



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

Moments

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

Lead Inspector
Alex Turner

Announced Inspection
11th September 2006 09:30

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

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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 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

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

Name of service	Moments
Address	Moments Limited Holme Lodge Farm Peon Hill Whitstable Kent CT5 3AY
Telephone number	01227 479444
Fax number	01227 479555
Email address	admin@momentspfa.PLUSCOM
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Moments
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	Mr David Olive
Type of registration	Fostering Agencies

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

Date of last inspection 23rd January 2006

Brief Description of the Service:

Moments Ltd is an independent fostering agency based in Whitstable, Kent. Services that can be provided include long, short term and emergency placements, supervised contact and outreach for children not attending school. At the time of this inspection the service was supporting 29 children and had 20 approved foster carers.

The current fees for the service at the time of the visit range from £848.05 to £1272.11. Information on the service and the CSCI report for prospective service users will be detailed in the Statement of Purpose and Service User Guide. The e-mail address of the service is admin@momentspfa.plus.com

SUMMARY

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

The inspection took place over three days. Arrangements were made to visit three foster families. In both instances members of the foster families gave up some time and were accommodating with respect to the inspection process. Time was spent speaking with the registered persons, the placements team, and one of the supervising social workers. Preinspection questionnaires were completed and returned by foster carers, placing social workers, and children. Information provided by the manager regarding key aspects of the service was also included in the information drawn upon to prepare this report. A broad range of documentation was inspected in relation to the operation of the service. The inspection was concluded with verbal feedback to the registered persons summarising the preliminary findings of the inspection in relation to each of the standards inspected. The time and cooperation of all those contributing to the inspection is acknowledged and appreciated.

What the service does well:

Moments have done well in providing a service where foster carers feel supported, valued and listened to. The health and welfare of children & young people has been promoted. Moments have also done well in consulting with people using the service, helping to prepare and support young people with education and in promoting diversity and contact arrangements.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The service has improved practice in the following areas – matching, safe care, recruitment checks and operation of the panel. Staffing levels have increased and a suitable person is now registered with the Commission to carry on the service.

What they could do better:

The overall training strategy for carers could be improved.

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 or by contacting your local CSCI office. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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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.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at the outcome for Standard:

NMS 12 - Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The fostering service promotes the health and development of children and young people.

EVIDENCE:

Children and young people have been supported to access mainstream and specialist health care provision. Physical, psychological and emotional health has all been taken into account. Written health care records maintained by foster carers serve were well thought out and up to date. Training in health matters has been provided.

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.

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

NMS 3,6,9,15 & 30 - Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The persons carrying on and managing the service are suitable to do so.

The service provides suitable foster carers.

The fostering service endeavours to place children & young people with foster carers who represent a suitable match against their identified needs and circumstances.

The fostering service works to promote children & young people's welfare and safety.

The fostering service has been thorough in its application of recruitment procedures.

The fostering panel is organised efficiently and effectively.

EVIDENCE:

The suitability of the people carrying on and managing the service was ascertained at the time of their registration. It should be noted that the

manager has, since the last inspection, gone through the formal process to register as the manager of the service with the Commission.

The fostering service has systems in place designed to ensure that children & young people are placed with foster carers who are able to provide a suitable standard of support and accommodation. The approval and review process considers health and safety and the overall nature of accommodation that is to be provided. The service routinely carries out unannounced visits to foster carers' homes. The matching process takes into account environmental factors. Regular supervision allows for monitoring of accommodation standards; it was suggested that this should be formally recorded in the foster carers supervision notes.

The service has systems that serve to assist in suitable matches being put forward and equally to ensure that unsuitable matches are not offered. Instances where introductory meetings and visits had taken place were documented in some cases. Foster carers spoken to offered the view that they were provided with adequate information to be able to make an informed decision about whether to accept a proposed placement. Young people spoken to indicate that they were satisfied with the arrangements for how their placements had been made. Evidence was presented to demonstrate action taken by the service to help fill gaps in the match between carers and children & young people. The fostering service has provided figures relating to the longevity of placements that indicate stability in placements made.

Contributing to the aim of promoting children's welfare and safety the training programme for foster carers includes child protection, safe caring skills and positive behaviour management. Since the last inspection carers have been supported to develop safe care guidelines particular to their own circumstances and those of the children that are placed with them. The foster care agreement stipulates that corporal punishment is not acceptable. Systems are in place to collate and evaluate information on the circumstances, number and outcome of all allegations of neglect or abuse of a child in foster care.

Evidence was seen in the staff files sampled which demonstrated the fostering service has been diligent in carrying out checks to determine the suitability of the people it employs to work with children.

The minutes of the three most recent panel meetings were reviewed. The minutes provided evidence that demonstrated the panel has been operated in line with the standards and regulations and has contributed significantly to the measures taken to ensure foster carers approval is in line with their skills, knowledge, experience and circumstances. The recommendation is made to include in the panels written procedures the process that covers decision-making when all members of the panel are not in agreement.

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.

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

NMS 7 & 13. Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The fostering service values diversity.

The fostering service promotes educational achievement.

EVIDENCE:

The fostering service has provided to carers training that covers issues in relation to recognising, valuing and working to promote diversity and equal opportunities. Carers visited during this inspection have demonstrated awareness of issues in relation to this area of practice and specifically of those that potentially impacted upon the children & young people they were looking after. Children & young people visited confirmed that they were supported to pursue activities and interests they enjoyed such as football, TV, games, music and spending time with friends.

It was evident from speaking with key staff and reviewing records that there is commitment to promoting education for children & young people. The service has made clear the expectations placed upon foster carers to support and encourage success in education. In the instances where suitable educational placement had yet to be agreed the fostering service was working with the relevant authorities to address the issue and in the interim had provided daytime outreach focussing on educational activities.

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.

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

NMS 10 & 11 - Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The fostering service promotes contact arrangements for children & young people.

The fostering service promotes consultation.

EVIDENCE:

There was evidence to demonstrate that contact arrangements had been addressed for children & young people placed with foster carers and that the arrangements had been reviewed over time. Included in documentation sampled were records that demonstrated children & young peoples views regarding contact have been sought. Records showed that contact is one of the factors taken into account in the matching process. Carers and young people spoken to offered the view that they were on the whole satisfied with regard to contact arrangements made.

The fostering service has and was working to encourage feedback from children and involve them in decisions and service development. Records showed that children & young people are routinely asked for their opinions prior to their own care reviews and the annual review of the carers looking after them. Feedback from social workers that have placed children and young people approved by the service has varied between good and excellent when asked to rate the extent to which the service has involved children & young

people in decisions about their day-to-day lives. Written and verbal feedback from children & young people supported this view.

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):

None of these standards were assessed.

EVIDENCE:

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 1, 16, 17, 21, 24, 25 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.

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

NMS 1,4,16,17,21,23,24 & 25 - Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The fostering service provides accurate and useful information about the service provided.

The service is monitored and controlled as specified by the standards and regulations.

Staff are organised and managed effectively.

The number qualifications and experience of staff working for the fostering service is such that the statement of purpose can be fulfilled.

The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with, training and supporting carers.

Case records for children & young people are comprehensive.

Administrative records are maintained as required.

EVIDENCE:

The statement of purpose provides an accurate account of the services provided. Information about the service is also provided to children & young people including details of how to complain.

The fostering service has a clear organisational structure. Staffing arrangements reflect those set out in the statement of purpose. It was found that in all aspects of service provision there were people with suitable qualifications and experience to fulfill their specified roles and functions. The assessment process for foster carers takes into account and addresses all relevant factors following recognised procedures to do so. Evidence of full assessments having been completed was found on foster carers files. Records sampled showed that foster carers have undergone regular annual reviews and that the process has been coordinated efficiently.

Evidence was seen that demonstrated all aspects of the fostering service are monitored and that strategies have been planned and implemented to develop service provision. The process of monitoring is rounded off well by the production of regular quality review reports and a business development plan.

Written policies and procedures set out the support provided to foster carers. The strategies to provide support include arrangements for training and development, supervision, respite care and other elements specified in the standards. Speaking with foster carers and sampling of records indicated that these strategies have been implemented in practice and that the role of the supervising social worker was understood.

The fostering service had developed a training programme for carers that covers the majority of the topics specified in the standards. The training

programme however lacks structure in terms of identifying core “modules” to be completed and by when. The recommendation is made to review training provision and structure it such that clarity is achieved in relation to training targets for different stages in foster carers careers and to take into account any specialist areas of training required.

Case records were reviewed and there are policies with regard to record keeping. Carers and young people’s files were well organised. Foster carers visited demonstrated an awareness of the expectations placed upon them in terms of record keeping and had received written guidance, training and supervision covering this area of practice. It was ascertained from viewing a sample of administrative records that the fostering service is working to ensure these are maintained as required by regulations. Records were being managed such that confidentiality is appropriately maintained.

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

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

<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	3
6	3
8	3
9	3
15	3
30	3

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

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
10	3
11	3

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
14	X
29	x

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

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection? NO

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

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.	FS30	The panels written procedures should include the process that covers decision-making when all members of the panel are not in agreement.
2.	FS23	Training provision and structure of training programme for foster carers should be reviewed such that clarity is achieved in relation to identifying training targets for different stages in foster carers careers and to take into account any specialist areas of training required.

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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