



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

London Borough of Ealing Fostering Service

**Fostering & Adoption
3rd Floor North, Town Hall Annexe
Ealing, London
W5 2BY**

Lead Inspector
Gavin
Thomas

Announced
19th October, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 9th and 17th November 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	London Borough of Ealing Fostering Service
Address	Fostering & Adoption, 3rd Floor North, Town Hall Annex, Ealing, London, W5 2BY
Telephone number	0208 825 6084
Fax number	0208 825 6359
Email address	sheikhg@ealing.gov.uk
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	London Borough of Ealing
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	Ms Ghazala Sheikh
Type of registration	
No. of places registered (if applicable)	
Category(ies) of registration, with number of places	

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

None

Date of last inspection 24th,25th,26th & 31st January 2005

Brief Description of the Service:

The fostering service of the London Borough of Ealing is located on two sites in Ealing and Acton. The service provides short - term placements, long term placements, kinship placements, a sitting service and short term breaks for children with special needs. The service consists of a Support Team, Access to Resources Team, Recruitment Team and Administration Team. All teams have separate managers who are accountable to the Operations Manager. The Operations Manager has overall responsibility for the the service. At the time of the inspection there were 15 qualified social workers, (not including the Registered Manager) and 15 unqualified social workers. There was no evidence of any significant gaps in the service during this inspection. Similarly, the recruitment and retention of foster carers with a range of skills and expertise is a continual process to ensure that the service strives to meet the needs of the children it has to foster.

SUMMARY

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

This inspection was undertaken jointly with the Commission for Social Care Inspection Service/Adoption Inspectors over three days. In addition to this, the Inspectors visited children and carers in foster homes over three evenings. The Lead Inspector also observed a Fostering Panel and a Foster Carers support meeting. Throughout the inspection, the Inspector met with various staff employed by the Fostering Service and other professionals who support the fostering service. They were, Social Workers, Assistant Social Workers, Team Managers, the Education Coordinator for Looked After Children, Psychologist, Transitional Worker, Teacher for Looked After Children and the Substance Misuse Advisor.

The Registered Manager completed a pre inspection questionnaire and a self-assessment audit, which gave a detailed account of how the Fostering Service is managed. The Fostering Service was assessed against twenty-one out of the thirty-two National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services.

This Fostering Service is well managed with robust systems in place to maximise the safety and well being of children/young people placed in foster care. The service also provides very good opportunities to train, develop and empower foster carers. This judgement is based on the overall evaluation of evidence gathered from staff, foster carers, children/young people, observations of the panel meeting, fostering support group and examination of a variety of records and documentation.

The outcomes of visits to foster carers and children/young people were overall very positive. The four foster homes visited were welcoming, homely and maintained to a very good standard. Two foster carers said they were adjusting to the new banding scheme for allowances. One foster carer did indicate that allowances were not discussed/agreed prior to the placement commencing. One foster carer made very positive comments about the support provided by the service. This comparison was given in relation to another borough where the foster carer was previously approved.

Other comments made by individual foster carers were as follows:

- The time taken for a child/young person to transition from fostering to permanency (adoption) should be much quicker.
- The time taken for pre approval assessments and training is too long.
- The Link Workers are very supportive and carry out regular visits.
- The training for foster carers is very good.
- Allowances are paid on time.

The five children/young people interviewed said they were happy and settled with their foster families. All of the children/young people looked well in appearance, appeared to be very much "at home" and spoke positively about their foster families.

Children/young people indicated that the food provided by foster carers is home made, good and healthy. Young people said they could help themselves to food and drink at any time. There were no concerns with children/young people interacting with foster carers own families. The Inspectors observed everyone interacting as one family in a positive way.

When asked about the quality of the fostering service, two young people said that their Social Workers changed too often and they hardly get to know their social worker before they change.

One foster carer expresses their views about the inconsistency with a Supported Lodgings placement. These matters were subsequently discussed with the Registered Manager.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection received completed surveys from five young people, eleven foster carers and six placing officers. Summaries of the outcomes were as follows:

Children/young people

- One young person did not like the food prepared by the foster carer.
- Two young people said they were not aware of the complaints procedure.
- One young person indicated that they wanted to live with their sibling.
- One young person indicated that they needed a wheelchair to improve their quality of life.
- One young person indicated they were not happy with the placement.
- Overall comments were positive and with the exception of one, four children/young people said they had no concerns about their foster placements.

Foster carers

- More funding should be available for NVQ training.
- Allowances and additional funding is paid on time and accurate.
- The voicemail system is frustrating and calls are not returned.
- The training programme for foster carers is "fabulous".
- A wheelchair is required for one young person to aid their mobility needs.

Placing Officers.

- One Placing Officer did express concerns about one placement. (Subsequent to this inspection, the Placing Officer confirmed that the issues given, had been dealt with).
- All other foster carers made positive remarks about the suitability of the foster placements, matching processes and positive working relationships with the fostering service.

The Registered Manager explained that with regards to the voicemail system, all calls are answered during office hours. The Registered Manager agreed to take this matter forward with the area social work teams.

The Inspector takes this opportunity in thanking everyone who contributed to this inspection.

What the service does well:

This Fostering Service is to be commended for the expertise and professional conduct demonstrated throughout the team. Examples of good work practices indicated that the service provides a range of opportunities for both children/young people and foster carers to develop positive relationships. Equally, systems in place to manage unforeseen circumstances, complaints and child protection matters were robust.

This service is managed and led by a team of experienced, competent and appropriately trained staff. The fostering service has established very good links with external professionals who provide support directly or indirectly to the children and their foster carers.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The Fostering Service has made good progress in developing training programmes for foster carers. Positive comments were received from foster carers regarding the types of training available to them.

The Fostering service has now produced a new banding system for foster carer allowances, which is more robust and incentive based. A considerable amount of time was invested in the new scheme before its launch in May 2005. This included consultation with foster carers.

The quality of staff recruitment records had improved since the previous inspection.

What they could do better:

Overall, the Fostering Service is doing very well in applying the National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations 2002. Individual comments made by Placing Officers, children/young people and foster carers via Commission for Social Care Inspection surveys or interviews were raised with the Registered Manager.

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

The fostering service had good systems in place for promoting healthy lifestyles. The fostering service works well with various professionals to maximise the availability to children/young people and their foster carers about different aspects of health and general well being.

EVIDENCE:

The initial training for prospective foster carers included guidance on meeting children's health needs. This is also included in on going training programmes. The Inspector observed healthy debates amongst foster carers about trans racial placements. This included meeting children's health needs.

Where relevant, children's health needs were clearly set out in their individual files. Foster carers spoken to confirmed that they are fully supported by the Fostering Service including Supervising Social Workers about accessing health provisions and resources.

Literature on maintaining healthy lifestyles is available to children/young people. Health topics are also promoted at special events such as "Outer Limits Day".

The Fostering Service is fully supported by professionals such as the Psychologist, Substance Misuse Coordinator, Looked After Children Nurse and Looked After Children Teachers. These professionals have an input in providing on going support and where necessary training, to promote children/young people's physical, emotional and social development.

Foster carers confirmed that they encourage and support children/young people to attend primary health appointments such as the dentist and optician.

Foster carers spoken to confirmed that the Fostering Service clearly communicates children/young people's dietary needs.

Young people may use the Drop- in centre to seek advice or guidance from trained professionals regarding health related matters.

One young person who completed a survey for the purpose of this inspection indicated that they did not like the food prepared by their foster carer.

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 & 30

The Fostering Service is to a very high standard. The service has robust and through systems in place to provide safe and caring homes for children/young people needing foster care.

The Fostering Service is to be commended for the conduct and efficiency of the foster panel.

EVIDENCE:

Recruitment checks carried out on the Registered Manager were in keeping with the criteria as set out in Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002. A valid CRB check was in place for the Registered Manager.

All foster carers are required to undergo robust assessments and preparation training prior to their applications being presented to the Fostering Panel for approval. All foster carers are issued with a handbook, which includes policies and procedures. The handbook is comprehensive and contains a wealth of information. Foster carers spoken to confirmed that their Link Worker visits them every three weeks.

Two inspectors visited four foster homes. The Inspectors spoke with five young people. The five young people all indicated that they were settled and happy

with their foster placements. Foster children were placed in a mixture of shared and single bedrooms. All young people spoken to said they were safe and treated as part of their foster family. The homes visited were judged to be secure, well kept and homely. All four homes were maintained to a high standard.

The Registered Manager explained that foster placements takes into account a child/young person's needs as much as possible. One young person said they had visited their foster carers and seen their accommodation prior to moving in.

Foster carers are provided with as much information about a child/young person when they are placed in their care. The Access to Resources Team (ART) is responsible for ensuring and monitoring ways in which information is processed and given to foster carers. The Access to Resources Team is also responsible for coordinating the matching processes. Foster carers spoken to were satisfied with the matching process and the children entrusted to their care. Foster carers gave examples of their life skills, parenting skills and family values, which they share with foster children. Foster carers were also specific about the needs of children they felt capable of offering placements to.

One foster carer was of the opinion, that the length of time taken for a child/young person to move from fostering to an adoption placement is too long.

The Inspector observed the foster carers monthly support meeting. This meeting was well planned with opportunities for foster carers to contribute to open discussion and group work on transracial placements.

Systems were in place to maximise children/young people's protection from neglect and abuse. Child protection policies and procedures were in place and made known to foster carers. In – house training is provided on child protection. Foster carers confirmed this. The foster service places an emphasis on "safe caring" and how to support children/young people who may have experienced trauma and have been the subject of a child protection investigation.

A policy on anti bullying was in place. The Registered Manager reported that there were no known concerns with regards to any of the children/young people placed in foster care being bullied.

The five young people who completed surveys and the five young people who met with the Inspectors did not give any indication that they were being bullied.

Five cases were brought to the attention of the fostering service between January 2005 and August 2005. Three cases were in relation to child protection

matters and two were in relation to standards of care. In accordance with records examined, all five cases were appropriately investigated.

The fostering service is made up of three teams plus a family link scheme. Currently, the caseloads are divided between five qualified social workers and four unqualified/assistant social workers. The Inspectors met with members of the social work team. The staff demonstrated competence and knowledge about working for the fostering service.

The quality of staff recruitment files examined had much improved since the last inspection. Recruitment checks carried out were in keeping with the criteria as set out in Schedule 1 of the Fostering Service Regulations 2002. The Registered Manager confirmed that there was a system in place for ensuring that staff CRB checks are renewed every three years via the London Borough of Ealing Personnel Department.

The Inspector observed a fostering panel. This was followed by an interview with the panel chair. The fostering panel was held in the council chambers on 19 October 2005. The panel was very well organised and conducted in a professional manner. This included the preparation of all relevant documentation required prior to the panel. Those present were:

- Panel Chair
- Panel Advisor
- Legal Advisor
- Minute Taker
- Panel Member - Vice Chair
- Panel Member - Education
- Independent Member – Foster Carer

Two panel members and one independent members had resigned. They were:

- Panel Member - Councillor
- Panel Member - Health
- Independent Member

All cases were thoroughly examined by the panel. The panel will not accept reports, which are below the required standard. The panel upholds its standards of quality and will only accept reports, which are of good quality. The panel chair said that it is rare for the Fostering Service to produce reports, which are "less than good". The panel chair is now in his fourth year. The panel chair is independent to the Fostering Service.

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, 13 & 31

Good systems were in place for valuing diversity and promoting equality. The Fostering Services, foster carers and the Education sector for Looked After Children had good protocols in place for working together to support children/young people to achieve a good education.

EVIDENCE:

The Fostering Service had procedures in place for promoting diversity and equality. Members of the staff team were from different backgrounds and cultures.

The London Borough of Ealing has an Equality and Diversity policy. The Children's Services Division monitors racist incidents and equalities standards. This includes the Fostering Service. The Team Manager gave an example of how the Fostering Service managed a situation when a young person did not want to live with a particular family.

Good practice systems were maintained by the Fostering systems for ensuring that young people's needs are met. These include:

- Resources and training for foster carers on trans racial placements.
- An assessment of need of children placed transracially/transculturally.
- Trans-racial placement policy.

Training on equality, diversity and trans racial placements was observed at the Foster Carers Support meeting.

The recruitment team explained that the London Borough of Ealing is still experiencing a shortage of foster carers. As a result, the strategies used for recruiting foster carers are monitored and reviewed regularly.

All foster children/young people spoken to, said they were happy with their placements.

A policy on promoting Education for Looked After Children was in place.

The London Borough of Ealing has a dedicated team of teachers for Looked After Children. This team works closely with the Fostering Service to ensure that children/young people in foster homes receive the appropriate support for their education. This includes educational provisions for young people who are not in full time education.

The LAC teacher and the Manager for this team confirmed that support and assistance is available to children/young people and their foster carers. This includes outreach support in foster homes. One to one educational support is available to children/young people at the Drop-In Centre.

Personal Education Plans (PEP's) are completed for Looked After Children.

Two foster carers explained to the Inspectors that they were determined and committed to ensuring that the children/young people entrusted in their care had a good education. Examples given, included the young people's academic achievements which secured their placements in college and university.

Foster carers confirmed that they attend children/young people's education reviews, school evenings and work closely with their Link Workers to ensure that children/young people have the resources to achieve a good education.

The Education Co-ordinator for Looked After Children explained the monitoring systems for children/young people's educational achievements. The London Borough of Ealing has seen good results for Looked After Children.

Where possible, the London Borough of Ealing provides work experience for Looked After Children.

The Fostering Service provides short –term breaks for children with disabilities aged 0-12 years. This service is provided in either the carers home (family link service) or the child's own home (sitting service). All referrals for this service are received from the short breaks and leisure opportunities panel. Short – term break carers are recruited, approved, trained and supported in the same

way as long-term foster carers. Sitters are employees of the London Borough of Ealing.

Very clear procedures were in place regarding the short – term break service. Children must be clinically diagnosed with a severe to profound learning disability and/or a physical disability to receive this service. Twenty- one respite days are allocated to each child per annum. Families may receive up to eight hours sitting per month.

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 & 11

Maintaining contact with parents/significant others is one of the priorities when planning the care of Looked After Children. The Fostering Service does well in achieving this. Good practice systems were in place for ensuring that children/young peoples opinions and those of their families and significant others are sought over key matters.

EVIDENCE:

A policy on promoting contact was in place. Foster carers are informed of the arrangements for a child/young person to maintain contact with parents/significant others prior to or at the point of placement. In situations where contact is a difficult matter, mutual venues are agreed with dates and times for meeting. These meetings are normally supervised by a Social Worker. Finances are included in Foster Carers allowances to meet travel costs.

Foster carers are required to co operate and support contact arrangements.

Three young people spoken to confirmed that they were supported by their foster carers to maintain contact with birth parents by phone and in person. The young people were satisfied with these arrangements.

One young person, who completed a Commission for Social Care Inspection survey, indicated that they would prefer to live with their sibling.

The Fostering Service promotes the importance of contact through a variety of ways, which are:

- Preparation training for foster carers.
- Post approval training.
- Consultation with Link Workers and Social Workers.
- Placement agreement meetings.
- Review meetings (children/young people and foster carers).

The Fostering Service had a range of systems and procedures in place for ensuring that children's opinions and those of their families and significant others are listened to. Children/young people are encouraged to complete the Looked After Children feedback form for statutory reviews, children/young people are members of the corporate parent panel, and a number of events are held throughout the year. These include the Outer Limits Day, Rising Stars Day and involvement in the Blue Print Project.

Supervising Social Workers seek the views of children about their foster placements. Examples were given of action taken as a result of listening and responding to what children/young people had to say about their placements.

Some children/young people did express dissatisfaction about the lack of visits and contact from their Social Workers. One young person informed the Inspectors that visits/meetings with their social worker are often cancelled.

Parents and significant others are consulted on decisions affecting a child/young person and the overall running of the Fostering Service via statutory reviews, meetings with social workers and where appropriate, permanency meetings.

All children/young people and foster carers are issued with a copy of the complaints procedure.

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 Fostering Service has produced a more structured and incentive-based allowance scheme for existing and new foster carers.

EVIDENCE:

The Business Support Services Team is responsible for processing all payments. Three foster carers said they received their allowances on time. One foster carer said that allowances had not been agreed prior the placement commencing. This was addressed with the Registered Manager.

A new banding system for allowances was introduced in May 2005. Foster carers were involved in the consultation processes for this new scheme. This scheme is linked to incentives. The new banding is graded bands 1, 2 and 3. All existing carers at the time of introducing the new scheme were placed into band 2. The new scheme requires foster carers to account for children/young people's allowances in a more robust way. Upon completion of the NVQ Level 3 Childcare award, carers can progress to level 3. All carers in the fee paying scheme are required to undertake 3 training courses per year. The fostering service reported that there has been good response from carers.

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, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24 & 26.

Strategic management systems and quality assurance and monitoring system were robust. As part of the Children's Service, the Fostering Service is making steady progress in the planning for forthcoming legislative changes.

EVIDENCE:

A Statement of Purpose was in place. The Statement included details as set out in standard 1.4 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services. The Statement of Purpose was last reviewed in September 2005. Elected members approved this document. Documentary evidence examined confirmed this.

All children/young people are issued with a copy of the Welcome Guide for Looked After Children in Ealing. Children/Young people are also issued with details on Health for Ealing's Looked After Children. Both documents contained a wealth of information including details on how to make a complaint, what the service sets out to do and contact details for independent advocates.

The Inspector can confirm that the fostering service's policies, procedures and practices reflect the Statement of Purpose.

The Registered Manager is also the Operations Manager for Children's Services for the London Borough of Ealing. The Registered Manager is suitability qualified and holds relevant professionally recognised Social Work and Management qualifications. The Registered Manager also has demonstrable experience in relevant social work since 1985.

A staff training programme was in place. Staff also have access to the Social Services corporate training programme. All staff are required to undergo an induction. Evidence of training undertaken is retained on individual staff files.

Staff confirmed that they receive regular one to one supervision and annual appraisals.

The Fostering Service had clear strategies in place for working with and supporting foster carers. These included:

- Opportunities for training and development.
- Foster carer support groups.
- Supervision.
- Support from specialist professionals such as LAC Teachers, Substance Misuse Worker and Psychologist.
- Out of hours support.
- Reviews.

The role of the supervising social worker was clear to both the social worker and foster carers. Foster carers confirmed that they have regular visits from the supervising social worker. Annual review reports are prepared and available to the Fostering Panel. The Panel Chair demonstrated a thorough and professional approach when examining and commenting on the contents of reports submitted the Panel.

Although communication systems were in place between the Fostering Service social work team and the Area Social Work teams (Children's Social Workers), one member of staff was of the impression that establishing more robust ways in communicating and networking between both teams is an area, which could be improved upon. The Inspector was informed that this is an objective currently being discussed for implementation within the next year.

The Fostering Service has a Training and Development Co-Coordinator who is responsible for coordinating and monitoring all training undertaken by Foster Carers. A comprehensive training programme was in place for foster carers. This included a pre approval training programme, and induction programme and a core training programme.

Foster carers were recently updated on forthcoming training events in August 2005. Foster carers are supplied with the following in support of their training:

- Details on how to make application to the Fostering Service for training requirements.
- A training profile. All Foster carers are required to keep a profile of all training undertaken.
- Application forms for the "three course" training. This training is in conjunction with the new banding scheme for allowances.
- Information on NVQ workshops.

Foster carers spoken to confirmed that they were in receipt of the most recent training programme. Training courses are held during the day and where possible, in the evenings and at weekends. Foster carers were very complimentary about the training opportunities. Two in particular, stressed that this was one of the strengths of the Fostering Service.

The London Borough of Ealing has now agreed, that if necessary, foster carers can now claim for car parking fees when attending training.

The Fostering Service uses a wide range of professionals to facilitate foster carers training including staff from the fostering service, internal trainers and external trainers.

Core training includes child protection, safe caring, health and safety and equality and diversity.

Case records examined for four children/young people were well maintained and in very good order. Lockable cabinets are provided for the storage of confidential records. A written policy on case recording was in place.

Relevant training courses are available to new and experienced foster carers on recording and life story work with children/young people.

There have been no changes to the office accommodation. The fostering service operates from two sites. The Recruitment and Assessment team and Kinship Social Worker are based in Acton Town Hall. All other teams are based at the London Borough of Ealing Town Hall Annex. For the purpose of this inspection, the office accommodation in Acton was inspected by one of the Service/Adoption Inspectors. Office space was judged to be sufficient for the numbers of staff employed. Additional meeting rooms are available to the Fostering Service when required. Public parking facilities are within walking distance of the office based at the Town Hall Annex in Ealing. The office in Acton is well served by local bus routes.

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

STAYING SAFE	
<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	3

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	3

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

No

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.				

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.		

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