



Champions for  
Social Care  
Improvement

# inspection report

## Fostering Services

### **Foster Care NCH**

479 Margate Road

Broadstairs

Kent

CT10 2QA

20th January 2004

## **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**

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**Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)**

YES

**Name of Agency**

Foster Care NCH

**Tel No**

02077047000

**Address**

479 Margate Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 2QA

**Fax No**

**Email Address**

**Registered Number of IFA**

H050000794

**Name of Registered Provider**

Foster Care NCH

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

Ms Tracey Livesey

**Date of first registration**

16th December 2003

**Date of latest registration certificate**

16th December 2003

**Registration Conditions Apply?**

NO

**Date of last inspection**

13.01.04

<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		20th January 2004	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		09:30 am	
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	Mrs Sue Gaskell	081981
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>	Mr W Wallace	
<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**

**Inspection visits**

**Description of Fostering Service**

**Part A: Summary of Inspection Findings**

**Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State**

**Implementation of Statutory Requirements from last Inspection**

**Statutory Requirements from this Inspection**

**Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection**

**Part B: Inspection Methods & Findings**

**(National Minimum Standards For Fostering Services)**

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

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

**Part D: Provider's Response**

**D.1. Provider's comments**

**D.2. Action Plan**

**D.3. Provider's agreement**

## INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Independent and local authority fostering services which fall within the jurisdiction of the 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 Foster Care NCH. 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.**

Foster Care NCH is based in Broadstairs, Kent. At the time of the inspection, it was providing placements for 59 children and young people in 42 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 Inspector was pleased to acknowledge the preparation by the Agency, which greatly facilitated the Inspection process. It is clear from the Pre-inspection Questionnaire, documentation, and discussions with staff and the Manager that the Agency is managed effectively and has actively pursued the requirements and recommendations from last year's Inspection. The Inspection process included private interviews with Foster carers, and children, and also benefited from observation of the Panel meeting consisting of Foster carers, children, Social Work and management. The feedback from Foster carers and children was very positive, with confirmation of a high level of training and support from individual link workers and from the Agency out of hours team. There were no children at the Fostering Panel, although their input re: issues are sought.



## **Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State**

**(Local Authority Fostering Services Only)**

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

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

NO

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

NO

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

NO

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

NO

**The grounds for the above Report or Notice are:**

## Implementation of Statutory Requirements from Last Inspection

Requirements from last Inspection visit fully actioned?

YES

**If No please list below**

### STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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

No.	Regulation	Standard	Required actions	

**Action is being taken by the 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.**

Condition	Compliance	
<b>Comments</b>		

Condition	Compliance	
<b>Comments</b>		

Condition	Compliance	
<b>Comments</b>		

Condition	Compliance	
<b>Comments</b>		

<b>Lead Inspector</b>	Sue Gaskell	<b>Signature</b>	<i>S Gaskell</i>
<b>Second Inspector</b>	_____	<b>Signature</b>	_____
<b>Locality Manager</b>	William Wallace	<b>Signature</b>	_____
<b>Date</b>	9/3/04		_____

## 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	

### 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	1	
2	14 & 19	

\* 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	
• 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	YES
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	20/01/04
Time of Inspection	09:30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	21

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.

## 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?**

2

Since the last Inspection, the Agency has revised the Statement of Purpose in line with the requirements and it now clearly states the Agency's aims, values and methodology. The Agency has also updated the Children's Guide. This took considerable time as the Agency consulted with children and young people to ensure its usefulness and then the Guide required ratification at national level. It was recommended that other forms of access should be considered for children and young people whose first language is not English.

## Fitness to Carry On or Manage a Fostering Service

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

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

### Standard 2 (2.1 - 2.4)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The manager has confirmed that she has passed the Diploma in Management Studies. It is clear from interviews with the Registered manager and the staff group that this Standard has been met. The financial reporting system has been improved with a quarterly financial management meeting involving the Financial manager, the Responsible individual and the Registered manager.

### Standard 3 (3.1 - 3.4)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The Inspectors were satisfied that those responsible for carrying on or managing the Agency are fit to do so.



## 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

It is clear that as an organisation the Agency benefits from access to considerable administrative support. This is further enhanced by local arrangements evidenced in the quality of the pre-inspection information.

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

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.

5

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.

5

Serious complaint about a foster parent.

0

Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.

1

**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

The Agency continues to be managed appropriately, indeed, staff commented on and praised the openness of the culture of the organisation.

## 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
<p>The Inspector visited four foster homes, and after discussion with the foster carers concluded that those children and young people are provided with a service which aims to provide a safe, healthy and nurturing environment. The recommendation from the previous inspection that written agreement be sought prior to the use of shared rooms by siblings, has been carried out and this Standard is now assessed as met.</p>		

### 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
<p>The Registered Manager confirmed that the policies regarding the value and promotion of diversity and equality are interwoven and incorporated into other policies. The inspector observed that at the panel meeting, discussion around the needs of unaccompanied asylum seekers demonstrated an awareness of the needs of children from different cultural backgrounds. Further there was also discussion indicating that incidents of racism had been managed appropriately.</p> <p>One of the foster carers showed the Inspector information provided by the Agency to enable families to gain more of an insight into the needs of different cultural and religious backgrounds, and again confirmed that incidents of racism had been managed appropriately and sensitively.</p>		

**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

Emergency referrals continue to be dealt with through the duty system and in the event of an emergency placement; information is sought as soon as possible after placement. The Inspectors were satisfied that the Agency has appropriate systems in place to aid good practice and that additional support is provided where appropriate. Foster carers confirmed that there is additional support for children with special needs or from particular cultural groups. The Inspector was satisfied that every effort is made to ensure that children's needs are matched with what can be provided by the 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

There is evidence of detailed knowledge of matters relating to child protection, underpinned with the organisation's own written policy and guidance. There was evidence at the panel meeting that all allegations of abuse have been considered appropriately and seriously, but have included consideration of the impact on the carers ie balancing the rights of the young people and the foster carers. The Inspectors noted that files contained details of the safer care plan assessments which have been introduced since the last inspection.

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

90

%

**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 Inspector spoke to the contract co-ordinator and was satisfied that this standard continues to be met.

**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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The Inspectors are pleased to acknowledge the role of the Children's Panel which aims to improve the children's participation in, and influence on, the organisation. Minutes are kept of the children's panel meetings. The children have also participated in the preparation of the Children's Guide. The Inspector spoke to one young person involved in the children's panel, who confirmed that the panel mixes work with fun.

**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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This standard continues to be met. An inspection of the records confirmed that carers are required to maintain records of any healthcare requirements and how they have been addressed. Foster carers confirmed that they are required to maintain daily records in order for the Agency to provide regular reports to Social Workers, and that a high priority is placed on providing training on health care issues.

**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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The Inspector noted that evidence on file confirms that members of staff receive ACE training, in order to offer additional support to foster carers. There was also evidence of the individual input to carers to meet educational needs and assist with the encouragement of young people.

**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?**

2

Based on the organisation's own self assessment, there still remains a need to develop good practice in this area. Whilst staff interviewed were familiar with the legislation, they identified a need for more training. This appears to be an issue for the organisation at national level.

## 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

This standard continues to be met. The Agency maintains a thorough and rigorous recruitment and selection procedure which applies at all levels for staff and carers. Some relatively inexperienced foster carers confirmed that thorough checks are carried out.

Total number of staff of the agency:

23

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

6

### 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

From discussions with the staff group it was clear that they feel that the organisation and management is efficient and effective, despite having one member of staff on long-term sick leave.

**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

Since the last inspection all social work posts have been filled and there are currently 8 full time posts and 2 part time posts.

**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 Inspectors were satisfied, from the policies and procedures submitted, and from corroborating evidence, that the Agency is continuing to meet this Standard, and that this is underpinned by the central organisation. The Inspector was given examples of considerable support to staff through a difficult period.

**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?**

2

The Agency continues to show commitment to training. There are some shortfalls but the Inspector acknowledged that this is beyond the control of the Agency.

<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>
The Inspector was satisfied that this Standard continues to be met. Staff confirmed that they are well supported and staff supervision records indicated a clear system with targets and appraisals to ensure that staff are accountable.		

<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>
The Inspectors were satisfied through discussions with the foster carers and examination of the Agency's records, that foster carers are provided with regular support and advice through home visits by link workers or through telephone or written advice. The Agency remains clear as to its role in supporting carers and its potential conflict with placing agencies unable to meet their responsibilities to children. The Inspectors were advised of specific cases of clearly defined appropriate intervention.		

<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>
The organisation has recently prepared a new handbook, and in anticipation of it being circulated to all foster carers in the near future, this standard is now met.		



**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**

From conversations with the Training Officer it is clear now that there has been a change of strategy in promoting attendance at training courses, involving identifying courses, prioritising those who should attend and monitoring by the panel. The Agency has taken a far more proactive stance on this issue since last year's inspection. The Inspectors were also advised by the Agency, and by the foster carers, that a training manual is provided to all carers which lists the training courses available.

## 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

The Inspector examined a number of children's files and found them well maintained and easily accessible.

### Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.13)

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

#### Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The Inspectors were satisfied, through inspection of a number of records, files and registers, and through conversation with the Administrator, that this standard is met. There is a vacancy for a full time senior administrator due to the relocation of the Maidstone team to the office. The Financial assistant ensures that prompt payment is made to foster carers and the foster carers confirmed that there has been no problem with this.

Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:

51

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

75

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

32

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

6

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

6

Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £

336

Maximum £

336

## Fitness of Premises for use as Fostering Service

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5)

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

3

The Agency has sufficient facilities in large office premises to ensure efficiency and security. However the Inspector noted that the main office would benefit from redecoration.

## 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

Although financial accounts were not examined, the Agency's business plan and Annual Report confirmed that the organisation is financially sound.

### 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

The Inspector noted that the Agency has enhanced its financial policies and was satisfied that this standard continues to be met.

**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

All of the foster carers interviewed confirmed that all payments for allowances and expenses are made promptly and on 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

One of the Inspectors attended a panel meeting and interviewed the chair person. The Inspector noted that the panel discussed issues relating to variations, child protection, training and diversity. The Inspector was satisfied that the panel contained an appropriate quorum, that there was a wealth of expertise and experience and that members raised issues appropriately. There was evidence of link social workers knowing their carers and of the organisation pursuing issues with other agencies. The chairperson felt that there had been an improvement in record keeping and administration of the panel.

## 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 Inspector was informed that the Agency does not provide short-term breaks as defined by 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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This standard is not applicable to this agency.



**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 20<sup>th</sup> January 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

**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 6/4/2004, 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, KAREN HARVEY of Fostercare NCH Broadstairs, 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**                              KAREN HARVEY            
**Signature**                              Karen Harvey            
**Designation**                          REGISTERED PROPRIETOR            
**Date**                                      20.4.04          

Or

**D.3.2 I, \_\_\_\_\_ of Fostercare NCH Broadstairs, 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.