



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

## FOSTERING SERVICE

### **Ethelbert Residential Family Placements**

**3 Cecil Square  
Margate  
Kent  
CT9 1BD**

*Lead Inspector*  
**Pat Gough**

*Announced Inspection*  
**16th January 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

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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

**Name of service** Ethelbert Residential Family Placements

**Address** 3 Cecil Square  
Margate  
Kent  
CT9 1BD

**Telephone number** 01843 221 144

**Fax number**

**Email address**

**Provider Web address**

**Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)** Ethelbert Specialist Homes Limited

**Name of registered manager (if applicable)** Vacant

**Type of registration** Fostering Agencies

**Category(ies) of registration, with number of places**

# SERVICE INFORMATION

## Conditions of registration:

**Date of last inspection**      22nd January 2003

## Brief Description of the Service:

Ethelbert Residential Family Placements provides fostering and supported accommodation for children and young people and is part of Ethelbert Specialist Homes Ltd, which owns registered children's homes and schools. The fostering service office is situated in Cecil Square, Margate. It has recently concluded merger negotiations with another fostering agency and is currently engaged in managing the process.

At the time of the inspection, there were twenty young people placed with the service and two young people in supported accommodation (16 plus scheme). In addition, there were twenty-five approved foster carers.

The Acting Manager, Lynn Shaw, holds the Diploma in Social Work qualification, and is currently working towards the NVQ Level 5 qualification in operational management. The manager's experience includes child protection work in a local authority setting; work with families in a mental health capacity as well as two and a half years as a supervising social worker and deputy manager.

In addition, there are five operational staff, including the manager. As the fostering service is expanding, it is planning to increase the administration team.

The Responsible Person, Leslie Davenport, holds the NVQ Level 5 qualification in strategic management and together with the organisations Directors has several years experience of management, fostering and caring for children and young people in a residential setting.

# SUMMARY

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

This was an announced inspection, conducted over a period of four days. It involved the inspection of the agency's premises in Margate and the observation of a scheduled foster panel meeting, by the lead inspector. Further evidence was provided through the examination of carers' and children's files, other agency records and discussion with the registered provider the panel chair, the finance director, the acting manager and other agency staff. The inspector visited three foster homes and was able to speak to carers and young people to ascertain their views on the competency of the Agency. The responses in inspection questionnaires distributed to young people, carers and placing authority representatives, also contribute to the inspection findings.

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

There is good case recording and a good system for the organisation and management of files. The files were well indexed and the information was easy to access.

The Company recognises and rewards the staff for good practice and this was documented where a member of staff had responded well in supporting carers whilst on 'out of hours' duty. The staff stated that it was a good agency to work for and that they were well treated as employees.

The very good support given to carers is evident through conversations with carers and their written responses within questionnaires, for example, 'I find them very friendly and supportive'; 'everyone is helpful'; 'they give good and professional service to the family placement carer'. The young people confirmed that they were consulted regularly by the carers and by the agency and indicated that they were being looked after well with comments like, 'Ethelbert's is a fabulous agency, I'm really pleased with the high standard of care, foster carers are the best ever'.

The company gives importance to continuity of care for the young person and promotes the provision of opportunity for the young person to progress from residential placement to supported accommodation via the fostering service. There is a good safeguarding policy and guidance for carers to follow and the safe caring assessments and health and safety checks support that in practice.

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

The service now conducts telephone enquiries on the receipt of all references to verify their authenticity and to explore in more detail, if necessary, the content of the reference. The recruitment process is very well recorded.

Although the security of the files may be suspect from one source of entry, the agency have taken steps to safely store all confidential files in locked metal cabinets.

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

Health issues, in respect of the young people placed with carers, have a fairly high profile in that every effort is made to secure information from placing authorities and routine medical treatment and appointments are well recorded.

The carers could, however, pay greater attention to the wider aspects of healthy living and development and record on a regular and consistent basis how the young person is responding to their input and by recording their achievements. The agency should adopt a proactive stance in providing the carer with more precise guidance on this issue and supplement that with more regular monitoring and support to the carers on the subject of healthy living.

There should be a written policy and better guidance to carers on preparation of young people for adulthood. This would enhance the company's approach to supporting young people from residential care to supported accommodation and potentially, independent living

In order to enable the manager to maintain the good practice within the agency, the company should evaluate the level of responsibility the manager has for commitments or projects additional to her responsibility for the management of the agency and her participation in statutory professional training.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the agency has identified a shortfall in its training resources for foster carers, it should proceed with the creation and implementation of specific training resources for carers. It may also wish to consider, following consultation with carers on the sort of training that they would benefit from, the offer of assistance from experienced carers, as suggested by one carer in a questionnaire response.

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**

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Staying Safe

Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

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 current practice supporting the young people to adopt a healthy lifestyle could be enhanced to give greater prominence to health education of the young people who are placed.

## **EVIDENCE:**

From the files that were inspected, the information provided by the placing authority and contained in the LAC documentation provides little useful indicators as to what aspects of their health provision require attention. Whilst there is some reference to annual medical, dental and vision tests, the wider healthy living issues, such as personal hygiene, knowledge of health issues and ability, are largely ignored.

The service, through its guidance to carers, focuses on the importance of promoting healthy living. There is not, however, sufficient emphasis on recording how this guidance is implemented and therefore there is a lack of information on the impact of the carers practice with the young people and the young people's current level of understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, their attitude and response and level of functioning. Some of the content in the carers' daily notes include references to diet, personal hygiene and daily activity and the amended placement agreement dedicates a page to healthy matters and actions to be addressed through a risk assessment. This would benefit from a supplementary written health plan, which embraces all aspects of healthy living.

# 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 manager has the appropriate qualifications and skills to effectively manage the staff in order to enable them to support the Carers.

The agency's procedures for vetting prospective foster carers and the recruitment of staff are thorough and ensure that children are looked after by suitable adults.

Children are properly matched with carers who have the skills to meet their needs and who provide comfortable living environments for their use.

There is a child protection policy and procedural guidance for the staff and the carers to follow in order to safeguard the young people

The agency has clearly outlined the procedures and guidance to enable carers to protect and promote the children's welfare.

The fostering panel performs its role effectively and demonstrates its independent role in recommending appropriate carers to care for children, according to strict criteria.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The service has addressed the recommendation made at the previous inspection and there was evidence that telephone enquiries are made to follow up on references. The enquiry is dated and signed and includes some detail as to the content of the telephone conversation particularly where clarification of details in the reference has been sought. CRB checks are renewed as required and all references are in the personnel file.

Three foster care homes were visited; two had placements and one was engaged in the introduction of a young person soon to be placed. All homes were in suitable locations and were adequately furnished and decorated. The young people were accommodated in single bedrooms and all were suitably personalised. The young people expressed satisfaction with their rooms and had items of entertainment such as television, audio equipment and a computer or play station. Each home had undertaken a safe caring assessment and a health and safety assessment, which is updated annually or sooner if circumstances require. The relevant information on vehicle safety and driver competence, relating to the carers' transport was evidenced in their file.

The initial assessment material, sampled from four carers' files, confirmed that thorough research had been involved prior to submission to panel. Where trans-racial placements had been made, the agency had assisted the carers in making contact with sources of help with ethnic issues. Links had been made with the Asylum team and the Mandarin community. The manager outlined the process of planned introductions prior to the commencement of a placement and one of the carers spoke about the effectiveness of the process and commented on the benefits derived by the young person and the carer's family.

There are very clear guidelines in the foster carer handbook on unacceptable responses to negative behaviour and discussions with the foster carers supported the view that there was a clear understanding of how to respond to the young people. Safe caring assessments are completed for each household and the young people confirmed that any sanctions used by the carers are fair. Guidance on the subject of self esteem is provided in 'choosing to foster' training and the manager stated that it features in most of the training provided.

There is comprehensive guidance on child protection and one carer who dealt with a 'disclosure' by a young person indicated that she managed it confidently because of the training and her extensive caring experience. There were four child protection referrals in the past year; all of which were appropriately documented and the agency's procedures were followed.

Three personnel files were inspected and found to contain all the relevant documentation relating to Schedule 1. There is a selection procedure checklist in each file, which clearly indicates what documentation is required and what checks must be done and the dates on which they have been received and

completed, respectively. Each file contained proof of identity, three references, telephone enquiry responses or each one, a written record of the interview and a completed CRB check.

A foster panel meeting was observed in session and correct procedures were followed in relation to the composition of the panel, in that it was quorate, and in the way the meeting was conducted. The requirement that there is representation on the panel of a director of the company, who is not also the decision maker, was discussed with the responsible individual and the manager. Reports prepared for the panel were informative and qualitative. The agenda was followed and all participants were able to contribute.

# 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

The Agency assists it's foster carers in providing quality care and support for children with diverse needs.

The relevant systems and processes are provided and utilised to enable carers to support children with their education and to monitor their progress.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The service provides guidance and training on the importance of valuing diversity and covers elements such as gender, ethnic origin and disability. The manager gave examples of ways in which carers had been assisted to promote and work with diversity and stated that the service was continually attempting to extend the range of carers with backgrounds and skills to meet a wide range of young people's diverse needs. Following discussions with the manager, the supervising social workers and the carers, the inspector formed the view that young people's individual preferences fall into the category of diversity and carers are required to acknowledge those preferences as important to the child.

The agency, in its documentation, highlights the importance of education and support for the young people in its care. The responsibilities of relevant parties such as the placing authority, the agency and the foster carer are clearly outlined with a focus on good liaison, proper monitoring, attendance and the completion and awareness of the PEP and IEP. It is also acknowledged that the young person plays an important part in the process and that achievements should be recognised.

The agency has its own education provision and a full time education welfare officer. Where there is an issue about non-attendance at school, the carer is included in the discussions and agreement on strategies to manage that. Reference is made to the difficulties for the foster carer arising out of the school exclusions in that it is the intention of the agency 'to provide activities not only to alleviate stress but to offer the young person opportunities for learning and socialising within the community at large'.

# **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

There is guidance and support provided by the Agency and carers to enable children to maintain useful contact with appropriate people.

The agency's communication systems and guidance on the importance of consultation encourages and enables children and carers to express their views and preferences.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The agency has a policy promoting contact and this includes arrangements for parents to stay in local overnight accommodation. There was evidence of contact arrangements and home visits with family and friends in the young people's placement plans, foster care agreements and feedback obtained from questionnaires distributed to carers and placing authorities. The carers commented on the types of contact promoted and the support they receive from the agency. There was a record of contact arrangements in the carers' daily logs and references to arrangements within the young peoples' files. A concern expressed by a young person, regarding a contact visit, and noted in the file was discussed with the manager. The manager confirmed that the issue had been addressed and the young person was satisfied.

All the responses received through the surveys indicated that young people, carers and social workers representing the placing authorities, were satisfied with the level of communication from the agency and felt that they had been included in consultation and involved in the decision making, whenever it related to the welfare of the young person. The carers, in reference to the occurrence of consultation, commented positively on the frequency and usefulness of carer meetings, supervision and one carer stated that the agency



had asked for her views through a questionnaire. The young people confirmed that they are able to offer their opinion, views and make suggestions.

# 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)

**The Commission considers Standards 29 the key standard to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.**

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

14,29

There is no policy and a lack of guidance for carers on how they should support young people in their preparation for adulthood and therefore they may not have the opportunities, whilst in placement, to acquire the necessary skills for independent living.

The Agency's financial and payment structures are sound and make adequate provision for the carers to meet the needs of the child.

## EVIDENCE:

The foster carers' handbook contains some guidance, under expectations of all carers (3.1), on what is expected of them in terms of providing life skills teaching and learning opportunities for young people. There is also some reference to this within the foster carer agreements and care plans.

The Company provides a package of care for the young people who are placed in its service, which promotes opportunity for progression and life fulfillment through its residential placement, fostering and supported accommodation placements. Whilst this process, which is actively implemented, is to be commended, there is no policy relating to preparation for adulthood or specific guidance for carers on how to support that policy through a life skills programme to which the young person subscribes through consultation. The manager stated that training on promoting independence and preparing children for fostering is to be identified. On the whole, placing authorities are not proactive in producing pathway plans and very often they are compiled too late and without any consultation with the young person, the carer or the supervising social worker.

The financial and placement procedures are detailed in part two of the foster carer's handbook with a scale of fees and other information on allowances in two appendices. The carers stated that payments are received within the agreed timescale and where one carer referred to a missed payment due to an administrative error, by the agency it was confirmed that the agency had reimbursed all costs, relating to the late payment, to the carer.

# 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, and 24 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.**

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

1,2,4,5,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27,28.

The agency's statement of purpose contains full information to inform potential purchasers of the service and the necessary guidance to support carers in providing quality care of the children.

The manager and the registered provider have the necessary experience and qualifications to manage the agency and to advise and guide staff on their support to carers, enabling carers to provide a quality service to the children.

The manager has extensive experience of working with children as a qualified social worker, social work manager, child protection co-ordinator and managing the agency. The registered provider has management qualifications and several years' experience of managing the agency as a whole.

The agency is being managed to a high standard and a member of staff has been nominated to deputise in the manager's absence. Specific tasks were being delegated to those staff with particular roles.

Although there are sufficient staff to meet the needs of the carers at present the agency should regularly review the manager's commitments so that her ability to carry out her management duties are not adversely affected.

The Company provides effective support to the staff and rewards commitment and good practice.

Staff and foster carers receive good training appropriate to individual needs and the needs of the agency.

Staff receive regular support, written guidance and management supervision in order to carry out their respective roles in the agency.

Foster carers receive support and supervision from qualified social workers.

The agency keeps up to date records, which were being stored securely.

The premises were suitable for the operation of the agency and provide a comfortable and safe working environment for the staff. The premises are insured and health and safety checks are completed.

There was no evidence found at the time of the inspection that the agency was not financially viable and children, carers and staff needs were being met. Financial policies and procedures are in place for staff to follow.

#### **EVIDENCE:**

The statement of purpose sets out the services that are provided as well as services that can be accessed, including encouraging young people to participate in work experience placements as part of the transition to employment. It also operates a supported accommodation scheme. The statement was reviewed in November '05 and incorporates all the required information.

The children's guide is currently being reviewed as the one in circulation has information and photographs, which are outdated. The information in the current guide is provided in a style and language that can be understood by most young people, however the agency is advised to explore other ways in

which it could be presented so that young people with a learning difficulty or disadvantage can understand the content.

The acting manager holds a diploma in social work, has many years experience in social care and is currently engaged in the NVQ Level 4 management course. The directors of the company have considerable and appropriate relevant experience in childcare practice. The organisation within the agency office supports the view that the manager has the necessary organisational skills to run the provision efficiently and the staff and the carers provided supporting evidence to confirm that there is effective communication with staff and carers and the staff team are provided with effective leadership.

There is a good management structure with clearly defined roles enabling staff to provide an effective professional performance in meeting the needs of carers and children. There are monitoring systems in place to ensure quality performance of the agency. The finance director outlined the financial processes that are in place to ensure that carers are paid on time and that the manager and staff have the necessary funds to engage in professional development, effectively support the carers and provide for the welfare of the young people. There is an annual audit of the Company finances.

The acting manager has a job description, which adequately states her responsibilities. The acting manager outlined her duties and the level of delegated responsibility that she has for the management of the service. A new deputy has been identified to provide support.

There is a clear management structure and the staff confirmed that it works effectively. The staff, employed by the agency, have the necessary skills and experience to conduct their role and the monitoring systems such as the monthly quality assurance practice, panel observations and feedback, contribute to on-going improvement. The staff stated that there is daily informal supervision if it is required and adequate formal supervision. This was confirmed through examination of staff supervision files. There was evidence that good practice is acknowledged and encouraged and poor practice is challenged. All the staff have the necessary information through job descriptions, contracts and other documentation contained in their handbook to enable them to perform their role. There is good administrative support and effective IT systems in place.

There is a low turnover of staff and both staff and carers commented on the good management and support within the agency. The manager stated that there was a very good response when there was recruitment of carers through the local press and evidence from Form F assessment reports and observation of panel indicated that recruitment is thorough and rigorous.

Currently the acting manager has a heavy workload encompassing her management duties, the supervision of an unqualified family worker, the

management of a project commissioned by the Company and a commitment to NVQ training. In addition, the acquisition of another agency and the management implications of the initial takeover could compromise the manager's ability to maintain stability within the agency and the continuance of the good and effective practice already in place. The provider acknowledged this issue in feedback and stated that it is currently being addressed and gave an undertaking that quality of service will not be jeopardised.

There is an established out of hours service, which according to comments from the carers is very effective. All carers receive supervision through home visits, which are both announced and unannounced. The regularity may vary according to status, that is, whether they have young people placed, if they are newly approved, their level of experience or need for extra support. Communication from the manager to a supervising social worker indicating the company's appreciation of extra effort and commitment, contained within a staff file, supported the comment from staff that the employer is fair and supportive and there is good employment practice.

There was a positive response from carers on the training provided by the agency and the matrix provided by the acting manager confirmed what training had been offered over the past year and what was completed by individual carers. The company, through its associated services for children, primarily residential, has substantial training resources. Whilst carers spoke highly of the training that was provided, particularly that on 'attachment and loss', some of the training such as behaviour management was not deemed to be sufficiently specific to fostering practice. The manager acknowledged this and confirmed that discussions had taken place with the Company's training co-ordinator address this issue and explore ways in which certain training programmes and their delivery could be more 'foster care' focussed.

There are weekly team meetings, which the staff confirmed are practice focussed. Regular supervision is provided and policies and procedures are available for reference and implementation. It was noted that staff appraisals had been delayed and staff had been given reasons for this. This was discussed at feedback and assurances were given that appraisals will be conducted in the period prior to the commencement of the financial year so that funding can be apportioned for professional development.

The guidance supplied by the agency for carers is detailed and informative and clearly outlines the level of management and the support that the carer can expect. All carers who responded through the inspection questionnaires and discussions with the inspector commented on the high level of support that they receive. The manager confirmed that there is good communication between supervising social workers and the children's social workers, through electronic mail, telephone, correspondence and review meetings.

The foster care agreement is informative and this is supplemented by well organised and clear guidance in the carer's handbook. The information covers support issues including 'out of hours' as well as the complaints process. One complaint was received since the previous inspection, from a carer's neighbour, relating to noise created by a young person. The complaint was effectively dealt with by the agency and the process was well documented.

There is a written policy on case recording and there was evidence that this was closely monitored by the agency. The carers commented positively on the agency's efforts to supply them with the appropriate information on the child due to be placed. There was one instance, however, where insufficient information on the young person's behaviour may have contributed to the premature end of the placement. It is acknowledged that the agency does not always receive the information from the placing authority, however the agency has a duty to request all relevant information, which may benefit the child in placement.

The Agency records seen were, on the whole, up to date, cross referenced with each other and were being securely stored. There is written guidance for staff to follow on record keeping. Appropriate security systems are in place for records held on computer and the premises is secure. Archived records are stored on the premises although the location is damp and the agency will need to ensure that room is sufficiently heated and that storage cabinets are secure and insulated to maintain the records for possible future use. The quality of the content of the daily records, kept by the carers, was variable, but with some excellent practice in evidence.

Due to the acquisition of the fostering agency, which has offices close by, the agency is currently engaged in accommodation strategy discussions. It is agreed, however that the acquisition will lead to an enhancement of the facilities available to staff and carers. It was noted that the room currently used for confidential practice files, although there is a good security system, could be accessed. This was discussed at feedback and the agency confirmed that through the accommodation strategy discussions that an alternative location had been identified.

All the required financial systems are in place and the manager, staff and carers stated that they work effectively. Staff and foster carer training is organised and paid for by the agency, to include NVQ training. Foster carers confirmed they received regular payment. Activities and holidays have been organised for young people. The agency accounts are audited annually. The financial processes include the monitoring of expenses from foster carers. Charges are made known to foster carers and placing authorities, as detailed in foster carer and placement agreements and the statement of purpose.





# 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>
<b>12</b>	2

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

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

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

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>14</b>	2
<b>29</b>	3

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

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

## 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	The agency should place more emphasis on promoting healthy lifestyles for young people in conjunction with preparation for adulthood through advice to the carers to focus on the wider issues of health education and healthy living so that young people are encouraged to adopt such daily practice that will be beneficial to them in later life.
2	FS14	A written policy on preparation for adulthood and guidance for carers to implement it, should be produced to equip young people with the necessary life skills to manage their own lives upon leaving care.
3	FS17	The agency should continue to review its staffing levels so that the management of the service is not adversely affected through insufficient workers and the subsequent heavier workload for the manager.
4	FS23	The agency should pursue its objective to create training programmes that are specifically focused on fostering practice.

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