



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

## FOSTERING SERVICE

### **Medway Fostering Service**

**Medway Council  
Compass Centre  
Pembroke Gate, Dock Road  
Chatham  
Kent  
ME4 4YH**

*Lead Inspector*  
Sophie Wood

*Announced Inspection*  
5th September 2006      10:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

<b>Reader Information</b>	
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This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Fostering Services*. They can be found at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk) or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

*Every Child Matters*, outlined the government's vision for children's services and formed the basis of the Children Act 2004. It provides a framework for inspection so that children's services should be judged on their contribution to the outcomes considered essential to wellbeing in childhood and later life. Those outcomes are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution; and
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

In response, the Commission for Social Care Inspection has re-ordered the national minimum standards for children's services under the five outcomes, for reporting purposes. A further section has been created under 'Management' to cover those issues that will potentially impact on all the outcomes above.

Copies of *Every Child Matters* and *The Children Act 2004* are available from The Stationery Office as above

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# SERVICE INFORMATION

<b>Name of service</b>	Medway Fostering Service
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<b>Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)</b>	Medway Council
<b>Name of registered manager (if applicable)</b>	Mr Clive Eggleton
<b>Type of registration</b>	Local Authority Fostering Service

# SERVICE INFORMATION

## Conditions of registration:

**Date of last inspection**      26th September 2005

## Brief Description of the Service:

Medway Council Fostering Team is responsible for the delivery of foster care services provided by Medway Local Authority.

The team comprises a manager, senior practitioner, 8 fostering social workers, 2 respite care social workers, 1 placement support worker, 3 full time support services assistants and 1 part time, support services assistant. A part – time post, dedicated to research and provide for training provision for both staff and foster carers has been implemented since the last inspection.

With some 145 foster carers and placements of children and young people totalling 231, the service provides both short and long - term placements, which include emergencies and permanent. Within this, placements include babies, young children, teenagers/adolescents, mother and baby, disabilities / special needs and pre - adoption.

The team also arranges and provides for respite care, short - term breaks and day care in order to support families in the local community as well as foster care placements.

The service maintains necessary clear and established links with the Looked After Children's Team, Children's Disability Team, Adoption Team and 16+ Team. Regular meetings attended by managers and heads of these services ensure good communication and coordination.

The Authority has very recently undergone a 'Joint Area Review' (JAR) inspection and prior to this a number of significant changes had already been and also remain in the process of being implemented. This includes the restructuring of area teams and their responsibilities, in terms of bringing previously separate disciplines together, the appointment of key personnel, including an area and assistant area director and ultimately conducting a complete review as to the longer – term operation of children's services within the Council.

# SUMMARY

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

This inspection commenced on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2006 and was conducted over five days by regulatory inspectors, Sophie Wood and Lucy Ansell.

Given the information mentioned above, it was extremely helpful to meet with personnel from all relevant associated departments, including the area and assistant area director, in order to establish how the fostering provision fits, and is affected by, the other areas of children's services within the authority.

The inspectors worked separately in order to satisfactorily cover all of the areas fully, and this included:

1. Visiting six separate fostering households.
2. Interviewing the Children's Service director and assistant area director, registered manager, LAC team manager, safeguarding manager, adoption team manager, 16+ team manager, a number of fostering social workers, administrative personnel, 3 service managers, the chair of the foster carers' association, a human resources representative, health representative, quality assurance manager, educational psychologist and external consultants.
3. A case tracking exercise was undertaken in respect of those children and young people currently placed with the six fostering households that were randomly selected.
4. Various team meetings, including panel, were observed.
5. Relevant written policies, procedures and other records were scrutinised.
6. The premises were toured.

Other additional inspection material was obtained through the receipt of the pre – inspection documentation, completed by the registered manager and questionnaires, completed and returned by foster carers, children & young people, and social workers.

Following last year's inspection, the team held a number of training sessions to specifically explore the requirements and recommendations that were made. This led to a systematic way of introducing the necessary changes in a robust and timely manner, which has resulted in every requirement, bar one, now being met.

It was very unfortunate to find the one outstanding requirement is a 'personnel' issue, beyond the manager's control.

The evidence found throughout this visit supports that a dedicated, qualified team works under excellent leadership.

Sound and robust monitoring mechanisms ensure that gaps are identified and remedied and the entire team welcomes the inspection process in an effort to further improve its practice.

## **What the service does well:**

The service is managed by a motivated, well – organised individual, who is, in turn, supported by a well – qualified, long – standing team. This provides foster carers with consistent, professional supervision and support.

Children and young people benefit by being placed with foster carers who can meet their needs.

Sound consultation processes mean that foster carers, children & young people, and family members are effectively listened and responded to.

Robust safeguards, in terms of complaints, allegations and investigations serve to protect children & young people from harm and abuse.

Clear lines of communication between departments ensure that potential difficulties with individual placements are quickly identified and planned for.

An experienced panel chair ensures procedures and protocols are explicitly followed and the composite of the group brings expertise from a wide range of relevant areas.

## **What has improved since the last inspection?**

An additional full – time social worker post has been successfully filled. This has led to a revision of team caseloads, making them more manageable.

A part – time post has been created and filled to primarily research and make provision for the training and development needs of staff and foster carers.

A complete review has been held to canvass the opinions of foster carers in respect of out of hours support.

The foster carer annual review format has been amended to include specific detail and tracking of training needs and attendance. Within this document, the health & safety document has also been updated and improved.

All foster carers have received additional support to update their own 'safe care' policies.

Training in respect of 'health promotion' has been expanded upon for foster carers and young people.

The provision for 'preparing young people for adulthood' has been reviewed.

Social work staff have received specific guidance and training to ensure their practice reflects the differences in providing both supervision and support to foster carers.

A case recording policy has been written and is currently being distributed.

### **What they could do better:**

Recruitment checks still require additional information in order to be fully compliant with the Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

Some of the health information held and recorded by foster carers was variable, in terms of quality and content; this should be reviewed.

The service needs to ensure it has robust written assessment criteria in place, particularly for the assessment of foster carers who are joining from other fostering agencies.

Improved communication and information sharing from other departments, such as finance and personnel may lead to fewer difficulties, such as carer payments.

A review of the current IT system is recommended, as some of the details needed by the fostering team cannot readily be provided for.

A review of the administrative tasks of the team is recommended; they work to a very tight schedule already and more work is being created from the new training post.

Although some additional equipment has been provided from the last inspection, including computers, the physical environment is not conducive for the task in hand and should be reviewed.



Please contact the provider for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from [enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk) or by contacting your local CSCI office.

# **DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS**

## **CONTENTS**

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Staying Safe

Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

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Scoring of Outcomes

Statutory Requirements Identified During the Inspection

# Being Healthy

## The intended outcome for this Standard is:

- The fostering service promotes the health and development of children.(NMS 12)

**The Commission considers Standard 12 the key standard to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.**

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at the outcome for Standard:

12

**The overall outcome in this area is good. This judgement has been made from evidence gathered during the inspection, which included a site visit.**

Children and young people benefit by having their primary health needs identified and provided for. Additional training on health promotion has further improved this aspect of care provision.

## EVIDENCE:

All of the care files inspected held clear and specific details as to the immediate and ongoing health needs of individuals.

Every child and young person subject to the case – tracking exercise was registered with all relevant health care providers, and those needing other professional input, such as CAMHS services, were in receipt.

Time was spent interviewing the panel's health representative and it was positive to be advised that the newly appointed LAC Nurse for Medway is commencing with her post this week.

Following a recommendation made from the previous inspection, additional training with regards health promotion for foster carers and young people had been delivered and there are plans for this to continue.

Written supervision records of foster carers showed evidence that the carers' role in terms of supporting and promoting good health is being regularly tracked, however; the records held by carers were variable and this should be addressed to ensure the same good quality is in place throughout.

# Staying Safe

## The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

- Any persons carrying on or managing the service are suitable. (NMS 3)
- The fostering service provides suitable foster carers.(NMS 6)
- The service matches children to carers appropriately.(NMS 8)
- The fostering service protects each child or young person from abuse and neglect.(NMS 9)
- The people who work in or for the fostering service are suitable to work with children and young people.(NMS 15)
- Fostering panels are organised efficiently and effectively.(NMS 30)

**The Commission considers Standards 3, 6, 8, 9, 15 and 30 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.**

## **JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following Standard(s):**

3, 6, 8, 9, 15, 30.

**The overall outcome in this area is good. This judgement has been made from evidence gathered during the inspection, which included a site visit.**

Robust systems serve to protect children, young people and foster carers, however; gaps within the recruitment process for staff must be remedied. The panel conducts business effectively and in line with regulations.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The registered manager and social work team are all suitably qualified and experienced to undertake the tasks expected of them and additional training is continually offered and undertaken.

A requirement to review recruitment practice was made last time and this was further explored. Gaps in terms of written references and telephone verification of these were again identified; this issue had clearly been raised by the registered manager and will be addressed with the provider, as it is beyond his control.

The files of foster carers were scrutinised, with good evidence presented in terms of thorough assessment processes; this was further confirmed through interviewing foster carers. Whereby there were 'gaps' or 'concerns' identified

throughout the assessment process, these were made explicitly clear, with additional training and guidance / monitoring subsequently provided.

It was noted that a number of foster carers had recently made application to join Medway, by way of leaving their existing independent fostering agencies. Those files examined held evidence of fostering protocols being followed, and not all applicants had been successful.

The manager was able to describe the process of assessment for such carers, however; this is not currently endorsed anywhere in writing. The current procedure for the assessment of carers needs to be updated, with clear and explicit reference as to how 'existing' carers from other agencies will be assessed by Medway.

Six foster carer homes were visited and although different, in terms of size, location and family composite, each was well – maintained, suitably furnished and hazard – free. All carers confirmed the receipt of clear and explicit guidance with regards 'health & safety' and 'safe care'.

Good evidence was found in terms of 'matching' processes, whereby the specific and presenting needs of individuals had clearly been used to identify those placements most likely to be effective; this is further supported with evidence of a high proportion of placements becoming 'long – term'.

Policies and protocols aimed at protecting children and young people are concise and clear. Foster carers receive child protection training and those interviewed were fully conversant with the service procedures.

A comprehensive record is held and regularly scrutinised in terms of all concerns, complaints and allegations received by the service and it was particularly positive to note the number of 'low level' concerns that still receive the same level of investigation and scrutiny as those deemed as more serious.

The fostering panel was observed and the business being conducted included the presentation of an assessment, annual reviews and scrutiny of the concerns and allegations record.

The panel chair operated an inclusive style, which made best use of all of those present; independent members from a variety of disciplines are well – represented.

The Form F assessment was scrutinised, before a consensus decision was achieved, as were all of the annual reviews presented.

The meeting concluded with the record of concerns and allegations being thoroughly reviewed, with appropriate actions being prescribed and verbatim minutes were taken, to ensure an accurate record was made.

# Enjoying and Achieving

## **The intended outcomes for these Standards are:**

- The fostering service values diversity.(NMS 7)
- The fostering service promotes educational achievement.(NMS 13)
- When foster care is provided as a short-term break for a child, the arrangements recognise that the parents remain the main carers for the child.(NMS 31)

**The Commission considers Standards 7, 13, and 31 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.**

## **JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):**

7, 13, 31.

**The overall outcome in this area is good. This judgement has been made from evidence gathered during the inspection, which included a site visit.**

Diversity among foster carers and children / young people is valued and educational needs are keenly supported.

Birth families benefit enormously through the short – term care provision and this enables children / young people to continue to return home.

## **EVIDENCE:**

Whilst the service seeks to actively recruit foster carers from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, the majority of those approved are white / English, however; this is reflected by over 95% of Medway's looked after children.

The service works very hard to maintain its own publicity programme, targeting all areas of the wider community; circulars and fliers translated into a variety of languages, are continually distributed through schools, community groups and other public places, in an effort to advertise how individuals can 'get involved'.

This has ensured very positive responses, with many carers stating they would not have applied otherwise, as they did not appreciate the different ways in which they could work for the Council, for example by providing respite only.

One such carer was visited and she explained how well her own situation of providing respite for a small number of regular individuals works well for her own circumstances and the families of the children concerned.

Respite provision is often used as a means to introduce newly approved carers to the fostering task and those spoken with fully endorsed this approach as a good introduction.

The calibre of foster carers providing a service for children and young people with complex needs, for example specific health / medical conditions was again found to be commendable. Foster carers with backgrounds including specialist nursing and special needs teaching are continuing to be in high demand, with their skills used to best meet the needs of those in their care.

Foster carers are made explicitly aware of their own responsibilities to promote and support the educational attainment of fostered children. This is made clear within the foster carer agreement and handbook. One of the Council's educational psychologists was interviewed and she described a number of recently implemented significant changes, aimed at further promoting and developing the educational attainment of Medway's looked after children. Examples include, greater liaison with the recently appointed training officer, in an effort to give foster carers greater access to the training that used to be primarily accessed by other professionals and an improved database to monitor, not just attendance, but actual educational outcomes for children and young people. The information currently coming through is indicating that Medway is good at maintaining school placements, however; looked after children are not performing as well as their peers, and it is this particular aspect that is being targeted.

The provision of Tutors specifically assisting Year 6 pupils with the transition into secondary school is being fully utilised and various methods are being explored in order for schools to provide extended hours for children and young people to access resources, such as computers.

The provision of short – term care for children, whose birth parents remain as their main carers, was again commended. The two social workers responsible for this provision remain in post; one was interviewed and a respite carer was visited.

This provision is well – coordinated, and this is key, given the very high demand for this service. Respite foster carers are recruited in the same way as full – time carers and good matching processes mean that children and young people frequently return to the same household, by way of offering continuity to the child and the family.

Such carers receive the same good levels of supervision and support, as experienced by their full – time colleagues and they are subject to the same annual review processes and training requirements.





# **Making a Positive Contribution**

## **The intended outcomes for these Standards are:**

- The fostering service promotes contact arrangements for the child or young person. (NMS 10)
- The fostering service promotes consultation.(NMS 11)

**The Commission considers Standards 10 and 11 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.**

## **JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):**

10, 11.

**The overall outcome in this area is excellent. This judgement has been made from evidence gathered during the inspection, which included a site visit.**

Children and young people positively benefit by being supported to maintain contact with those who are important to them. Sound consultation processes ensure that all stakeholders are appropriately listened and responded to.

## **EVIDENCE:**

Under the terms and conditions of the foster carer agreement and handbook, foster carers are required to actively promote and support positive family contact for those in their care.

The files of those inspected held clear and specific details with regards contact arrangements, including those where legal constraints applied. Whereby this is the case, suitable and safe arrangements remain in place to facilitate appropriate supervision.

Children and young people spoke positively about the support provided by their carers to maintain contact with their own families and were very keen to state the importance of being able to have and attend sleepovers with their peers. This particular aspect was viewed very positively by older children.

Excellent examples were found to support sound consultation processes. Annual review documentation features this as a key aspect, not just for carers, but also for the looked after child and birth children. Those foster carers visited stated that the service works hard to obtain their views and opinions outside of this forum in a variety of ways, including newsletters, questionnaires, etc and

they all confirmed their own supervising social workers routinely ask for feedback during their visits. It was also very positive to hear carers state how easy they would find it to approach senior managers within the organisation, if they had a specific question, idea or concern and good examples were given of birth children being specifically asked for their views.

# Achieving Economic Wellbeing

## The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

- The fostering service prepares young people for adulthood.(NMS 14)
- The fostering service pays carers an allowance and agreed expenses as specified.(NMS 29)

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

14, 29.

**The overall outcome in this area is good. This judgement has been made from evidence gathered during the inspection, which included a site visit.**

Young people and their carers are now benefiting from receiving improved guidance and preparation in making the transition into adulthood. Improvements to payment systems would reduce the amount of dissatisfaction, felt primarily by respite carers.

## EVIDENCE:

From the last inspection, recommendations were made to review and explore the training and preparation provision for carers and young people, in terms of approaching adulthood and it was positive to find that some progress had been made.

Written guidance has been reviewed and updated, and additional training has occurred and is planned. The 16+ team is currently being led by an acting manager, who works hard to maintain good levels of communication with the fostering service.

Difficulties remain for some individuals and the organisation is working hard to ensure that preparatory transitional work commences for youngsters between their 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Some very good practical examples were found to demonstrate how foster carers are actively supporting those in their care with this transition, such as developing budgeting, self – help and independence skills and proportionately, a good number of older teenagers successfully remain with their carers after 'leaving care' age, as supported lodgings placements.

In the main, foster carers were satisfied with the ongoing receipt of their payments and allowances. These are clearly detailed and communicated.

Difficulties were primarily described by respite carers, who have often needed to chase outstanding payments or challenge the amounts received. Those who gave such examples were not overly concerned and felt the problem is exacerbated by the very nature of their work, in that their hours are not consistent each month. However, this is an area that should be further investigated, as it is currently dependent upon a system that is not tailored for it.

# Management

## The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

- There is a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and the fostering service ensures that they meet those aims and objectives.(NMS 1)
- The fostering service is managed by those with the appropriate skills and experience. (NMS 2)
- The fostering service is monitored and controlled as specified. (NMS 4)
- The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.(NMS 5)
- Staff are organised and managed effectively.(NMS 16)
- The fostering service has an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff.(NMS 17)
- The fostering service is a fair and competent employer.(NMS 18)
- There is a good quality training programme. (NMS 19)
- All staff are properly accountable and supported.(NMS 20)
- The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers.(NMS 21)
- Foster carers are provided with supervision and support.(NMS 22)
- Foster carers are appropriately trained.(NMS 23)
- Case records for children are comprehensive.(NMS 24)
- The administrative records are maintained as required.(NMS 25)
- The premises used as offices by the fostering service are suitable for the purpose.(NMS 26)
- The fostering service is financially viable. (NMS 27)
- The fostering service has robust financial processes. (NMS 28)
- Local Authority fostering services recognise the contribution made by family and friends as carers.(NMS 32)

**The Commission considers Standards 17, 21, 24 and 32 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.**

**JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):**

2, 4, 5, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 32

**The overall outcome in this area is excellent. This judgement has been made from evidence gathered during the inspection, which included a site visit.**

The service benefits from being well – run, effectively managed and keenly monitored.

Foster carers receive good levels of support and training, which positively impacts upon those they look after. Improvements to administrative resources and the physical environment would further enhance this aspect of service provision.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The service is led by a suitably qualified and experienced manager, who holds the respect of a motivated, professional team. The majority of those in post have been so for a number of years and every member interviewed stated they plan to remain for the foreseeable future. This view was directly linked to the style of the manager and senior practitioner and the collaborative team approach in place.

Two newer team members both commented in exactly the same way and confirmed they had made the right decision to join the team.

Numerous written records were viewed and the contents demonstrated a robust approach to monitoring and quality assurance. Records of team meetings demonstrated the discussions regularly held in terms of monitoring the practice and operation of the team and the National Minimum Standards for fostering are constantly used to focus these meetings.

The manager, supported by administrative personnel, maintains detailed records of placements, foster carers, and concerns and allegations, in an effort to ensure robust safeguarding is firmly in place; this information is appropriately shared at higher levels throughout the organisation.

Team members benefit from regular supervision meetings, which are planned in advance and accurately recorded. Such records showed clear evidence of monitoring performance and identifying training needs.

The social worker vacancy, created from the previous inspection has been successfully filled and this has directly led to a review of caseloads, which are now more manageable. In addition, a part – time post has also been secured for a training coordinator and the work she has achieved thus far is commendable. That stated, the findings she has produced already indicate the need for the service to seriously consider adding to her current contracted hours, as the demand and need for this provision exceeds her capacity. (This aspect should also consider the impact this workload is having upon the administrative team, who already work to maximum capacity).

Much work has clearly been completed, since the previous inspection, in terms of the team ensuring that both elements of supervision and support are clearly covered during foster carer visits. This has led to a revised recording format

being used, which explicitly covers both areas and unannounced visits to carers were being clearly evidenced.

Following last year's inspection, the contents of case files have been reviewed, alongside the ongoing implementation of an amended case recording policy. Those files inspected, held the information required and were in good order. Administrative records are also of good quality, as far as the systems currently available, allow. As has been previously mentioned, the current IT systems do not readily lend themselves to produce some of the specific information, as needed by the fostering team, and this should be reviewed. Similarly, the team is also dependent upon other departments for specific information, including statistical data and finance information, which is not always easily obtained.

The team continues to work from the same office base, which is not large enough to accommodate all of the required resources, however; there are plans to consider other possible options and these are currently being explored.

The service provision for recruiting family members and friends as carers was explored again throughout this inspection. The team manager for this service was interviewed and relevant records were scrutinised. Family members undertaking this task are enabled to access relevant training and support; they are also provided with a forum, within which to attend regular support groups if they so wish. Once again, this aspect of service provision was commended.

# SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services have been met and uses the following scale.

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

"X" in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion  
 "N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

<b>BEING HEALTHY</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>12</b>	3

<b>STAYING SAFE</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>3</b>	3
<b>6</b>	3
<b>8</b>	3
<b>9</b>	4
<b>15</b>	2
<b>30</b>	4

<b>ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>7</b>	3
<b>13</b>	3
<b>31</b>	4

<b>MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>10</b>	4
<b>11</b>	4

<b>ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>14</b>	3
<b>29</b>	3

<b>MANAGEMENT</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>1</b>	X
<b>2</b>	4
<b>4</b>	3
<b>5</b>	4
<b>16</b>	2
<b>17</b>	3
<b>18</b>	X
<b>19</b>	3
<b>20</b>	4
<b>21</b>	3
<b>22</b>	3
<b>23</b>	3
<b>24</b>	3
<b>25</b>	3
<b>26</b>	2
<b>27</b>	3
<b>28</b>	3
<b>32</b>	4



YES

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection?

**STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
1.	FS15	20(3)(d)	<p>The fostering service provider shall not employ a person to work for the fostering service unless full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the matters set out in paragraphs 1 to 6 of Schedule 1, Fostering Services Regulations 2002.</p> <p><b>This requirement is carried over from the previous inspection and is made within the context of the need to evidence that written references are followed up by telephone verification and any gaps in employment are questioned and recorded at interview. Failure to comply with this requirement may lead to enforcement action.</b></p>	13/11/06
1.	FS6	27(1)	<p>The fostering service provider shall carry out an assessment of any person whom it considers may be suitable to become a foster parent, in accordance with this regulation.</p> <p><b>This requirement is made within the context of the</b></p>	13/11/06

			<b>service providing clear and explicit written guidance pertaining to the assessment process to be followed in the event of assessing carers who are transferring from another fostering service provider.</b>	
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## RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations relate to National Minimum Standards and are seen as good practice for the Registered Provider/s to consider carrying out.

No.	Refer to Standard	Good Practice Recommendations
1.	FS12	It is recommended that a review be conducted as to the nature and content of health records and information held by foster carers pertaining to those in their care, to ensure the same good standard is maintained throughout.
2.	FS16	It is recommended that consideration be given to expanding upon the current administrative provision for the team as a whole. This recommendation is made within the context of the additional administrative needs, as generated by the new training post.
3.	FS19	It is recommended that consideration be given to expanding upon the current weekly hours made available for the training coordinator provision.
4.	FS26	It is recommended that consideration be given to refurbish or reallocate the current office space.
5.	FS26	It is recommended that current IT systems be reviewed, to ensure these meet the needs of the fostering service. Within this, lines of communication between departments should also be reviewed.
6.	FS28	It is recommended that payment mechanisms, in particular, those for respite carers, be reviewed.

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

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