



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

Fostering Services

## **Swindon Borough Council Fostering Service**

Swindon Borough Council  
Euclid St  
Swindon  
Wiltshire  
SN1 2JH

21st February 2005

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

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

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

### **The role of CSCI is to:**

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

## **Inspection Methods & Findings**

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

### **The 4-point scale ranges from:**

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

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

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

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

**FOSTERING SERVICE INFORMATION**

**Local Authority Fostering Service?**

YES

**Name of Authority**

Swindon Borough Council Fostering Service

**Address**

Swindon Borough Council, Euclid St, Swindon, Wiltshire,  
SN1 2JH

**Local Authority Manager**

Terry Scragg

**Tel No:**

01793 463000

**Address**

Swindon Borough Council, Euclid St, Swindon, Wiltshire,  
SN1 2JH

**Fax No:**

**Email Address**

---

**Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)**

NO

**Name of Agency**

**Tel No**

**Address**

**Fax No**

**Email Address**

**Registered Number of IFA**

**Name of Registered Provider**

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

**Date of first registration**

**Date of latest registration certificate**

**Registration Conditions Apply ?**

NO

**Date of last inspection**

02.02.04

<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		21st February 2005	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		09:00 am	
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	Martin Davis	132266
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>	Wendy Anderson	
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>3</b>	Sarah Talbott	
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>4</b>		
<b>Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)</b> Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>			
<b>Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection</b>		Terry Scragg/Graham Senior	

**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 Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) are subject to inspection, to establish if the service is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and the requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000, the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and the Children Act 1989 as amended.

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

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

The report will show the following:

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

This report is a public document.

## INSPECTION VISITS

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

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

The Fostering Service is part of a broader Family Placement Service, which in turn is a core component of the Social Services Children and Families Service division of Swindon Borough Council. The Family Placement Team is responsible for the recruitment, assessment and support of foster carers and adopters, and for 'matching' placement requests with available placement resources.

The Service Manager is the nominated manager for the Family Placement Team for the purposes of inspection. He also manages the 16+ and Family Resource teams. There is a dedicated team manager who takes day-to-day charge of the Family Placement Team; he is supported by two Assistant Team Managers. The team includes ten social work qualified Family Placement Officers and two Social Services Officers. The team has traditionally had low staff turnover and at the time of the inspection the length of employment of staff within the team ranged from two years to 20 years. However two experienced staff were due to retire shortly and advertisements for replacements had not been released.

As at December 2004 the service had a total of 127 'active' foster carers registered providing placements to 207 children and young people. 87 of these were considered to be mainstream carers providing between them 152 placements. The 'Home and Away' scheme recruits and supports carers for children with disabilities or complex needs whose families need regular short-breaks from caring, 20 carers were registered with this scheme providing 35 placements. Historically the family placement team has been subdivided into specialist areas. The team now see themselves as more generic and work across the age range in fostering as well as undertaking the assessment and training of prospective adopters and Section 51 counselling. Inspectors were concerned that the service offered to 'Home and Away' carers might suffer if this did not remain a discreet service within the larger team. There is strong emphasis within the team on keeping children in their families and community and the team were supporting 20 family or friends carers who offered placements to 30 children and young people

The fostering service has a duty system staffed by social work assistants and overseen by the duty family placement officer and manager for the day. This duty system deals with requests from social workers seeking to place a child in a foster placement. If no placement is available or suitable from within the fostering team's own resources, the fostering service also has the responsibility of seeking out of Borough placements, which may be with other local authorities or with independent fostering agencies. The use of independent fostering agencies is at a low level. The team also provide, on a rota basis, an out of hour's telephone support service to foster carers, in addition to the Borough's emergency duty service.

Swindon Foster Care Association run a support and advice group for carers. Training programmes are held on a rolling programme. The fostering service is able to refer to a play therapist who has time allocated for direct work with children in foster care or for use in a consultation role with carers. There are links with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. A support group for looked after children, is managed by Swindon's Education and Community Department. This also provides a forum for meeting with agency staff and decision makers. A specialist education advisor for looked after children is in post and has been tasked with the responsibility to improve the educational experiences of looked after children. A health liaison worker for looked after children is also in post.

## 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 inspectors met with four sets of foster carers through case tracking. A group of foster carers along with their birth children and fostered children were also met. An inspector attended a meeting of the Swindon Foster Carers Association and interviewed the co-ordinator of the FOCUS group. A total of 75 pre-inspection questionnaires were returned from placing social workers and 27 received from foster carers. The fostering service declined to allow questionnaires to be sent to children who are fostered. This obviously restricted the extent to which children were able to contribute to the inspection. Inspectors met with key staff from the fostering service and other professionals working with looked after children.

The Fostering Service has made progress in the past 12 months. Almost 100% of carer annual reviews and health and safety checks on carer's homes had been completed. The manager had enrolled upon a course leading to an appropriate management qualification and similar training had been identified for the two Assistant Team Managers. A Foster Carer Handbook had been developed and circulated to all carers and a Fostering Service Policy and Procedures Handbook produced, these had been warmly welcomed by staff and carers and should help to improve consistency across the service over time. Management systems to monitor and improve the performance of the service had been further developed however inspectors found that there were significant errors in the information gathered. A strategy to systematically analyse the information gathered had yet to be developed.

A total of 7 requirements and 27 good practice recommendations have been made. Inspectors were particularly concerned by the size of caseloads within the Family Placement Team and by the apparent serious gaps in frequency of formal supervision of staff. Scrutiny of the operation of the family placement team should be extended to include Foster Panel more regularly, in this way in the inspectors' opinion, improvements in practice will continue to be made.

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

#### **This Standard was almost met**

- The Statement of Purpose was found to include all that which is listed in National Minimum Standard (NMS) 1.4. In the inspectors opinion the information on complaints in the Children's Guide was incomplete and further work is needed to ensure that the Children's Guide is available in a range of different formats.



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

#### **One Standard was met and one almost met**

- The recruitment procedures were adequate to ensure that staff appointed to manage the fostering service were fit for the purpose. The day-to-day manager had enrolled on appropriate NVQ Level 5 training, which he is due to complete in June 2005.
- Whilst significant service improvements in a number of key areas were identified, in the inspectors' opinion, the management of the service could be further improved.

### **Management of the Fostering Service (Standards 4-5)**

#### **One Standard was met and one almost met**

- Lines of accountability and delegation of responsibility were well defined with clear arrangements in place to identify the person in charge when the manager is absent.
- A system to monitor the matters listed in Schedule 7 was being developed however the reliability of the information was undermined by problems with the SWIFT information system. The manager also needed to consider how he would use the information gathered to monitor performance and service delivery.

### **Securing and Promoting Welfare (Standards 6-14)**

#### **One Standard was exceeded, three standards were met, three almost met and two not met**

- Dedicated workers in relation to the Health and Education of looked after children have continued to bring improvements in services in the last year.
- Health and Safety checks on the homes of foster carers are being implemented.
- Young people aged 16 years and over speak very positively about the support they get from workers in the 16+ team.
- The service was not found to accurately record the number and circumstances of accidents involving children in foster homes
- Whilst inspectors were unable to contact all fostered children via the pre-inspection questionnaire they were satisfied that the service had developed appropriate consultation systems so that children and young people have their views listened to.
- A standardised safer care policy had been distributed to all carers. Policies should now be personalised to each carer's specific circumstances.
- The service has developed policy guidance on acceptable measure of control, restraint and development. Feedback from carers who attended the new safe handling and de-escalation training course was positive.
- Inspectors were impressed with the process followed in matching carers and children

for long-term placements and saw that there were considerable strengths in having dedicated family placement duty workers. However inspectors were concerned by the way in which exemptions and variations were approved within the family placement team and by the quality of some temporary placement matches made.

- The service plans to review its practice of allowing children and young people who are fostered to share a bedroom. Inspectors recommended that the service develop policy guidance to inform staff of the matters to be assessed when considering a bedroom share.

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

**One Standard was met, six almost met and two not met**

- On the whole the recruitment processes followed for staff employed to work for the fostering service were found to be appropriate however minor gaps were found where staff had not been recruited through the usual formal procedures.
- Inspectors were concerned by the size of caseloads allocated to some staff and identified shortfalls in service provision which indicated that the service was not adequately staffed.
- Whilst staff in the Family Placement Team have considerable skills and examples of high quality assessments and reports were read, inconsistencies remain. It was unfortunate that the planned assessment training had not taken place
- Inspectors identified conflicting evidence relating to staff training opportunities.
- Serious gaps in the frequency of staff supervision were found and faults in the staff appraisal system identified.
- The service had recently developed a Foster Carer Handbook and a Fostering Policies and Procedures Handbook. These offered comprehensive guidance and clarification and appeared to have been welcomed by both staff and carers.
- Requirements relating to foster carer annual reviews and health and safety assessments of carers' homes were met.
- In some cases recording of visits to foster carers was limited and inspectors were concerned that the service had still not distinguished between the supervisory and support roles of Family Placement Officers.
- Whilst foster carers are provided with a wide variety of training options take-up has often been low. Inspectors found that training plans were not always clearly identified through the annual review process.

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

**These two Standards were met**

### **Fitness of premises (Standard 26)**

**This Standard was met**

### **Financial requirements (Standards 27-29)**

**One Standard was met and two did not apply**

- Inspectors were informed at the feedback session that funding had been agreed to enable the service to introduce the second phase of the foster carers payments scheme. This should now allow a competency based framework of assessment to be introduced supported by relevant training

### **Fostering Panels (Standard 30)**

**This Standard was almost met**

- A new Foster Panel Constitution had been developed. This included guidance and instruction covering most matters. Areas of this guidance need to be amended or expanded.
- Training for panel members should be arranged following recent changes to membership.
- The service should consider refining the approval options that are currently recommended by panel and further strengthen the role played by panel whenever the terms of a carer's approval are changed.

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

**This Standard was almost met**

- The 'Home and Away' Scheme offers an important service to disabled children and their families. The quality of care offered is high and the enduring nature of the placements a credit both to the carers and the service.
- Inspectors were concerned that without dedicated workers the strengths of the service may be undermined.
- Inspectors recommended that specific guidance on the use of medication should be developed along with a proforma on which carers should record medication administered.

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

**This Standard was met**

- Systems in place encourage the consideration of family and friends as carers and the fostering service places a high value on the contribution that family and friends can make by being approved as foster carers.

## **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	22	FS12	The fostering service provider shall maintain a record of all accidents occurring to children whilst placed with foster parents.	02/05/04

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

**COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION (IF APPLICABLE)**

**(Registered Independent Fostering Agencies only)**

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

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

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

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

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

**Lead Inspector**      **Martin Davis**      **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Second Inspector**      \_\_\_\_\_      **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Regulation Manager**      **Malcolm Sykes**      **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 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	Reg 3	FS1	The Children's Guide must include a summary of the complaints procedure	30.09.05
2	Reg 34 Children Act 1989, Schedule 7, Section 63(12)	FS8	Each placement made must be consistent with the foster carers terms of approval. The service must differentiate between the purpose of a variation and an exemption and apply these accurately.	31.05.05
3	Reg 33	FS8	Foster placement matching assessments must include all relevant background information so that the service is satisfied that the placement is the most suitable having regard to all the circumstances	31.05.05
4	22 (1) (3)	FS12	The fostering service provider shall maintain an accurate record of all accidents occurring to children whilst placed with foster parents.	31.07.05
5	19	FS17	The fostering service must ensure that a sufficient number of persons are employed to fulfil the purposes of the fostering service	30.09.05
6	21 (4)(a)	FS20	The fostering service provider shall ensure that all persons employed receive appropriate supervision	31.05.05
7	21 (4)(a)	FS20	The fostering service provider shall ensure that all persons employed receive appropriate appraisal	31.05.05



### GOOD PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS INSPECTION

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

No.	Refer to Standard *	Recommendation Action
1	FS1	The Children's Guide should be available in different formats to meet the needs of different groups of children
2	FS22FS1	Amend any inconsistencies between the Foster Carer Handbook and the Fostering Service Policy and Procedures Handbook and related documents including the Foster Care Agreement
3	FS4FS2	Clarify the ongoing role of the two Assistant Manager's and develop further the systems designed to monitor performance of the service
4	FS18FS4	Reliability of information stored and retrieved from the SWIFT system should be improved
5	FS6	Develop a policy regarding bedroom sharing following the concerns raised by Foster Panel
6	FS8	Additional guidance should be added to the Fostering Policies and Procedures Handbook to clarify the circumstances in which a variation or exemption should be applied for.
7	FS8	Where an exemption of variation is agreed without reference to Foster Panel this should be reported to the next available panel so that the agreement can be scrutinised
8	FS8	Foster Carers who are made available to EDT particularly where they are offering a placement over numbers or where an exemption would be required should be specifically assessed for this task
9	FS9	Individual safe care policies should be developed for each foster home in consultation with the carer and everyone else in the home. These should be cleared with the placing social worker and explained to the child
10	FS23FS9	Confirm dates for safer care training for foster carers
11	FS9	Ensure that safe-handling and de-escalation training is provided on an annual basis. Develop a specific incident report for carers to complete following incidents where a young person has been restrained or amend the current incident form to ensure that all relevant information is reported.
12	FS10	Clarify in the Foster Care Handbook the information that foster carers are expected to maintain to record the outcome of contact arrangements

13	FS11	Identify a member of the fostering service to act as the link-person with the FOCUS group co-ordinator
14	FS12	Clarify the additional mental health services that are planned for 16 to 18 year olds who are not in full-time education
15	FS15	Wherever a CRB is deemed transferable contact should be made with the previous employer's CRB countersignatory to check whether police intelligence information had been shared. If it had the employee should not start to work prior to a new check being completed
16	FS15	All people working in or for the fostering service should have their written references verified through telephone enquiries
17	FS16	All employees should have appropriate, up-to-date job descriptions
18	FS16	All carers should be encouraged to maintain a training portfolio
19	FS17	Provide competency assessment training for all staff and ensure that there is a clearly set out assessment process for carers which defines those matters under Standard 17.6.
20	FS16FS18	Provide written guidance to staff who participate in the out-of-hours service and amend job descriptions so that they reflect this additional voluntary responsibility
21	FS19	Ensure that staff are able to access relevant professional training and prioritise training needs identified through staff appraisal systems. Provide backfill or other support to enable staff to registered for the PQCCA
22	FS22	Ensure that supervising social workers meet regularly with foster carers. Meetings should have a clear purpose and provide the opportunity to supervise the foster carers' work. Foster carers' files should include records of supervisory meetings. There should be occasional unannounced visits, at least one each year.
23	FS23	Each carer's Annual Review should include an appraisal of training and development needs, which is documented in the report
24	FS30	Foster Panel should consider recommending more specific terms of approval for carers that reflect the assessed skills of the carers ensuring that the assessment has been completed in a thorough and rigorous way
25	FS30	Where carers have a long-term exemption to the normal fostering limit these carers annual reviews should be returned to Foster Panel so that panel is able to monitor this arrangement. Clarify in the Foster Panel Constitution and relevant policy guidance the specific arrangements in place for panel to sample carer annual reviews past the first review

26	FS12 FS 31	Produce additional guidance on administering and recording young people's medication. Produce a recording sheet for foster carers to record medication that is administered
27	FS10	Ensure that any risks associated with contact arrangements are appropriately risk assessed

\* 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	9
Survey of placing authorities	YES
Foster carer survey	YES
Foster children survey	NO
Checks with other organisations and Individuals	YES
• Directors of Social services	NO
• Child protection officer	YES
• Specialist advisor (s)	NO
• Local Foster Care Association	YES
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	21/02/05
Time of Inspection	09.30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	81

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

The scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

## Statement of Purpose

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

### Standard 1 (1.1 - 1.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
---------------------------	---------------

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
---------------------------	---------------

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
---------------------------	---------------

The Statement of Purpose includes the information listed in National Minimum Standard (NMS) 1.4. This was amended in January 2005 and presented to the elected members for their approval in February 2005. 83% of placing officers reported via the pre-inspection questionnaire that they had received a copy of the Statement.	
---	--

The service provides a Children's Guide in a flexible format. A wallet with various inserts and leaflets provides information on the specific services provided by the borough and a general guide for children who are looked after that provides more generic guidance. This is complimented by an interactive website which young people can access, this has links to related sites. The Children's Guide contains appropriate information on how a child or young person can access an independent advocate but in the inspector's opinion further detail needs to be added in relation to complaints to fulfil the requirements of Regulation 3(3)(b)(ii). This should include a summary of the complaints procedure with relevant timescales. The service is currently exploring how it might produce a Children's Guide for the short-breaks scheme and for younger children and a recommendation is made here.

Since the last inspection the service had developed a Foster Carer Handbook and Family Placement Policies and Procedures. These had recently been circulated and a training day planned during March 2005 to formally introduce these to staff. Family Placement Officers planned to use supervision sessions with carers to work through the procedures. On the whole these handbooks appeared to provide comprehensive guidance to staff and carers and reflected the aims and objectives as outlined in the Statement of Purpose. The inspectors noted some inconsistencies between these documents and minor amendments are needed however this did not detract from the overall value and quality of the handbooks. Other documents will also need to be revised so that they are consistent with these handbooks, most notably the Foster Care Agreement

## 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?	2
<p>The nominated manager of the family placement team has the relevant professional and management qualifications and experience however he is not the day-to-day manager 'carrying on' the service.</p>		
<p>The team manager of the family placement team has 30 years relevant child care social work experience and has been in his current post for ten years. This manager commenced an NVQ Level 5 in Operational Management in December 2004. This is scheduled to be completed in June 2005. The course has been designed specifically for family placement managers.</p>		
<p>At the last inspection, inspectors found that <i>“the management of the family placement team is not rigorously organised, and managed in a manner that delivers the best possible childcare service.”</i> Evidence of improvement was noted in this area and a number of significant improvements in service delivery had been achieved. However areas of concern have also been identified at this inspection which indicate that the leadership function can be further improved and work needs to continue to develop this area. This should include further clarification of the ongoing role to be played by the assistant managers and further development of the systems that monitor performance and promote greater consistency in service provision.</p>		

**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

In general the recruitment procedures for staff working within the fostering service fulfil the requirements of the regulations and the National Minimum Standards. Some specific shortfalls were noted but these are reported in Standard 15 as they did not relate to the staff appointed to management positions.

Personnel guidance had been amended to ensure that for the references set out in Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002, telephone enquiries are made to follow up written references and to ensure that CRB checks are renewed every three years.

A secure record of checks and references is maintained.



## 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?**

2

As stated significant concerns were identified during previous inspections leading the inspectors to question the way in which the fostering team was managed. At this inspection the inspectors noted that a formal performance-monitoring framework was being developed. The information to be gathered had been designed around the matters to be monitored in Schedule 7 and should provide valuable data to enable the manager to monitor the delivery of services and take remedial action where required. However at the time of the inspection this remained in the development stage and the manager had not decided how he would monitor and respond to the information gathered. The reliability of this information is also undermined by problems with the SWIFT system, these problems had been recognised by the service and reported to the SWIFT information team. Recommendations are made.

The inspectors saw that the Foster Panel provided regular feedback on the quality of foster carer assessment reports as did the nominated agency decision maker. Evidence was found that this feedback had been picked up during individual supervision and appraisal sessions, however the inspectors found shortfalls in these systems which led them to question their quality, these concerns are reported in NMS 20. In the inspectors opinion these shortfalls undermined quality assurance.

Wider quality assurance systems exist so that the performance of the family placement team is scrutinised by senior managers and elected members.

Two Assistant Team Managers were in post, they had assumed some responsibility for monitoring and controlling and were seen to be developing systems to achieve this. Inspectors were informed that their roles would be further developed and clarified following the inspection.

There are financial procedures in place and a reviewing procedure to keep them up to date. Information is provided to purchasers and others where appropriate, including statements of the amounts paid to foster carers.

Carers, managers and staff are informed of their responsibility to declare any possible conflicts of interest.

<b>Number of statutory notifications made to CSCI in last 12 months:</b>	X
<b>Death of a child placed with foster parents.</b>	0
<b>Referral to Secretary of State of a person working for the service as unsuitable to work with children.</b>	0
<b>Serious illness or accident of a child.</b>	X
<b>Outbreak of serious infectious disease at a foster home.</b>	0
<b>Actual or suspected involvement of a child in prostitution.</b>	X
<b>Serious incident relating to a foster child involving calling the police to a foster home.</b>	0
<b>Serious complaint about a foster parent.</b>	2
<b>Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.</b>	X
<b>Number of complaints made to CSCI about the agency in the past 12 months:</b>	0
<b>Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:</b>	0

<b>Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.4)</b>		
<b>The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>The manager has a clear job description. This sets out both duties and responsibilities.</p> <p>Generally the levels of delegation and responsibility of the manager, and lines of accountability are well defined. The inspectors did question the level of authority that is vested in the family placement team in relation to amending foster carer terms of approval, in the inspectors' opinion the role of Foster Panel in this decision making process should be formalised. In this way, the inspector believes, practice will be more effectively scrutinised. This is picked up in NMS 30</p> <p>There are clear arrangements in place to identify the person in charge when the manager is absent.</p>		

## 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?
---------------------------	---------------

Fostering assessment reports and the initial training process addresses the ability of applicants to provide a safe, healthy environment, carers also receive written guidance. The inspectors were impressed with the quality of care provided to children and young people in the cases tracked.

Social workers had all received general health and safety training and the two duty officers more detailed training. Staff reported that this enabled them to more confidently complete health and safety checks of carer homes. The duty officers had helped social workers deal with the backlog of health and safety checks. Completion of health and safety checks is monitored at annual review and social workers are alerted via the SWIFT system of when checks are due.

A risk assessment is completed as part of the matching process for all placements, this includes an assessment of risk if young people are required to share a bedroom. The service does not have a formal policy governing bedroom sharing for children placed with foster carers. The inspectors were told that this was due to be discussed by the senior management team following concerns and specific incidents. The inspectors would recommend that a specific bedroom policy be produced confirming the situations in which bedroom sharing would not be considered appropriate and setting out the matters to be considered whenever assessing whether bedroom sharing is appropriate.

Appropriate checks are undertaken to ensure that where carer's provide transport for young people the vehicle is safe and appropriately insured.

Foster carers are reminded that they are expected to participate in the Commission's inspection of the service through the Foster Care Agreement

**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

Only a small number of carers on the register are from ethnically diverse backgrounds therefore black children needing placement can be placed outside of their culture. The inspector was shown evidence to confirm that additional support was offered to the carers and children in these placements. Placing social workers confirmed that seeking appropriate matches for black children can be difficult but also confirmed that additional supports are offered. The service should continue to prioritise the recruitment of black and minority ethnic carers to enable more appropriate placement matching.

Foster carer training places an emphasis upon valuing diversity and helping children to deal with discrimination. The Children and Families Intervention Team run support groups for young black children aged 7 to 12 years which younger fostered children can attend.

The Participation Officer will lead a consultation process with accommodated young people from black and minorities ethnic groups by September 2005. The aim is to provide a better understanding of the needs and experiences of accommodated black and minorities ethnic people.

Language Line provides a translation service and packs have been developed for asylum seekers. At previous inspections services offered to lone children asylum seekers have been commended, this remains a particular area of strength.

Services offered via the Home and Away service remain flexible to family needs. Carers tracked from this scheme had received appropriate financial support to make appropriate adaptations to their home.

**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

The inspectors noted the role that is played by the Placement Panel in ensuring that children are accommodated only where this is appropriate, and where time allows in approving potential placement matches.

The inspectors would also acknowledge that the system of matching for long-term placements through the 'homefinder' system enables appropriate consideration of potential matches.

The inspectors were also impressed with many aspects of the family placement duty system. Having dedicated duty officers enables these officers to follow placement requests through initial referral to the point of placement. Having access to the SWIFT system enables these workers to access detailed referral and matching information, this will improve as the quality of information recorded on SWIFT improves.

Some placing social workers interviewed or reported via the pre-inspection questionnaire that there was very limited placement choice for emergency and short-term placements and in reality often no choice. They were however more positive about matches for long-term placements.

Inspectors were concerned about the process by which exemptions and variations are agreed. The inspectors found evidence of carers being notified that they had been exempted from the normal fostering limit when in fact a variation had been agreed. Separate guidance should be added to the Fostering Policy and Procedures Handbook to clarify this situation and separate proformas developed for each situation.

Whilst some foster placement matching assessments were of a high standard inspectors found that others contained limited information. In one where an exemption had been agreed taking the carers to six children relevant risk assessment information relating to young people already in placement had been omitted. The inspectors discussed ways in which this system could be made more robust. Placing the Foster Panel at the heart of this process would increase independent scrutiny and add an additional quality assurance system. The inspectors have made a recommendation reflecting this.

At the last inspection the manager reported that he would provide details of families willing to consider exemptions to the emergency duty service. The inspectors' reported that in their opinion this was an inherently risky practice, as the emergency duty service (EDS) often have little background information and are often pressured for time. A protocol has been developed outlining the specific circumstances in which EDS can make these placements and the family placement team continue to provide a list of carers available for exemption. This protocol does not require the duty officer to consult with a senior prior to making a placement which requires an exemption and carers who are put forward as willing to offer an 'over numbers' placement have not necessarily been specifically assessed or approved for emergency placements. In the inspectors opinion the protocol does not sufficiently ensure that the welfare of children will be safeguarded and protected.

An inspector read one Form F assessment completed in November 2004 which repeatedly called for 'very careful' matching due to the fact that any child placed would be required to share a bedroom and as new carers the family had limited fostering experience. The carers first placement was made in an emergency, the family placement matching assessment records that there was a lack of information about the child referred, the carers support worker was on leave and therefore could not be consulted and the carers reported that they did not have the opportunity to speak to the child care social worker prior to the placement. This placement subsequently disrupted. In the inspectors opinion the matching process, in this case, was not well managed.

**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

The family placement team has developed and distributed a standardised Safer Care – Foster Care Agreement. Whilst these provide useful information and set general groundrules their value is limited. Each foster home should have an individual policy that has been developed through consultation with the carer and others living at the home. This should then be cleared with the child’s social worker and explained clearly and appropriately to the child. These policies should then be reviewed and amended as necessary. The inspector was told that a series of safer care training days will be scheduled during 2005 however no dates had been set for these.

The fostering service makes clear in the Foster Care Agreement and Foster Care Handbook that corporal punishment is not appropriate.

The manager maintains records of any allegations of abuse or neglect of a child in foster care. Additional guidance has been produced confirming that staff are required to notify the manager or an assistant manager of any complaint, allegation or expression of concern about a carer. A copy of this is also sent to the service manager who will confirm in writing the action to be taken. The inspector had access to minutes of ‘concerns’ meetings and strategy meetings in relation to the two allegations made against carers in the last twelve months. These minutes demonstrated that appropriate action is taken in response to concerns and allegations.

A requirement following the last inspection called for the service to prepare and implement a written policy on acceptable measures of control, restraint and discipline of children placed with carers. A policy has been written and added to the new Foster Carer Handbook. Twelve carers and one member of staff have also attended a safe handling and de-escalation training course. The training organisation recommends annual refresher training which should now be built in to the annual training plan and any ‘high risk’ carers should be encouraged to attend this training in the future. The current incident report that carers complete should be amended if these are to be used for reporting incidents that have involved restraint, these should emphasise the de-escalation strategies employed, name the type of hold used and record any consequences of this intervention.

The fostering service has a procedure for carers to follow whenever a child is missing from home, this has been included in the Foster Carer Handbook. An amendment to the SWIFT system is planned to ensure that where a child is missing from foster care the system records this.

**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?**

**2**

In the pre-inspection questionnaire completed by placing officers 85% reported that foster carers worked 'very well or fairly well' with the child's family. Of the 75 responses received from placing social workers 65% reported that there were restrictions on contact or communication for the child placed with carers, social workers reported that these restrictions were managed well by the fostering service in every case.

Initial foster carer training emphasises the importance of contact with parents and other significant people. Through tracking inspectors found evidence of carers encouraging and maintaining contact arrangements through difficult circumstances, these carers took care to present a positive image of birth family where possible. In one case a foster carer had significant concerns regarding the child and her family's safety as a result of the risks associated with contact. This carer had asked for a risk assessment to be completed so that appropriate precautions could be agreed, a formal risk assessment had not been completed and the carer was left feeling vulnerable.

An independent visitor scheme is available to children and young people who have limited contact with their family. This scheme is well publicised and children and young people can refer themselves to it. Independent Reviewing Officers monitor take up through the review system.

The new Foster Carer Handbook does not provide guidance to carers on the information that they should maintain to record the outcome of contact arrangements and their perceived impact on the child or young person. In the inspectors view the expectations that the service has in this area should be clarified.

**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 service refused to allow the Commission to send the pre-inspection questionnaire to children and young people in foster placements. The inspector was informed by the family placement manager that *“Our view is that the questionnaire seems designed to invite mainly negative feedback and therefore is unlikely to represent a balanced overview of the fostering experience of most of our looked-after children.”* This decision has impacted upon the inspectors' ability to fully assess this standard.

Inspectors met with the co-ordinator of the FOCUS group but unfortunately were unable to attend due to one inspector becoming ill. The inspectors wish to apologise to the young people for any inconvenience caused and have written directly to this group. This is a long running group for children who are looked after, inspectors heard how these young people have in the past had the opportunity to provide feedback to councillors and the department. This group had a new co-ordinator who intends to forge a closer relationship with the family placement team and develop a formal referral system, the inspectors would support these plans and have recommended that the service considers nominating a liaison person within the family placement team. Inspectors understand that in the past there was a link person but following staff movements this role had not been reallocated.

Inspectors were also shown action plans developed by the Children's Participation Officer. A working group is being established to explore participation of disabled children in their short-term stay reviews and is due to report in September 2005, there are plans for exit surveys for young people leaving care to be put out to tender by March 2006 and by November 2005 to have provided training for staff on participation and listening.

Foster carers confirmed that the Independent Reviewing Officers make time to speak alone with children and young people before reviews in an effort to seek their views on the quality of care they have received.

92% of foster carers who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire reported that the service had provided them with information on how to make a complaint on behalf of a young person and 20% reported that they had made a complaint for a child. As reported in NMS 1 in the inspectors view the information included in the Children's Guide and the 'Kicass' website should be more detailed and include a summary of the process with relevant timescales.

Two formal complaints were received by the service in the last twelve months, one of these related to an IFA foster placement and therefore did not relate to Swindon Borough Fostering Service, the second was found to have been appropriately responded to.



**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?**

1

The inspectors interviewed Anne Gray, the LAC Co-ordinator for health. She has continued to make significant progress in the last year. Initial health assessments for all looked after children and young people are completed by a doctor, subsequent assessments for children aged up to 16 years are completed by health visitors (pre-school) and school nurses who have received specific training. Young people aged 16+ are supported by their social worker to complete a health questionnaire. 92% of all health assessments are now complete, this is up from 80% last year. This worker is also giving input on health issues as part of the 'Skills to Foster' course for new applicants. She is also addressing training issues on health for family placement officers; foster carers, social workers, the IRO's and panel members, however she reported that few foster carers have attended this training.

At the last inspection it was reported that written health records were not in evidence on children's files. The service now plans to introduce BAAF Health Assessments and provide carers with the summary and health care plan that this produces. A newsletter will be sent to carers to inform them of this development. Anne Gray intends to undertake an audit 6 months after this system is launched to monitor whether carers have actually received this information and to assess how useful this has been. The inspectors would support these developments as throughout this inspection inspectors heard of concerns about the quality of health information that is shared with foster carers.

An inspector also interviewed a Play Therapist who has dedicated time to work with both children and carers in relation to mental health issues. She will accept referrals from family placement social workers and processes referrals quickly, she is available to offer advice to carers where no direct service is taken up by the child or young person. She had also run a 6 week attachment and resilience course which 14 carers attended. The inspector was told that plans have been made to develop this area of the CAMHS service with the appointment of two further workers (1FTE). This may enable a specialist support group for carers to be developed, this would be a significant development as in the inspectors opinion this is an area of the service that is currently underdeveloped.

Both health workers interviewed confirmed that a potential gap in services exist for 16 to 18 year olds who are not in fulltime education. During feedback the inspector was told of planned developments in this area but would request more details of these plans so that the Commission is reassured that appropriate services are provided to these young people.

Following a requirement made after the last inspection a system had been designed to record any accidents to children who are placed with foster carers and carers reminded of their responsibility to complete incident report sheets. To monitor the number and type of accidents reports are pulled off the SWIFT system. The summary provided at the inspection indicated that 6 accidents had occurred in foster homes since the system was introduced in November 2004. However 2 of these recorded accidents should have been recorded as assaults by a child, and one should have been recorded as a medical emergency rather than an accident. The system to monitor accidents was therefore considered to be inadequate and the requirement is repeated.

The inspectors found that limited guidance had been provided for carers in relation to administering and recording young people's medication, particularly within the Home and Away Scheme. The inspectors found that in some cases carers were relying on guidance provided by parents rather than having access to the prescribing doctors directions, carers were accepting medication in envelopes rather than in the original container. The inspector's were concerned that this increased the risk of medication errors.

Inspectors were also told by staff and carers that they were unclear how medication dispensed should be recorded. Inspectors recommend that a recording sheet be designed for these carers to record medication given or refused. This should reduce the risk of medication errors and in an emergency will provide a concise record that could be transferred with the child.

**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?**

**4**

An Education Co-ordinator for Looked After Children is based in the same office as the family placement team, he works to oversee and improve the educational performance and experience of Looked After Children. He and his team of two part time teachers are available to foster carers who may have concerns relating to children in their care. Carers are able to access resources such as story sacks, feely bags, reading books and revision materials. He has provided specific guidance for foster carers that compliments the general guidance that has been included in the Foster Carer Handbook including advice for carers on issues such as children starting or changing schools, attendance, bullying and exclusion.

Emphasis is given to the importance of clear and early communication between key professionals including the social worker, foster carer and LAC nominated teachers. The LAC Education Co-ordinator attends the initial fostering preparation course and his team are 'on-call' to carers providing support regarding specific problems. His team talk to carer's about their role at parent's evenings and set out their responsibilities and what they can expect from teachers and schools. The foster carers role in school contact is set out in the Foster Carer Handbook.

155 of the 172 Looked After Children in Swindon had an up to date Personal Education Plan (90%), those without PEP's were new to the looked after system and the Education Co-ordinator was actively following these up.

Inspectors heard that the number of fixed term exclusions had fallen in the last year and no looked after child had been permanently excluded. Where there is a concern that a child may be excluded the co-ordinator liases with foster carer, social worker and school in an attempt to develop a package of support to prevent exclusion. This can include direct support for the child in the classroom. Where a child is excluded this team ensures that a structure is provided to include appropriate school work for the child. Attendance is monitored through the Education Welfare Tracking Document, the Exclusion Report produced by the Education Department and the LACES data-base. One child had been out of school without any formal education, this young person is placed with an IFA.

Guidance included in the Foster Carer Handbook identifies where financial responsibility lies for all school costs, including school uniform and school trips.

**Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.5)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

There is a comprehensive leaving care policy for children and young people fostered in Swindon. Training materials for carers include information about the preparation of young people for independent living.

In the past inspectors heard directly from young people how much they valued the input they got from the 16+ team workers and young people spoken to confirmed that they were actively involved in decision-making processes and implementation of the pathway plan.

Inspectors found positive evidence at this inspection of the service working flexibly with foster carers to enable them to continue to support young people post 16 and 18 years. Similarly inspectors were told by some carers that they were pleased with the financial support offered to them and to young people who were attending university.

## 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?

2

There are clear written recruitment and selection procedures for personnel to follow when appointing staff to work for the fostering service. Personnel officers were aware of the requirements of Schedule 1 and NMS 15.3. A system had been established to ensure that CRB checks are renewed every three years. In general personnel records were of a high standard.

All social work staff have an appropriate qualification and many years experience of family placement work. Unqualified staff had been employed to carry out social work functions on the duty desk but they did so under the direct supervision of qualified staff who were ultimately accountable for the placements made.

For one Family Placement Officer who had been employed within the last twelve months the service had accepted a previous employers CRB check without taking up a new check. Wherever a CRB is deemed transferable it is essential that contact is made with the previous employers CRB countersignatory to check whether police intelligence information had been shared. If it had the employee should not start to work prior to a new check being completed.

In some circumstances administrative assistants from the borough's central pool may work in the family placement team. Telephone follow-up calls to referees were not made for these workers

A sessional worker had recently been employed to undertake foster carer assessments. The manager had interviewed this worker and requested a CV however there was no evidence of telephone follow-ups to references and whilst inspectors were told that qualifications had been verified at interview no evidence of this had been retained. Whilst this worker had considerable experience she did not have direct experience of family placement work and had not been trained in this type of assessment.

**Total number of staff of the agency:**

21

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

2

**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?**

**2**

There is a clear management structure to the family placement team with appropriate levels of delegation within the team. Inspectors were told that the individual roles of the two assistant team managers will be further clarified following the inspection.

The department has a system for determining, prioritising and monitoring caseloads however inspectors were concerned by the size of caseloads being carried by some staff and found that this had a direct impact upon the service that social workers were able to offer to carers. This is reported further in NMS 17.

Staff reported that they had adequate administrative back up but noted that this can be stretched when they are planning courses and training events for foster carers. Inspectors were informed that admin workers can be drawn from a central pool when there is sickness or a significant backlog of work. All social workers have access to IT equipment, e-mail and the intranet. These systems have adequate security measures in place.

An internal audit of job descriptions indicates that not all members of the family placement team have up to date job descriptions.

Inspectors found little evidence of carers maintaining a training portfolio, one carer tracked had attended very few training/learning events despite many years of service. Inspectors heard from a number of different professionals that in their experience it had been hard to encourage carers to attend training events.

Inspectors found evidence that for one worker training that had been identified in an annual appraisal in 2003 and again in 2004 had not been provided, this training had clearly been identified as a priority, failure to provide this had, in the inspectors opinion, served to undermine professional and skills development for this worker.

Inspectors found no evidence at this inspection of placements being made with carers prior to their approval.

Staff have copies of those matters under Standard 16.16. These are available on the intranet.

**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?**

**1**

Inspectors found that some staff carried a high case load. In one case this ran to 5 foster carer assessments, supporting 16 carers, 2 Section 51 counselling cases, initial visits, leading a Skills to Foster Course, Foster Panel membership, co-ordinating the Home and Away Scheme with specific responsibility for placement matches, and participation in a pilot project co-ordinated by the Shared Care Network. In the inspectors opinion this was excessive. Other staff carry a similarly high caseload. The inspectors were told that this has a direct impact upon the service offered. Whilst initial visits are all allocated potential carers can wait up to 3 months for a visit, and whilst all fostering assessments are currently allocated a sessional worker had had to be employed to take on some of these and the manager had had to stop allocating adoption assessments. It was also noted by the inspectors that the service has set the standard minimum frequency of visits to carers at 6 weeks, the manager felt that it was unrealistic to expected monthly visits to carers because of the size of caseloads.

It was noted by the inspectors that historically carers had been left unallocated where there had been long-term sickness or vacancies for other reasons. Currently the family placement manager is the allocated worker for four families. Two experienced members of staff are about to retire, these posts had not been advertised and the interim arrangements remained unclear (the Commission was subsequently informed of the arrangements for providing support and supervision to the carers affected). In one tracked case complicated care proceedings were due to commence, the carer reported that she felt undermined as a consequence of her support worker retiring and no replacement identified. 81% of carers who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire reported that they believed the family placement team to be under staffed.

The family placement team has developed a carer recruitment strategy that identifies priority areas and sets target against which success can be measured.

At the last inspection the inspector reported that *“in the absence of a clearly set out assessment process, the inspectors experienced difficulty obtaining clear evidence for this Standard. In practice the inspectors heard that individual family placement officers were interpreting their own model of assessment.”* The need for a clearly set out assessment process for all staff to follow remains in the inspectors’ opinion overdue. Inspectors would acknowledge that this is a team with a great deal of experience and many examples of good and impressive practice were identified throughout the inspection however in the area of carer assessment considerable inconsistencies were found. Some staff appear to have incorporated elements of competency based assessment others had not. The inspector was told that competency assessment training would be provided for the team once the second phase of the payments to foster carers scheme had been agreed, however at the time of the inspection these arrangements were not in place.

**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?**

**2**

Staff reported that there were sound employment practices and they were aware of their whistle blowing responsibilities. They informed inspectors that they had been provided with full information about the terms of their employment and were generally positive about the training opportunities available to them. Inspectors saw evidence of good employment practices in the information provided by Human Resources.

There are two out-of-hours support services for carers, one is provided via the emergency duty team and the second is staffed by volunteers from the family placement team. All carers interviewed said that they received good support out-of-hours. The inspectors understand that no written guidance had been provided to staff that participate in this voluntary scheme. Job descriptions should be amended so that they include details of this additional role.

Management systems have been developed to monitor foster carer supervision and support. However this relies upon the SWIFT system and currently this does not provide reliable information so that in some cases it would appear that carers receive very few support/supervision visits. Improvements to this system are therefore required.

A health and safety policy is in place for carers. Insurance is provided via membership of the Fostering Network Association and the boroughs own insurance cover. Information about the cover provided is included in the Foster Carer Handbook.



**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**

There is a clear programme of induction and foundation training for social workers joining the family placement team.

Inspectors were shown a summary of the training events attended by staff over the last twelve months, this showed that staff had access to a wide range of training. Social workers interviewed reported that they were happy with the level of in-house training provided and they said that they understood that this was likely to improve further in the future. Appropriate management training had been identified for the Family Placement Team Manager and the Assistant Team Managers.

A training officer interviewed informed the inspectors that a specific training pathway for family placement staff had not been developed, however he anticipated that additional funding would be made available in the near future which should enable this to be developed. The family placement team had compiled a list of core training needs that could be used to form the basis of this pathway

Currently no staff from the Family Placement Team hold the Post Qualifying Child Care Award and the inspector was told that no back fill cover would be provided should a member of the team put themselves forward for this award. Given the concerns that have been reported about caseloads the lack of backfill is in the inspectors' opinion effectively blocking professional development in this priority area.

As reported attempts to access BAAF carer assessment training for one member of staff had been unsuccessful over the past two years.

**Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)****All staff are properly accountable and supported.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****1**

The service had recently developed a Fostering Policy and Procedures Handbook that details the duties and responsibilities of family placement staff. This is a significant development and should help to establish greater consistency of practice. The full impact could not be assessed as this and the newly produced Foster Carer Handbook had only just been circulated. Carers and staff interviewed indicated that these had been well received.

Planned supervision of staff takes place, this includes professional case work supervision. Significant gaps in the frequency of supervision were found, in one case there was no formal record of supervision over an 8-month period. When asked the manager said that he believed supervision had taken place but that the minutes had been mislaid however these were not located during the period of the inspection. Inspectors also found evidence in staff meeting minutes to indicate that staff had concerns about the frequency of their supervision. A requirement is therefore made.

Inspectors found that staff receive regular appraisals from their line manager. The majority of those sampled were detailed with clear action plans aimed at ensuring ongoing professional development. However in one case this was undermined by a failure to access relevant training. This problem was compounded by a failure to review the action plan agreed through the appraisal, to identify other ways in which professional development could be enhanced and poor practice challenged. For this reason the inspectors did not consider the appraisal system to be sufficient.

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

The Foster Carer Handbook and the Fostering Policies and Procedures Handbook sets out the strategy for working with and supporting carers, this includes guidance on the issues listed in NMS 21.2.

The role of the Swindon Foster Care Association is outlined in the Statement of Purpose. This group was visited during the inspection and found to be articulate and well informed. Whilst the chair described the various ways in which he has tried to encourage carers to participate in this group the active membership has remained small.

Significant progress had been made in the last 12 months in the area of foster carer reviews. By February 2005, 94.3% of carers had had an annual review, 7 reviews remained outstanding and of these 4 carers had met with their family placement social worker to complete the review and reports were being prepared. Many of the annual reviews read provided a useful summary and identified carer's strengths and needs.

A foster carers first annual review is presented to the foster panel, and a sample of all carer reviews are also taken to panel. Recommendations are made in Standard 30 in relation to the role of Panel in reviewing carer approvals.

81% of placing social workers who returned a pre-inspection questionnaire reported that the Family Placement Officer worked very well or fairly well with them, with only 1.4% reporting that they were a little disappointed. Those placing social workers interviewed indicated that they had developed a positive relationship with the fostering service, inspectors were told that in some cases this had helped to prevent placements from disrupting.

**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**

Foster Care Agreements were seen on files inspected and found to include matters and obligations specified in Schedule 5 (Regulation 28).

Each approved foster carer is expected to be supervised and supported by a named, appropriately qualified social worker. In the Fostering Policies and Procedures Handbook it states that there is a general expectation that carers should be visited at least every six weeks. The Foster Carer Handbook should be amended so that this commitment is made clear to carers.

57% of carers who returned a pre-inspection questionnaire reported that they were very or quite well supported by the service. Two carers interviewed were concerned about how they would be supported when their current worker retired. These carers had not been told who their new worker would be.

In some cases records of visits to carers had been poorly recorded with very limited detail of the issues discussed or the frequency of visits. The current record of visits does not distinguish between support and supervision visits and did not demonstrate that a clear strategy was being followed to ensure that the carers were being effectively supervised. Inspectors were also concerned that the new Foster Carer Handbook and the Fostering Service Policy and Procedures Handbook did not adequately distinguish between supervision and support of foster carers.

Whilst the service expects all foster carers to receive at least one unannounced visit each year and had informed carers of this expectation, during interviews with staff inspectors heard that many carers had never received an unannounced visit and there was a clear resistance to this from some staff. The system to monitor compliance with this expectation was not robust.

The new Foster Carer Handbook provides information which covers policies, guidance, legal information and insurance details. It also outlines the complaints and representations procedure.

Foster carers report that there are systems of practical support that cover the details under Standard 22.7. Foster carers indicate that they are aware of procedures for dealing with complaints.

Information about procedures for dealing with allegations has been included in the Foster Carers Handbook. The inspectors heard that there is access through the Foster Care Association to independent support to foster carers during an investigation. At the point of approval the borough provides membership of the Fostering Network, as an independent source of support and legal advice to carers.

**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?**

2

The service plans to run three preparation courses during 2005. Sexual abuse workshops are planned for February and September 2005 and Race, Religion, Language and Culture training is planned for March and October. Foster carers report that they can access good on-going training once they have completed their preparation training. The fostering service had also drawn up a training 'wish list' that had been sent to the training department identifying both carer and staff training needs. The training officer indicated that this may be used to form the basis of a foster carer training pathway.

Carers had also been invited to training facilitated by health and education staff. Inspectors heard that take up of these courses had been particularly low. Courses had been provided at various times of the day, expenses were payable and for some courses child care offered. Despite this staff were still concerned that it had remained difficult to engage some carers in training, one member of staff described a general apathy towards training. Inspectors were told that the new competency model of assessment and review should provide a greater incentive to attend training.

There is an expectation that the training that a foster carer has attended and their ongoing training needs is included in their foster carer annual review. In a number of reviews sampled inspectors found little evidence of this, in some training needs appeared to have not been considered and where carers had not participated in any training over a number of years this had not been adequately explained or challenged.

The inspectors were informed that a series of Safe Care workshops will be held over the coming year however no date had been set for these.

## 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
---------------------------	---------------	---

There is a detailed recording policy for the Borough. The continued implementation of the SWIFT system has led to an increased proportion of case recording being stored electronically. This should enable a comprehensive case record for each child to be maintained without unnecessary duplication. As reported earlier problems still exist with this system.

Foster carers are provided with Looked After Children paperwork which details the basis of each placement, its intended duration and purpose. The carers visited had all received LAC information.

As noted at the last inspection in February 2004 in the new Safer Care Agreement, there is an expectation that foster carers are required to keep a diary of significant events and to provide a monthly report on the child's progress in placement.

### 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 found evidence that the manager had developed a system to collate information listed under Schedule 7. Central files of complaints, concerns and investigations were kept by the manager and a summary of these had been provided in the pre-inspection information. The SWIFT system was relied upon for producing data on other areas listed in Schedule 7, this information was not considered to be reliable as significant errors had been identified by both the service and the inspectors. The manager had not developed a protocol for monitoring the information gathered. These areas were reported in NMS 4 and 2

The manager and assistant managers had completed audits of fostering files. These noted gaps in files and listed required actions. These audits have helped to improve the quality and consistency of files.

The record keeping system was congruent with the LAC/Integrated Children's System. Decisions by supervisors were evidenced on case files in supervision notes.

Carers and young people are informed of their right to have access to their records. In the

last twelve months no foster carers had asked for access.

Panel members are required to sign a confidentiality undertaking and relevant guidance has been included in the Foster Panel constitution.

All records were found to be stored securely.

<b>Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:</b>	127		
<b>Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months:</b>	191		
<b>Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months:</b>	166		
<b>Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months:</b>	27		
<b>Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months:</b>	24		
<b>Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £</b>	112.07	<b>Maximum £</b>	202.73

## 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 premises used by the family placement team are on the civic centre campus, conveniently near the offices of the fieldwork social workers, and the annexe in which relevant senior manager had offices. The office premises used by the fostering service are identifiable, and accessible to visitors. The family placement team is located on the first floor and has use of a large meeting room, sometimes used for training carers. The Borough has identified that the team's premises has no wheelchair access however the team have had access to an alternative training room which provides access to wheelchair user. There is a security system and access is restricted through a coded entry system. At previous inspections other buildings that are used for training, supervised contact and work with children were seen. These were found to be adequate and fit for their purpose.

Family placement staff confirmed that they have access to the intranet and that this has helped communication both with the fieldwork teams and within the family placement team.

The Borough SWIFT electronic recording systems were password protected. Inspectors were informed this system was robustly backed up. The paper records maintained in the family placement team were stored securely in metal cabinets.



## 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?
Standard not applicable	9

### 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?
Standard not applicable	9

**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

Inspectors were informed that funding had been agreed to enable the service to introduce the second phase of the foster carers payments scheme, along with this a competency based framework to foster carer assessments and annual review would be developed. This has the potential to bring about significant improvements in service delivery and it is unfortunate that this had not been introduced earlier as had been anticipated by the service and reported to inspectors at the last inspection.

Whilst some carers raised concerns regarding foster carer allowances and expenses the inspectors found that the service had operated in line with its written policy on fostering allowances. Carers have received this policy in the new handbook. The basic allowance paid is in-line with the Fostering Network's recommended allowance and for 11 to 17 year olds the allowance paid is in excess of the recommended minimum.

## 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?

2

Previous panel minutes were read, the panel chair interviewed and the panel was observed as part of this inspection. Panel was well organised and rigorous but also user friendly.

A new Foster Panel Constitution had been developed and circulated to members. This provides detailed policy and procedural guidance and serves as a useful reference point for members. Inspectors would recommend that further guidance be added setting out the procedures that should be followed whenever a member declares a conflict of interest. The inspector would expect any member who declares a conflict of interest to take no part in the decision making process.

The quality assurance function of panel has been established. A form has been developed upon which panel members can record their views on the quality of reports presented. The panel chair intends to monitor these and provide specific feedback to the family placement manager who is also the panel advisor.

Panel has three new members, including one member who was previously a child placed with foster carers. Inspectors considered this to be a significant development and one that is likely to have an impact upon the way in which panel considers applications and makes recommendations. Whilst new members had been interviewed by the chair and provided with written guidance they had received no training and firm plans for future panel member training had not been agreed.

The independent members include expertise in both education and child health.

Inspectors were concerned by the limited approval options that are currently recommended by panel. The majority of carers have temporary and/or long-term approvals. If more specific terms were used for example emergency, time limited or respite, then in the inspectors view this would help to ensure that assessments are more accurate and relevant to the skills required of carers undertaking these specific tasks. This would also enable foster panel to confidently recommend limits to a carer's approval which should then require a subsequent report to panel should these terms be changed.

As reported a carers 1<sup>st</sup> annual review is presented to foster panel, and panel samples further reviews. The panel chair agreed with an inspector that this system would be improved if each carers' annual review was presented to panel on a more regular basis.

The service was found to make long-term exemptions to the normal fostering limit. The

inspectors would recommend that where carers have an exemption in place that their annual review is always presented to panel so that these arrangements are subject to more independent scrutiny.

The inspectors were generally concerned that too much authority is vested in the family placement team and would encourage the service to make greater use of its foster panel to review, monitor and scrutinise any decisions made to change a carers approval which have not been presented to panel in the usual way.

## 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?
---------------------------	---------------

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
---------------------------	---------------

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
---------------------------	---------------

The Home and Away scheme provides respite foster placements to disabled children and young people. A particular feature of this scheme is the significant relationship that develops between carers' and a child's parents, many of these placements continue for many years. The service encourages high levels of autonomy so that carers and parents will often negotiate placement dates within limits set by the service.

In recent years two family placement social workers had taken responsibility for the 'Home and Away' Scheme but more recently one worker had assumed responsibility for the majority of this service. This social worker's case load appeared to be particularly high. In the inspectors' opinion this area of the fostering service benefits if the family placement officers involved have specific skills and expertise and the inspectors would be concerned if this became a more generic responsibility shared between all of the social workers in the family placement team.

Inspectors were told that no specific additional module to the 'Skills to Foster' training is now provided for potential Home and Away carers and were therefore concerned that this training did not adequately prepare new carers for the task of caring for a child through the Home and Away Scheme. The inspectors did note that carers had received individual training where the particular needs of children placed required this.

Issues raised in NMS 12 regarding medication administration and recording practice have particular relevance to 'Home and Away' carers.

## 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?
---------------------------	---------------

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
---------------------------	---------------

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
---------------------------	---------------

The fostering service places a high value on the contribution that family and friends can make by being approved as foster carers. This is reflected by the number of 'Specific-Approval' foster carers, numbering 20 with 30 children in placement at the time of inspection. Systems in place encourage the consideration of family and friends as carers.	
--	--

Carers who are family or friends are assessed to the same standards as 'generally-approved' carers. They are expected to attend the 'Skills to Foster' course and are also invited to attend on going training that is organised. The service has provided additional training courses specifically for this group of carers. Assessments are scrutinised by Foster Panel who pay particular interest to safety and support issues. Continued support is provided via the family placement team.

The service recognises that family and friends' carers often have to manage difficult and challenging situations. The inspectors were impressed with the support that had been offered to the one family tracked from this scheme during the inspection. Here difficult issues had been handled sensitively enabling a young person's placement to continue.

The inspectors acknowledge that the service has had its work in the area of Private Fostering recognised nationally and that family placement social worker had contributed to the new Private Fostering Standards.

**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 21 February 2005 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible



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

Amendments to the report were necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments were received from the provider	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 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 CSCI inspection reports are public documents. Reports on children's homes are only obtainable on personal application to CSCI offices.

**D.3 PROVIDER'S AGREEMENT**

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

**D.3.1 I \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I agree with the statutory requirements made and will seek to comply with these.**

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Designation** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Or

**D.3.2 I \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ 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.

**Commission for Social Care Inspection**  
33 Greycoat Street  
London  
SW1P 2QF

Telephone: 020 7979 2000  
Fax: 020 7979 2111

National Enquiry Line: 0845 015 0120  
[www.csci.org.uk](http://www.csci.org.uk)

S0000048053.V205357.R01

© This report may only be used in its entirety. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the express permission of the Commission for Social Care Inspection



The paper used in this document is supplied from a sustainable source