspection**

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**Description of Fostering Service**

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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**

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**(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**
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**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 National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) 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 NCSC in respect of Moments. 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 NCSC 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.**

Moments Ltd is an independent fostering agency based in Whitstable, Kent. The Agency was providing at the time of, and according to information provided for this inspection, placements for thirty-one children and young people in eighteen foster homes.

## **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 inspection took place over three days in September 2003. It found that ten of the twelve requirements and six of the thirteen recommendations made at the last inspection had been achieved. These efforts were to be commended. Four new requirements and three new recommendations were made in this report.

On each day of the inspection there was a welcoming atmosphere where staff conveyed a child-focussed approach to their work and a commitment to continue improvements in the practice of the Agency.

### **Statement of Purpose (Standard 1)**

#### **0 of 1 standard assessed was met**

The Agency had a written Statement of Purpose and a children's guide. The former was in need of revision to address changes in staff members.

### **Fitness to provide or manage a fostering service (Standards 2-3)**

#### **2 of the 2 standards assessed were met**

Following checks, interviews and meetings with the Directors of the company, the Inspector was satisfied the persons providing the service were fit persons to do so. The Manager in post has made application but is not yet registered with the Commission.

### **Management of the fostering service (Standards 4-5)**

#### **2 of the 2 standards assessed were met**

The Agency had addressed requirements made at the last inspection to establish systems of monitoring the service. Inspection of records and interviews with staff and carers provided evidence of the Agency being effectively managed.

### **Securing and promoting welfare (Standards 6-14)**

#### **5 of the 9 standards assessed were met**

The Agency had taken steps to ensure its carers were appropriately trained in methods of Care and Control although this training was still to be delivered. Care Plans and Local Authority Care Plans were available on file. Children confirmed they were consulted about care planning. Children had been registered with doctors, dentists and opticians. Contact with family was proactively supported by the Agency.

Time and effort had been invested in the way the Placement team operated and in improving the matching process. Evidence was found of placements being made outside of the terms of approval of carers.

### **Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers (Standards 15-23)**

#### **6 of the 9 standards assessed were met**

The Inspector picked carers at random to be interviewed as part of the inspection. These carers, together with twelve returned questionnaires provided the majority view of being satisfied with regard to the support they receive from the Agency. Similarly, children and young people provided positive responses of the care they receive and had no complaints with regard to the Agency. All carers were attending NVQ training.

Meetings with carers and inspection of carers' files provided evidence of a thorough recruitment process.

The Manager demonstrated a commitment to ensuring staff are suitably supervised.

### **Records (Standards 24-25)**

**1 of the 2 standards assessed were met**

The Agency gave open access to all records and information needed to complete the inspection. The quality of records had improved since the last inspection. Carers had been provided with training in record keeping although the Inspector identified the need for further work in this area and for carers to be more diligent in ensuring their records are kept securely.

**Fitness of premises for use a fostering service (Standard 26)**

**1 of 1 standard assessed was met**

The Agency had moved to new premises since the last inspection. These were considered fit for the purpose.

**Financial Requirements (Standards 27-29)**

**2 of the 2 standards assessed were met**

Financial information was made available. The Agency maintained accounts that were audited by an external company. Carers were satisfied with the financial arrangements.

**Fostering panels (Standard 30)**

**1 of 1 standard assessed was met**

The chair of the panel and the Agency had done much work to improve upon the way in which the panel functioned.

**Short-term breaks (Standard 31)**

Not assessed as this standard did not apply to the Agency.

**Family and friends as carers (Standard 32)**

Not assessed as this standard did not apply to the Agency.

## **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?

NO

**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	
1	28 (5)(b)	22	To ensure Foster Care Agreements meet the requirements of Schedule 5.	1 June 2003
2	17 (1)	23	To ensure carers are provided with the necessary training to meet the needs of each child placed.	1 October 2003

**Action is being taken by the National Care Standards Commission 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**      Geoff Standen      **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Second Inspector**      \_\_\_\_\_      **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Locality Manager**      \_\_\_\_\_      **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**      \_\_\_\_\_

## 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 and recommendations 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	4 (a)	1	That the Statement of Purpose must be revised to take account of changes in staff personnel.	01/12/03
2	34 (1)(b)	8	That all placements made must be consistent with the terms of approval of each carer.	01/11/03
3	28 (5)(b)	22	That the terms of approval for each carer must be included in Foster Carer Agreements.	01/12/03
4	17 (1)	23	That carers must be provided with the necessary training to meet the needs of each child placed.	01/03/04
5	32 (5)	25	That foster carers must store confidential records securely	01/11/03
6	18 (5)	25.13	That the complaints log must contain a written record of any complaint, the action taken in response to it and the outcome of any investigation.	01/11/03

### 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	8.1	To ensure each child placed is carefully matched using comprehensive information of the assessed needs of children.
2	9.2	To provide carers with appropriate training sufficient to meet the standard.
3	12.4	To ensure foster carers are provided with a written health record of each child placed.
4	21.2	To devise a clear strategy as per the standard.
5	22.6	To ensure that meetings with foster carers have a clear purpose and that records of these meetings are sufficient.
6	24.2	To provide a written policy on case recording that is made known to all staff.
7	25.9	To ensure written entries are non-stigmatising and distinguish between fact and opinion.
8	25.12	To encourage children to make additions and comments to their records.
9	30	As part of its quality assurance function the Panel identifies the individual training needs of carers.

\* 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	4
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	YES
• 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	NO
Interview with panel chair	YES
Observation of foster carer training	NO
Observation of foster panel	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	YES

Date of Inspection	15/09/03
Time of Inspection	10:30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	27

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the NCSC 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.

Moments



## 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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At the last inspection two recommendations were made. The first recommended "information on how a child could secure access to an independent advocate should be included within the children's guide". The children's guide had been revised into a colourful and easy to read document and now included this information. The second recommendation was for the Agency "to produce the children's guide in different formats to meet the needs of different groups of children". Plans were in hand to publish the guide in three more languages of Albanian, Pushtu and Fasi by September 2003. This work was to be commended.

The Agency's Statement of Purpose was last revised in March 2003. Its content was sufficient to meet the demands of the standard and regulations although needed revision to take account of notable staff changes since the last revision e.g. change of Manager.

## 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?
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	3
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Since the last inspection the Agency had appointed a new Manager. This person had made application but had not, at the time of the inspection, been registered with the Commission. The Manager holds a Degree in Education (B. Ed).	
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### 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?
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	2
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The NCSC carried out the required checks and an interview with the Responsible Individual. All checks were satisfactory and the Commission was satisfied they were a suitable person to run the Agency.	
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As mentioned the Manager took up her post in June 2003 and had yet to be interviewed by the Commission in regard to the Fit Person Process.

## 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

At the last inspection two requirements and one recommendation were made. The first requirement asked the Agency “to establish clear procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the fostering service as specified in Schedule 7” and the second for the Agency “to supply the Commission at appropriate intervals with any report in respect of any review conducted”. The Inspector was provided with a report and was assured these would now be sent to the Commission on a regular basis. The Inspector suggested the report should contain more factual data rather than statements of intent as was found in various parts of the report.

The recommendation asked the Agency “to carry out a review of the roles of staff, including directors, and establish more clearly expressed lines of accountability within written policy and protocols”. A review was carried out and changes were made. The Inspector was satisfied this had resulted in a clearer, more defined structure.

**Number of statutory notifications made to NCSC in last 12 months:**

1

**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.**

1

**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.**

1

**Serious complaint about a foster parent.**

0

**Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.**

0

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

0

**Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:**

0

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

Each post in the Agency had a job description. Whilst the Directors continue to play major roles in the day to day running of the Agency, staff and carers were clear they report to the Manager. Staff understood the procedure of who deputises in the Manager's absence. From discussions with the Manager, staff and carers the Inspector took the view the service was managed effectively and efficiently.

## 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

All foster carers working for the Agency had gone through a rigorous recruitment and assessment process. This included preparation training in health and safety and a health and safety assessment of each carer's property that was updated annually. Evidence of these was seen. All of the foster homes visited were spacious enough to comfortably accommodate those living there and were adequately furnished and decorated. Each child visited had their own bedroom. Each foster carer visited understood they might be interviewed as part of the inspection process.

### 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

The Agency had policy and guidance in regard to equality issues that promoted the need to recognise the individual needs of each child. From meetings with staff, carers and children the Inspector found the Agency makes great effort to address the ethnic, cultural and religious needs of the children placed and that the outcome of the standard was being met.

**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?**

1

At the last inspection two recommendations were made. The first asked the Agency “to devise a matching process sufficient to meet the requirements of the standard”. The Agency had shown a clear commitment to addressing this issue with the formation of a Placements Team and the development of systems and formats to assist them in their work was to be applauded. The Inspector found there was still a need to extend the information collated on which decisions were based. Whilst the Inspector was assured decisions to place were always based on good social work principles and the needs of the children, rather than the needs of the carers or the Agency, the process was not clearly stated or evidenced i.e. that the Manager and/or Principal Social Worker made the final decision to place.

During the course of the inspection the Inspector found evidence of foster carers receiving children into their care that was outside of their terms of approval. The Agency was served with an Immediate Requirement to stop this practice forthwith.

The second recommendation asked the Agency to “to devise a strategy and system in order to evidence the agency’s requests, where appropriate, of responsible authorities to meet their obligations under FS8.6”. This was still to be done.

**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?**

2

At the last inspection two requirements and a recommendation were made. The first requirement stated the Agency must “ensure policy and procedures satisfy the standard and Regulation 12”. This work had been completed; the Agency’s child protection policy and procedure had been revised in accordance with Kent Child Protection Committee policy. One training course in this regard for staff and carers had been delivered and another was planned for October 2003.

The second requirement required the Agency must “ensure that no child is subject to any measure of control, restraint or discipline which is excessive or unreasonable” and the recommendation asked the Agency to “provide carers with appropriate training sufficient to meet the standard”. This matter has been addressed with carers in discussion groups and steps had been taken to provide carers with training in managing behaviour appropriate to the age of the children in their care in November 2003. The recommendation remains in place until such time as the training is delivered.

**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

At the last inspection a requirement was made for the Agency "to provide evidence of the promotion of contact subject to the provisions of Foster Placement Agreements". The Inspector found sufficient evidence in sampled files of contact agreements and of these being reviewed as part of the Looked After Plan for each child.

The importance and value of contact forms part of the carers' NVQ training.

**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 Inspector received fourteen completed children's questionnaires and spoke with two children during the inspection. All, bar two questionnaires, provided a positive response in stating that their foster carers either often asked or sometimes asked their opinions. Parents, children and significant others were invited to planning and review meetings. Carers spoken with gave examples of listening to children's views and advocating on their behalf.

Children demonstrated an understanding and knowledge of who and how they would make a complaint to should they wish/need to do so.

**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?**

2

Evidence was found in children's files of appropriate services being provided for children i.e. GP, dentist and optician, and of carers providing information for the planning and review process. Sampled files contained relevant Looked After Children forms and medical consents.

Foster carers possessed a differing range of health information regarding the children in their care; one had received little or no information from previous carers or placing authorities.

**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

Evidence was seen on sampled children's files of regular liaison with the education department and of information being sought appropriately. Foster carers demonstrated an awareness of and a commitment to ensuring children's education was a high priority. Evidence was found of foster carers involving themselves in the education of their foster children e.g. homework and visits to schools where appropriate. Children confirmed that carers took an active interest in their schoolwork.

**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

Evidence was seen and heard, where appropriate, of children being encouraged and supported in becoming independent as part of their care plan. Plans were congruent with their age and ability.



## 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

Two requirements were made at the last inspection. The first required the Agency “to ensure staff files contain the information needed to comply with Schedule 1”. Staff files were well organised and presented and contained the necessary information. The second requirement asked the Agency “to ensure staff have the qualifications, skills and experience necessary for the work they perform”. Given the changes in staff personnel and the way in which the Agency was now organised the Inspector was satisfied the Agency met this requirement.

Two recommendations were also made at the last inspection. The first asked the Agency “to provide evidence there are clear written recruitment and selection procedures for appointing staff that follow good practice”. This had been done. The second asked, “all staff are interviewed as part of the selection process”. Discussions with staff and staff files provided evidence this had been done with all new appointments since the last inspection.

Total number of staff of the agency:

11

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

At the last inspection a requirement was made for the Agency “to carry out a review of the roles of staff, including directors, and establish more clearly expressed lines of accountability within written policy and protocols”. This had been done. As stated the Inspector was satisfied the Agency had a clear management structure where staff understood the lines of accountability. All staff had regular supervision sessions where workloads were monitored. Regular staff meetings were held every week. Social work staff were supported and assisted by a team of administrators. All staff had appropriate job descriptions and conditions of employment.

**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 Agency employs a Manager, Principal Social Worker, two supervising social workers, three people in a 'Placement team' and two administrative personnel. Social work staff were allocated low caseloads of between six to eight families each that enabled workers to provide carers with regular telephone contact and support visits of at least once a month. Carers provided positive feedback regarding the support they received.

Carers were assessed and approved in a thorough and appropriate way.

**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

The Agency had appropriate policy and procedures in the form of handbooks for both carers and staff. These included health and safety and a whistleblowing policy of which staff and carers were aware. An out of hours support service was available to carers. Both staff and carers received regular supervision. Sufficient insurance cover was in place and displayed.

**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

The Inspector was provided with evidence of the training opportunities available to staff. These included the Children Act, Child Protection, and a course run by Fostering Network in Working Together.

All staff had received annual appraisals other than newly appointed staff requiring probationary appraisals. Plans were in place to carry these out. Evidence was seen of appraisals contributing to the identification of staff training needs.

**Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)****All staff are properly accountable and supported.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

At the last inspection a requirement was made for the Agency “to ensure that staff receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal”. The Inspector was satisfied this had been achieved. Staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities and whom they were responsible to. Each worker had a job description. Evidence was seen of staff attending regular supervision sessions and staff meetings.

**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?****2**

At the last inspection a recommendation was made for the Agency “to provide a written strategy to address FS21.2”. Work had been done to address this matter although it was agreed further development was still needed. The Inspector found there was a need to establish a clearer definition between support and supervision and what this entailed for support workers.

Carers were provided with the opportunity to attend regular support groups. Carers had varied opinions as to the value of these groups.

**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?****2**

At the last inspection a requirement was made for the Agency “to ensure Foster Care Agreements meet the requirements of Schedule 5”. Work had been done to revise these although there was still a need to include the individual terms of approval for each carer in their agreements.

A recommendation was also made At the last inspection that asked the Agency “to ensure the recording of supervision visits complies with FS22.3 and FS22.6”. After speaking with support workers and looking at records the Inspector was satisfied this was being done although advised there was a need to elaborate and improve upon the content of the recording of meetings with carers. That is, the form used to record meetings had headings of Health, education and concerns and so did not provide evidence of other essential matters being addressed e.g. sanctions, methods of control, bullying, health and safety.

**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?**

1

At the last inspection a requirement was made for the Agency “to ensure carers are provided with the necessary training to meet the needs of each child placed”. A recommendation was also made “to ensure the effectiveness of training is evaluated”. All carers were currently attending an NVQ Level III course. A member of staff was employed as a Research and Development Manager and had the responsibility to develop and co-ordinate training opportunities for both staff and carers. The worker had clearly made great progress in establishing systems that would assist in helping to meet the requirement and this work was to be applauded. A matrix of training courses and modules had been constructed to assist this work although it was agreed there was a need to develop this further i.e. the matrix should include both staff and carers and provide a record of the training completed. Also, whilst the range of training offered, especially providing NVQ to all carers, was to be commended no system, including annual reviews, determined whether the individual training needs of carers for the children they care for were being addressed.

## 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?

2

At the last inspection a requirement was made for the Agency "to ensure each child's file contains a Foster Placement Agreement as required by Schedule 6". Sampled children's files were well ordered and provided evidence this had been achieved. A recommendation was also made "to establish a system to ensure that where necessary information is not forthcoming from a responsible authority a copy of the written request for the information is kept". This had been done.

Administrative staff shared a common understanding of case recording but were unaware of any written policy.

When visiting foster homes the Inspector found they used differing types of books to record daily events although the Manager stated carers had been given diaries in which to do so. Carers confirmed they had received training in record keeping.

### 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?

1

At the last inspection a requirement was made for the Agency "to ensure the Register of Foster Parents included all of the information required by Regulation 31". This had been done. A recommendation was also made "to encourage children to make additions and comments to their records". Of the carers visited none had encouraged children to make recordings and not all had shared their records with the children. There was a lack of understanding as to whom the records belonged to. Evidence of subjective and stigmatising language was found. Some foster carers were not storing their records in a secure way

Administrative records kept at the Agency's office were well ordered and maintained and sufficient to meet the standard. A complaints log was kept although evidence was found of complaints from carers in other documentation that had not been recorded in the log.

<b>Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:</b>			31
<b>Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months:</b>			34
<b>Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months:</b>			25
<b>Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months:</b>			6
<b>Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months:</b>			1
<b>Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £</b>	343.00	<b>Maximum £</b>	514.50

## 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

Since the last inspection the Agency had moved its office to bigger premises about two miles outside of Whitstable. These offer sufficient room for the administration of the Agency but still did not provide sufficient space for training purposes or large meetings. However, the Inspector was satisfied the Agency makes suitable alternative arrangements when needed.

## 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 Inspector was assured the organisation remains financially viable. The Inspector found no evidence at the time of the time of the inspection to suggest that financial matters negatively influence any practice, material or staffing aspects of the Agency.

### 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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One of the persons employed in an administrative capacity assumes a responsibility for the day-to-day operation and maintenance of the financial processes i.e. the billing of responsible authorities and the payment of carers. Accounts are maintained and audited by an external company.



**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

Carers confirmed the Agency made payments to them promptly and at the agreed time. Written policy regarding allowances and expenses were in place and had been made known to carers.

## 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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Written policy and procedures were in place. Panel members were appropriately recruited and consisted of people from a range of professional backgrounds and experience as per regulations.

The Inspector met with the Chair of the Fostering Panel and observed the Panel whilst it heard a number of annual reviews of carers. The information provided for the reviews was well presented and decisions were reached appropriately after discussion although the Inspector considered the Panel should have explored the training needs of carers in greater depth.

## 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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The Agency had not provided any placements in the last year that were applicable to this standard.	9
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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?	9
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Not applicable.

**PART C**

**LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY**

**(where applicable)**

Not 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 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> September & 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2003 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

Moments feel that this was a fair inspection.

**Action taken by the NCSC 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"/>
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 15<sup>th</sup> December 2003, 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"/>
Action plan was received at the point of publication	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 NCSC inspection reports are public documents. Reports on children's homes are only obtainable on personal application to NCSC 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, Linda Croft of Moments, confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above dates and that I agree with the statutory requirements made and will seek to comply with these.**

<b>Print Name</b>	<u>Linda Croft</u>
<b>Signature</b>	<u>L Croft</u>
<b>Designation</b>	<u>Director</u>
<b>Date</b>	<u>12.12.03.</u>

**Or**

**D.3.2 I, \_\_\_\_\_ of Moments, 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 dates for the following reasons:**

<b>Print Name</b>	_____
<b>Signature</b>	_____
<b>Designation</b>	_____
<b>Date</b>	_____

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.