

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

Freedom Fostering

**Suite 6, Saturn Facilities
Spring Road, Ettingshall
Wolverhampton, West Midlands
WV4 6JX**

Lead Inspector
Janet
Manders

Announced
26th September 2005

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	Freedom Fostering
Address	Suite 6, Saturn Facilities, Spring Road, Ettingshall, Wolverhampton West Midlands WV4 6JX
Telephone number	01902 491117
Fax number	
Email address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Freedom Fostering
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	Ms Maureen Johnson
Type of registration	IFA Fostering Agency
No. of places registered (if applicable)	
Category(ies) of registration, with number of places	

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

Date of last inspection 6th December 2004

Brief Description of the Service:

Freedom Fostering is a small fostering Agency based in the Wolverhampton area. It was formed in 2002 by a group of social workers, foster carers and teachers coming together to develop a service for children based on the principles of high quality foster care and effective support systems.

Freedom Fostering aim to provide a small number of skilled, well trained carers who will work with short term and emergency placements. Long term placement will also be considered as appropriate, dependent on the needs of the young people and the skills of the foster carers.

Freedom Fostering state that training is given a high priority within the Agency. All the preparation and further training is competency based and linked with NVQ awards. Support of carers is also a high priority. In some situations staff have maintained daily contact with the carers. This level of support has not always been possible as the Agency has begun to grow, however, a planned restructuring of the Agency and the recruitment of another member of staff should assist in providing appropriate support to foster carers.

The declared intention of the directors is for the Agency to remain small. This is to allow close support and guidance from staff in providing a high quality service and for carers to work together in developing their skills and expertise.

SUMMARY

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

This inspection was undertaken over a period of 5 days by 2 inspectors. 4 foster carers were visited in their homes by inspectors, when the inspectors also had the opportunity to meet with the young people in placement. In addition to these visits, carer's files were viewed as were those of the young people placed with the foster carers and interviews with the supervising social workers. Questionnaires were also sent to all foster carers, young people, aged 8+, placed with foster carers by the agency and their placing social workers.

Inspectors were unable to observe the Fostering Panel on this occasion as no Panel is due to take place until the New Year.

What the service does well:

Foster carers work hard to ensure that young people are kept safe and that their health needs are met through regular health checks. In addition the agency and foster carers support and encourage young people's education and cultural achievements.

The agency provides sufficient financial support in a prompt and efficient manner to ensure that foster carers can meet the needs of the young people placed.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The agency has been able to clarify and formalise the working arrangements for staff employed by the agency.

CRB checks have been undertaken in respect of the Manager, Responsible Individual, the Director and all foster carers and Panel members.

There have been improvements to the payment of foster carers with payments being made directly into the foster carers bank accounts in respect of long-term placements.

There has been an improvement in the information gained by the agency from placing authorities to enable appropriate matching. All young people placed are within the term of approval of the foster carers they are placed with.

Training has taken place in respect of child protection procedures for both foster carers and staff.

What they could do better:

The agency must improve its management arrangements so that there is a robust system of monitoring arrangements and procedures to ensure that the agency and its staff are working within the remit of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and that it meets the requirements of the National Minimum Standard. At this inspection there were still 20 requirements made at the last inspection that have not been addressed and a substantial number of recommendations.

Checks and references in respect of all staff are required before they commence employment to ensure that young people are kept safe.

The agency must ensure that its policies, procedures and recording is compliant with the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and that policies are developed in all areas identified in these regulations.

In light of the social worker's lack of professional experience within a fostering service, they must undertake training to ensure that they are fully aware of issues pertaining to fostering and the supervision of foster carers, including training in respect of the assessment of foster carers. Training should also be provided to the Fostering Panel to ensure that all members are clear as to their roles and function. The Manager must ensure that she is fully cognisant of developments within fostering and that she fully understands the National Minimum Standards and the Fostering Services Regulations 2001.

The agency must improve its financial planning and monitoring to ensure that the agency can be confident in respect of its financial viability.

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.

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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes these Standards are:

- 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 outcomes for standard(s) 12

Carers were seen to be promoting the health of young people by ensuring that routine appointments with medical professionals were maintained, but the agency had not consistently supported them in this task.

EVIDENCE:

In discussion with foster carers and from examination of files it is apparent that foster carers ensure that young people receive appropriate medical treatment to ensure that their health needs are met. However, in one case medication had not been passed from one foster placement to the next.

Records indicated that all young people had received regular health assessments, however, the agency did not provide all foster carers with a copy of the assessment although a copy was held on the child's file by the agency. The agency has developed a pro-forma for recording young people's health needs, how these will be met and any interventions that have taken place. Nonetheless, these have not been completed in respect of the young people seen by the inspectors. Consequently important information regarding young people's medical history and immunisation record had not been passed on to the foster carers.

The delegation to foster carers of the ability to consent to medical treatment had not been promoted by the agency. In one case the LAC Placement Plan Part 1 had been incorrectly completed so that ability to consent was delegated to the social worker, not the foster carer. The agency has no format of its own for the delegation of medical consent.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes 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, and 15 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for standard(s) 3, 6, 8, 9, 15 and 30

Whilst foster carers provide good care for the young people they care for and endeavour to keep them safe, the agency's failure to follow procedures and a lack of monitoring could put young people's safety at risk.

EVIDENCE:

CRB checks had been undertaken in respect of the Director, the Responsible Individual and the Registered Manager. Although some progress had been made in obtaining employment histories, most of the requirements of Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 are still not in place in respect of the Registered Manager, Director or the Responsible Individual.

Foster homes visited all provided a suitable standard of accommodation for the young people and each child had suitable bedroom accommodation. However, there was no format to assess the risk of young people sharing bedrooms when this situation arises. The inspectors were informed that the Agency has a policy that no child shares a bedroom. However, an exception to this policy is where 2 siblings have chosen to share a bedroom. A written risk assessment is required in respect of these young people. Health and Safety checklists had been completed during the assessments of carers and were renewed at each foster home review. There was no evidence of training for carers in their Health & Safety responsibilities.

Placements had been made within the terms of each carer's approval, and carers reported being given enough time to consider whether or not to accept the placement. Introductions had taken place where the circumstances of the move allowed sufficient time. However, there was no evidence, in the placement agreement, of the elements of matching which had been taken into consideration in agreeing the placement. There had been some improvement in the written information obtained from placing authorities for matching to take place, but the agency does not have a referral format at present. It is recommended that a referral format is developed in order to ensure that the relevant questions are asked on each occasion and to provide a checklist of information to be obtained. A copy of this referral form, along with copies of all information received, should be promptly provided to the foster carer.

Safe Caring Guidelines were in place on some carer's files. In other cases the agency was awaiting return of the completed document. However, these were being completed on a general basis, rather than being individual to the needs and circumstances of the young person placed. There is no provision for signature by the placing social worker (although one had been signed by the child's social worker) and both carers had not always signed. The young person's involvement or understanding was not clear. There was no evidence of Safe Care training being provided, or of carers being given sufficient detail about abuse the young people had suffered in order to be able to protect the child and their own families.

Inspectors were extremely concerned that the agency had not undertaken appropriate checks to ensure that staff working for the agency were suitable to work with young people. Examination of personnel files showed that there was no evidence of interview, references had not been obtained until after staff have started work, or had not been obtained at all. There was no consistent evidence to show that references were followed up by telephone. In addition the agency had not obtained CRB checks until after 2 members of staff had commenced employment with the agency.

Social work staff are appropriately qualified but those involved in the assessment of carers did not have previous experience of family placement work and have not been trained in assessment.

Inspectors were unable to observe a fostering panel during this inspection as no panel was due to take place until January 2006. Inspectors were able to confirm that a policy has been written to guide panel members when it is not possible to reach a jointly agreed recommendation. This document states that the Chair should seek guidance from the responsible individual/agency decision maker. However, it is considered that this is against the spirit of regulation 28 (4) and could be seen to compromise the independence of the decision maker in considering representations if a carer is not happy with the panel's recommendation. This needs to be revised.

CRB checks have been completed on all panel members, although inaccuracy in the transposition of names to the application form meant that one of these checks is invalid and must be re-submitted.

No panel training has taken place as yet, due partly to the illness of a trainer. Panel minutes show that panel members are requesting that meeting dates are established for the year ahead, that panel receives training in the involvement of applicants in the panel's consideration of their assessment, for a panel advisor to be appointed, and for panel members to receive training in their roles and responsibilities.

A local authority fostering team manager has been invited to act as panel adviser, but has not yet commenced in that role.

Panel members had stated that social workers must complete a full assessment and must be available to attend panel.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes 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 standard(s) 7 and 13. Standard 31 is not applicable to this service.

Young people's educational and cultural needs were being well met by the Agency and its foster carers.

EVIDENCE:

Freedom Fostering place a high regard on young people's education and work with placing authorities and the local education authorities to gain suitable educational placements for young people placed with their foster carers. Where no school has been identified for a young person consideration will be given to purchasing an education package for a young person, in consultation with the placing authority.

There was evidence of educational reports on one young people's file however, whilst foster carers confirmed that they were involved in meetings to discuss young people's Personal Education Plans there was no evidence of such plans on one young person's file. In respect of another young person the agency had financed transport for the young person to remain at her previous school so as not to disrupt her education. A Personal Education Plan was on file for this young person.

Freedom Fostering promotes equal opportunities and are well aware of the disadvantages that the young people placed with them may encounter. Foster carers are encouraged to provide positive role models for the young people placed with them. Staff and carers are predominantly of a Caribbean background, as are most of the young people placed with the carers, although

one young person is white British. This young person informed inspectors that she was happy to be living with foster carers from a different ethnic background to herself.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes 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 standard(s) 10 and 11

The agency and foster carers understand the importance of contact for young people, but this needs to be supported by consistent documentation to ensure young people are appropriately protected.

Whilst foster carers seek young people's views Freedom Fostering must also ensure that they actively seek the views of young people, their parents and placing social workers to enable the service to improve.

EVIDENCE:

Staff and foster carers understood the importance of contact for young people and stated that where appropriate they were happy to facilitate contact for a young person. However in respect of the young people seen by inspectors restrictions were in place regarding contact and therefore foster carers were not actively involved in young people's contact with their families. Foster carer's are financially reimbursed by the Agency for any additional expenses incurred through contact.

Pro-forma contact agreements were seen on file but had not been completed, The Foster Placement Agreement for one young person did not contain any information regarding contact arrangements and the foster carer stated that they were not aware of the arrangements in place. With respect of another young person, foster carers informed the inspector that a recent review had made changes to the contact arrangements but there was no reference on file that arrangements were different from those recorded when the young person was placed, nor were the minutes of the review on file.

There was no evidence on file of risk assessments being undertaken prior to contact taking place as required.

Young people spoken to during the inspection and those young people who responded in the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their foster carers regularly consult with them regarding their day to day care. One file showed careful consideration of a young person's move to alternative foster carers with his views being sought.

The last inspection made a good practice recommendation that the Agency should seek the views of young people and their families regarding issues which are likely to affect their daily life and their future. There was little evidence of this and the agency still does not formally seek young people's views for foster carers annual reviews.

Inspectors were informed that placing social workers views are sought as part of foster carers reviews, however, no views were recorded on file. The manager stated that this was because the social worker had not returned the form. There was no evidence that any attempt had been made to pursue this issue with the social worker.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes 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 standard(s) 29

The agency provides sufficient allowances to recruit and retain carers, and to enable carers to meet the young people's expenses.

EVIDENCE:

Foster carers receive payment on a fortnightly basis, 2 weeks in advance. Inspectors were informed that payments have improved since the last inspection in that foster carers payments are made directly into foster carers' bank accounts.

Young people's needs were being adequately met through the amounts paid.

Foster carers reported no difficulty in obtaining reimbursement for additional expenses incurred whilst looking after a young person.

The previous inspection stated that, "the Foster Carers' Handbook is not clear as to what expenses can be claimed. Information regarding such matters is located in numerous places in the Handbook and carers would benefit from guidance being produced to bring all financial information and how to claim expenses, together in one document." This has still not been undertaken.

Management

The intended outcomes 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 cares 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 standard(s) 1, 2, 4, 5, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27 and 28

Staff and foster carers were generally well supported by the agency, however, considerable improvements to the management of the agency are required to ensure that all necessary procedures and safeguards are in place to protect young people.

EVIDENCE:

Freedom Fostering has updated their Statement of Purpose and this was approved by the Directors on 8th April 2005. The Statement of Purpose is a useful document giving details of the aims and objectives of the agency and now covers all areas required by the Regulations.

The Children's Guide has been updated and whilst the name of the Commission for Social Care Inspection has now been updated and inserted into the Children's Guide, the address is still not included nor is there any explanation of the role of the Commission, as required at the last inspection.

Work has been undertaken with foster carers at regular training sessions to ensure that they are fully aware of the Agency's policies and procedures. Foster carers informed inspectors that these training sessions have been extremely useful.

Whilst staff have a wide range of experience of working with children and young people, inspectors remain concerned at the lack of relevant fostering experience of staff, the manager and the Responsible Individual, this is evidenced throughout the work of the agency in the lack of appropriate information, recording and monitoring.

The Manager has undertaken NVQ4 in Management since the last inspection and is waiting for external verification. Nonetheless, there are numerous areas within the agency that inspectors believe are not being managed effectively, including the need to undertake checks in respect of all staff before commencing employment, quality of foster care assessments, consistency and quality of recording within the agency and the lack of compliance with the Fostering Service Regulations 2002 as identified in this inspection.

Inspectors were informed that the Agency has developed a system of monitoring by the Responsible Individual with the assistance of senior staff at monthly board meetings, however, there is no detailed record of this monitoring and action has not been taken to ensure that appropriate action is taken where gaps are noted. Inspectors are not confident that required monitoring is undertaken in a robust and analytical way to ensure that young people are kept safe and that the quality of care provided is improved.

Records are kept of allegations and complaints, however, inspectors are aware that a young person placed with Freedom Fostering foster carers, has made an allegation against a tutor. This was not notified to the Commission for Social Care Inspection at the time and details were not given as to the incident, the investigation or the outcome.

In written submissions to the Commission for Social Care Inspection inspectors were informed that there had been no complaints in respect of the service. Nonetheless, it was apparent through discussion with the Responsible

Individual and through records that complaints had been made and dealt with at an informal level, but the Agency has no system for recording and monitoring such complaints.

Inspectors found a lack of clarity in respect of the roles and responsibilities of the Responsible Individual and the manager. It is essential that the manager undertakes day to day management and monitoring of the service as required by her job description. The managers job description provided to inspectors must be updated to accurately reflect legislation and the requirements of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002. The manager must undertake all duties required by this job description.

There have been improvements and clarification to the structure of the agency, with clarity over who is employed by the agency and the roles of the staff. The agency has appointed a part-time administrator, however, she is presently on sick leave. In light of this absence the agency has employed a full time administrator who is very capable and appears to take responsibility for many aspects of the agency. Neither of these staff had a job description or contract on their personnel file, this was confirmed in discussion between the inspectors and the full time administrator.

The agency has developed an employee guide, which covers employee rights and includes a copy of the Whistleblowing policy. Inspectors were informed that this policy has also been distributed to foster carers.

The agency now employs 2 part time social workers, one of whom acts as deputy manager and provides cover for the manager when she is absent from work. Sessional workers are no longer used by the agency. In light of the smallness of the agency this would appear sufficient but as referred to in previous standards there is a lack of experience of working in a family placement service within the team. These two members of staff now undertake the assessment and supervision of foster carers. Assessments seen by inspectors were of variable quality, did not contain all information required by Standard 17.7 and Schedule 3 and showed little robust analysis of issues and concerns raised during the assessment.

As the Agency has approved 9 foster carers, but at the time of the inspection only has 4 young people in placement with 3 different foster carers capacity is not an issue for the agency.

Staff informed the inspectors that they receive regular supervision from the manager, however, inspectors would recommend that there is provision for independent supervision of the deputy manager if it is felt necessary in light of the family relationships between the 2 workers.

At the last inspection inspectors expressed concerns that respite carers were not the subject to a full assessment only basic checks and CRB checks. At this inspection, inspectors were informed that only 1 foster carer had requested

respite and the young people had been placed with one of the agency's other approved foster carers.

Changes have now been made so that all foster carers are supervised on a monthly basis by a qualified social worker. However, there was no evidence of any input or supervision to foster carers, when one of the supervising social workers was on a period of prolonged sick leave. Inspectors were informed that the other worker had agreed to provide appropriate support and supervision for the carers, however, this had not been recorded on the carers' files.

Unannounced visits had taken place in respect of some of the foster carers and the Manager and Responsible Individual will undertake the remaining visits in the near future.

Foster carer Agreements have not been updated and remain non compliant with the requirements of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002. The agency also uses an additional form as part of the Foster Care Agreement, which refers to the Boarding Out of children (Foster Placements). The agency should not refer to Boarding Out of children (Foster Placement) Regulations as these regulations have now been revoked by Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and would therefore make any agreement invalid.

The agency has not yet put into place a policy regarding under what circumstances a foster carer should be removed from the foster care register.

Information contained in the Foster Carers' Handbook in respect of complaints is very limited and should cover all areas required by Regulation 18 (2). This should be available to all parties. Foster cares and young people stated that they were now aware of the complaints procedures operated by the agency. Nonetheless, pre-inspection information available to inspectors indicated that none of the placing social workers were aware of the Agency's complaints process, therefore not all elements of the requirement made at the last inspection have been met.

Pre-approval training is provided on an individual basis by the assessing social worker, as it is not practical to undertake group training due the small number of assessments undertaken by the Agency. In these circumstances, it is particularly important to ensure that prospective carers have the chance to meet with experienced carers.

Post approval training has focused mainly on the NVQ award and is specifically competency based. Inspectors received a programme for post approval training undertaken with foster carers this year, however this did not cover all areas identified in the Agency's Statement of Purpose or required by the National Minimum Standards and Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

Freedom Fostering should ensure that foster carers receive certificates of all training undertaken so that they can maintain a training portfolio and demonstrate what training they have completed.

Examination of young people's files indicate that foster carers keep a record of significant events regarding young people placed with them, however, these were not up to date on all files. In addition social workers records were not complete on all files nor were young people's reviews always on file. In respect of one young person there was confidential information regarding a half-sibling kept on the young person's file. This should be removed to maintain confidentiality.

The Foster Carer register and young people's register were not in place at the beginning of the inspection, however, after discussion with the administrator work was undertaken to put these in place. The foster carers register is now compliant however, further work is required in respect of the young people who are placed to accurately show all placements and information regarding the young persons address before being placed and upon discharge.

Inspectors were provided with information from the agency's accountant. This indicated that financial information is not of a robust nature and in light of the reduction in the number of young people in placement and the increase in staff working for the agency, inspectors are concerned in respect of the long term financial viability of the agency.

Examination of financial records indicated that there was not a sufficiently robust system in place for the planning and monitoring of financial information.

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	2

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	2
6	2
8	2
9	3
15	1
30	1

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

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
10	2
11	3

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
14	X
29	4

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

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.	12	34 (3) Sch 6	The Registered Person must ensure that as part of the Foster Placement Agreement arrangements for the consent to treatment and delegation of consent are clearly recorded.	01/12/05
2.	12	17(3)	The Fostering Service must ensure that foster carers are given all appropriate information regarding a young person, including the state of health/health needs of any young person placed or to be placed with them	01/12/05
3.	3	5(3), 7(3) Sch 1	The Registered Person must ensure that all elements of Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 are in place in respect of the Registered Manager, Director and the Responsible Individual. Timescale of 01.02.05 not met	01/01/06
4.	6	12 (1)	The Fostering Service must ensure that there is a format for risk assessments to carried out in line with Standard 6.5 and where required that they are recorded in writing and placed on file.	01/01/06
5.	6	17(1)	The Registered Person must	01/02/06

			ensure that carers are provided with training in health and safety.	
6.	8	34 (3) Sch 6	The Registered Manager must ensure that before making a placement, the responsible authority shall enter into a written agreement (foster placement agreement), which covers all matters specified in Schedule 6 including elements of matching. Timescale of 01.02.05 not met	01/12/05
7.	15	20 & 21	The Registered Person must produce and follow a written policy on recruitment and selection of staff, based on the requirements of the Fostering Service Regulations 2002. Timescale of 01.03.05 not met	01/01/06
8.	15	20	The Registered Person must undertake Criminal Bureau Checks on all staff of Freedom Fostering prior to them commencing employment.	01/12/05
9.	15	21 Sch 1	The Registered Person must ensure that a system is put in place for recording references and checks in relation to the suitability of staff to work with children and this is kept on individual personnel files. Timescale of 01.02.05 not met	01/12/05
10.	30	20 (3) Sch 1	The Registered Person must ensure that a new CRB check is undertaken where there are inaccuracies in the initial check.	01/12/05
11.	30	28 (4)	The Registered Person must ensure that the policy regarding action to be taken when Panel are unable to reach a joint decision is revised to ensure that it does not compromise the role of the agency's decision maker in respect of foster carers'	01/01/06

			representation.	
12.	10	14	The Registered Person must ensure that a young person's foster placement agreement contains all information regarding contact arrangements and that these are updated to accurately reflect current contact arrangements.	01/01/06
13.				
14.	1	3 (3) (c)	The Children's Guide must be amended to include information about the role of the Commission for Social Care Inspection and appropriate contact details, in addition to other sources of support and advocacy for young people. Timescale of 01.04.05 not met	01/01/06
15.	2	8	The Registered Manager must ensure that the requirements of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 are carried out and that all staff abide by them.	01/01/06
16.	2	8.3	The Registered Manager must undertake such training as is appropriate to ensure that she has the knowledge, experience and skills necessary for managing the Agency.	01/02/06
17.	4	42 (1) a Schedule 7	The Registered Person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 7. Timescale of 01.03.05 not met	01/12/05
18.	4	42 (1) b &(3)	The Registered Person must establish and maintain a system for improving the quality of foster care provided, this system shall provide for consultation with foster carers, children placed with foster carers and the placing authorities. Timescale of 01.03.05 not met	01/01/06

19.	4	42 (2)	The Registered Person must supply the Commission with the report of the review conducted for the purposes of Regulation 42 (1) b and (3). Timescale of 01.04.05 not met	01/02/06
20.	4	42 (1) (a)	The Registered Manager must ensure that all assessments of foster carers presented to Panel cover all areas required by Schedule 3 and include robust analysis to ensure that foster carers are suitable.	01/01/06
21.	4	12 (2) (c) Sch 8	The Registered Person must ensure that the Commission for Social Care Inspection is notified of the instigation and outcome of any child protection enquiry. Timescale of 01.02.05 not met	01/12/05
22.	4	43 (1)	The Registered Person must inform the Commission for Social Care Inspection of any significant incidents as listed in Schedule 8 without delay. This must be confirmed in writing.	01/12/05
23.	5	8 (1)	The Agency must be managed with sufficient care, competence and skill and in an effective and efficient manner to avoid confusion and conflict of roles. Timescale of 01.03.05 not met.	01/02/06
24.	5	21	The Registered Manager must have an upto date and accurate job description.	01/12/05
25.	16	21	The Registered Person must ensure that job descriptions, contract, and conditions of service are provided for all staff, including sessional workers and a copy should be placed on their personnel record. Timescale of 01.03.05 not met	01/12/05
26.	17	27(2)(a)	The Fostering Service must ensure that, a consistent and	01/12/05

			thorough approach to foster care assessment is undertaken and that such assessments consider all aspects identified in Standard 17.7 and Schedule 3. Timescale of 01.02.05 not met	
27.	19	21 (4) (a)	The Registered Person must ensure that a training programme is developed to ensure that all staff are fully cognisant of all issues pertaining to fostering and the supervision of foster carers.	01/02/06
28.	22	19	The Registered Person must ensure that foster carers are provided with regular supervision by a qualified social worker. Timescale of 01.03.05 not met	01/01/06
29.	22	28 (5)	The Registered Person must ensure that the Foster Care Agreement covers all matters detailed in Schedule 5. Timescale of 01.03.05 not met	01/01/06
30.	22	28 (5)	The Registered Person must ensure that the Foster Care Agreement and all other paperwork used refers to correct legislation.	01/01/06
31.	22	18	The Registered Person must ensure that all complaints are recorded and monitored and the outcome evaluated to inform future provision of services.	01/12/05
32.	22	29 (3)	The Registered Person must ensure that the Agency has a clear policy framework, which outlines the circumstances in which a carer should be removed from the foster carer register. Timescale of 01.04.05 not met	01/01/06
33.	22	18 (1) & (2)	The Registered Person must establish a procedure for investigating complaints and ensure that the procedure is	01/12/05

			widely available to young people, their parents, foster carers and placing authorities. Timescale of 01.03.05 not met	
34.	23	17 (1)	The Registered Person must ensure that a programme of ongoing training, as set out in the Statement of Purpose and as required by the National Minimum Standards, is established for Freedom Foster Carers. Timescale of 01.04.05 not met	01/02/06
35.	24	35	The Registered Person must ensure that all young people's records are kept up to date.	01/12/05
36.	24	40	The Registered Person must ensure that each young person has a separate and confidential file, which only contains information regarding that child.	01/12/05
37.	24	17 (1)	The Registered Person must ensure by way of training and supervision that records completed by foster carers are accurate and complete. Timescale of 01.04.05 not met	01/02/06
38.	25	22(1) Sch 2	The Registered Person must ensure that the Agency keeps a register of young people placed by the Agency, which contains all information identified in Schedule 2 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002. Timescale of 01.03.05 not met	01/12/05
39.	27	44	The Registered Person must provide to the Commission for Social Care Inspection a bank reference expressing an opinion as to the agency's financial standing.	01/01/06
40.	28	44	The Registered Person must ensure that there is a robust system of financial planning and	01/01/06

			monitoring in place	
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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.	8	The Registered Person should ensure that a referral format is developed in order to ensure that relevant information is sought at the point of referral.
2.	9	Safe caring guidelines should be written, for each foster home, in consultation with the carer and everyone else in the household. A copy should be kept on file and the guidelines should be cleared with the child's social worker and are explained clearly and appropriately to the child.
3.	15	The Registered Person should ensure that written references are followed up verbally, and that a record is made of this discussion.
4.	15	The Fostering Service must ensure that all staff undertaking assessments of foster carers have received appropriate training in this area.
5.	30	The Registered Person should ensure that all Fostering Panel members receive suitable training in respect of their role and function to ensure that they can satisfactorily undertake their duties and appropriately challenge information presented to Panel.
6.	30	The Registered Person should consider training for Panel members in respect of applicants attending Panel.
7.	30	The Registered Person should ensure that social workers completing assessments for presentation to the Fostering Panel are available to attend the Panel.
8.	13	The Registered Person should ensure that a copy of a young people's Personal Educational Plan is kept on file.
9.	10	The Registered Person should ensure that a risk assessment as required by Standard 10.6 is undertaken prior to contact taking place and that this is recorded in writing and placed on file.
10.	11	The Registered Person should ensure that the views of young people, their families and placing social workers are recorded regarding all issues, which are likely to affect their daily life and future of young people.
11.	29	The Registered Person should provide foster carers with clear guidance in respect of what additional expenses they

		can claim and the procedure for doing so.
12.	20	The Registered Person should ensure that there is the opportunity for independent supervision for any staff who is related to the Registered Manager.
13.	23	The Registered Person should ensure that prospective carers have the chance to meet with experienced carers.
14.	23	The Registered Person should ensure that foster carers receive certificates of all training undertaken.
15.	24	The Registered Person should ensure that notes of a young person's review are kept on file until the full minutes of the review are received.

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