

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

Child Care Bureau Ltd

**H1 Blackpole Trading Estate (East)
Blackpole Road
Worcester
WR3 8SG**

Lead Inspector
Jacqueline
Dunster

Announced
20 June 2005 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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|---------------------|---|
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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 | Child Care Bureau Ltd |
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| Telephone number | 01905 754754 |
| Fax number | 01905 754566 |
| Email address | childcarebureau@btconnect.com |
| Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable) | Child Care Bureau Ltd |
| Name of registered manager (if applicable) | Jennifer Foster |
| Type of registration | 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 7 September 2004

Brief Description of the Service:

Child Care Bureau Ltd (CCB Ltd) is a family run, private limited company operating as an independent fostering agency. Two of its directors were foster carers for a number of years. It has been operating since June 2000 and was registered in accordance with the Care Standards Act 2000 on March 4th 2004.

CCB Ltd state that their primary aim is to offer foster placements of a high standard in a stable, nurturing, safe and caring family environment for children and young people who are looked after. It offers a wide range of placements: short term, long term, task focussed, respite, pre-adoption, bridging, parent and child, leaving care and emergency. These placements are provided to children and young people from 0-18 years old. The agency also undertakes a range of fostering support services.

CCB Ltd is based in Worcester and has carers in Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Warwickshire, Staffordshire, Dudley and Walsall.

At the time of the inspection CCB Ltd supported 18 fostering households with 19 children and young people in placement.

SUMMARY

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

During this inspection the agency's policies and procedures were examined. The manager completed a self-assessment form and a pre-inspection questionnaire. Thirteen questionnaires were returned from foster caring households, four from children in placement and eleven from placing officers. Responses were received from four local authorities within which the agency has carers.

Four fostering households were visited with carers and children in placement being interviewed. A training session for carers was observed. Panel was observed and the chair of panel interviewed. Discussions were held with a two groups of carers, the social work staff at the agency, the registered manager and an independent professional supervisor. An initial placement planning meeting was also observed.

What the service does well:

CCB Ltd has developed a number of areas of strength. It has in place a strong and effective management team in the registered manager and a senior practitioner supported by independent professional supervision. Likewise, it has a committed, supportive staff team. The agency has a team of motivated and committed carers who are responding positively to the changes which have taken place in the organisation.

The social work team provide an extremely high and responsive level of support to carers and excellent training is provided for staff and carers both on a generalised and needs-led basis.

Policies and procedures have been developed to meet the needs of children and foster carers and to provide a sound basis for practice.

CCB Ltd has a strong focus on the need to improve communication with children who have learning difficulties or developmental delay.

This agency has demonstrated a positive attitude to regulation and inspection over the past year. They have taken action to complete almost all the requirements and recommendations in their last report.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Repeatedly during this inspection foster carers stated that this agency is unrecognisable from that of a year ago. A level of commitment to this particular agency is now apparent which was not the case previously.

The quality of management of the social work task has significantly improved. The social work team have benefited from this increased level of supervision, direction and support. This in turn has enabled them to provide a significantly improved level of support and professional guidance to foster carers.

The quality of Form F assessments and the functioning of the fostering panel are much improved.

Through supervision and training the staff team are better equipped to do their job.

Policies and procedures have been rewritten to better reflect the demands of legislation.

There are clearer lines of definition between the directors of the company and the social work staff team.

The agency has been clear about the task it faced. It has taken a planned and orderly approach to addressing shortfalls which has benefited practice throughout the whole organisation.

What they could do better:

There are four main areas in which the agency could improve its practice.

Full risk assessments should be carried out, where they are required by the agency's health and safety policy, to increase the level of safeguard placed around children and carers.

The agency should ensure that the Foster Placement Agreement becomes a more purposeful document by ensuring it is in place at the outset of every placement and that it is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is up-to-date and relevant to practice.

A more authoritative stance should be adopted with placing authorities to ensure that local authorities better meet their responsibilities to the agency to provide full information for placements, carry out statutory reviews and provide adequate educational provision.

CCB Ltd should better enable foster carers to provide constructive activities for older children who do not have educational placements.

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.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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Staying Safe

Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

Scoring of Standards

Statutory Requirements Identified During the Inspection

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

Throughout the fostering process, from placement to review, the health needs of children are considered. The agency places a high priority on the health needs of children placed.

EVIDENCE:

Initial referral forms address the health needs of children referred and health is part of the matching considerations undertaken. Monthly supervision, foster carers' monthly reports and the Foster Care Agreement deal directly with the health needs of the children. Foster carers report on children's health to statutory reviews. These processes ensure that the health of the child is kept on the agenda.

There is evidence in children's records of working with CAMHS and other therapeutic services and of attention to the needs of children who have difficulty communicating. The latter is addressed through the provision of specific training. Additionally, training is provided on health and safety and first aid.

One child was able to describe the work which had been done with her by her carers and the senior practitioner to ensure that her skin and hair needs were met to prevent poor health outcomes. Three of the children who answered questionnaires were able to describe the action which had been taken to ensure their good health.

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

This is an agency which places a high premium on the wellbeing and safety of children and whose practice is informed by the need to keep children safe.

The service is managed by suitable persons, the agency provides suitable foster carers and the people who work in the fostering service are suitable to work with children and young people.

The records do not adequately demonstrate that a trainee social worker is receiving direct supervision of their activities.

The fostering panel is now efficient and effective. It has significantly improved since the last inspection. It has carried out business while inquorate on two occasions. The panel could extend its quality assurance role to include periodic overview of the quality of work presented to it. The agency regards development of the panel's practice as critical.

There are three areas in which practice should be changed to increase further the safeguards for children. These include the use of full risk assessments, the regular review of Foster Placement Agreements and ensuring that local authorities provide full information at referral.

EVIDENCE:

Staff files demonstrate that the agency is ensuring that vetting requirements are being addressed. All but one of the staff are qualified social workers. The other member of staff is a trainee social worker. The agency's recruitment practices are now suitable to ensure that appropriate staff emerge from the recruitment process. The records do not verify that the trainee social worker receives a level of supervision commensurate with their current unqualified status. Where this higher degree of scrutiny is taking place it is not currently recorded.

The foster homes visited during the inspection were comfortable and welcoming. They were well looked after and provided sufficient space for the needs of the children placed in them. The agency carries out thorough health and safety checks at least annually and the carers were all aware of their role in ensuring the health and safety of the children. They undertake appropriate training and work within supervision in this area. Unannounced visits are also undertaken at least annually. Placing officers' questionnaires are very positive about the work the foster carers do with children placed.

The agency has in place a very thorough referral document which enables good matches of children's needs to carers' skills. The foster placement agreement is a very useful document for addressing the needs of and plans for a placement. Correspondence and the views of carers indicate that the agency does not always pursue the placing authority for full information as rigorously as may be necessary to ensure that children are not placed inappropriately. Three of the carers' questionnaires raise concerns about the adequacy of information from the local authority at the outset of and during placement.

There are good policies and procedures in place on child protection and safe caring. Staff and carers are aware of the procedures for dealing with allegations, complaints and absconding. Each household has in place a safe caring policy. This is amended where necessary in response to the particular needs of a child to be placed. This is achieved through the matching process. Training and supervision addresses the demands of safeguarding the welfare of children.

The agency carries out a basic risk assessment within the referral format. The agency has in place a health and safety policy which states that "Specific risk assessments will need to be undertaken where a child self harms or is a known absconder or is known or is likely to place themselves or others at risk in some way". In two of the cases which were case tracked these specific risk assessments have not been undertaken even though they are necessary. Following discussions, the agency accepted that risk assessments should be

carried out in such cases to increase the safeguards for children and others. The agency has now produced a risk assessment document which should offer the opportunity to properly analyse risk and to review it regularly.

The agency has in place a very comprehensive Foster Placement Agreement for placements. Where these agreements have been used they provide a full initial assessment of the needs of the placement. The records indicate that on one occasion an old agreement has been updated for a placement and that the agreements are not regularly reviewed. The registered manager has agreed to put in place a regular system of review to ensure the agreements are relevant and useful for practice.

The fostering panel minutes and interviews with the registered manager and the chair of the panel demonstrate that the fostering panel is now able to demand that reviews and Form Fs which are presented should be of a sufficiently high standard. The panel undertakes a case-by-case quality control of material presented to them. Periodic overview of quality and practice is not undertaken.

The panel chair and members of panel have undertaken appropriate training for their role. This was reflected in the rigour with which the panel tested a complicated annual review which was presented to them. The panel was well managed and applied itself to its tasks. At the same time it ensured that foster carers felt relaxed and respected throughout proceedings.

The minutes of the panel for the last year indicate that on two occasions the panel carried out business while not being quorate. The demands of quoracy have been explained to the chair of panel who has indicated that the panel will observe these rules fully in future.

The agency has commissioned the British Association of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) to undertake examination and consultation on the agency's fostering panel with the aim of improving the panel still further.

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

CCB Ltd demonstrates a positive and proactive attitude to diversity particularly in relation to culture and disability.

Many children placed with the agency's foster carers have attained educational goals beyond initial expectations. Foster carers have been largely responsible for enabling this.

The outcomes for some older young people are limited by lack of educational provision. The agency does not take a sufficiently proactive role in ensuring that foster carers are able to offer constructive activity for these young people or in placing expectations on local authorities to ensure educational provision for the children it places.

EVIDENCE:

Referral documents consider gaps in the matching of children to carers and how these are to be addressed. Files, discussion with social workers, foster carers and a child in placement evidence the very active role the agency is taking in ensuring that a child's cultural and identity needs are met despite her placement within a white household. The outcomes for this child in terms of confidence, education and health clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of the agency's practices.

The agency provides training which focuses on the communication needs of children with disability or developmental delay. There is a strong knowledge base on disability within the staff team. One fostering household has been

provided with training specifically addressing the needs of the children with learning disabilities placed with them. Carers frequently reported that the agency was responsive to their needs in developing skills and knowledge in working with children with learning disability.

Discussion with carers and children, reading of files, foster panel minutes of annual reviews and the record of educational achievement evidence good work in ensuring positive educational outcomes for children. Foster carers have undertaken onerous commitments to ensure attendance and good relations with schools.

Two older children are not in any form of education due largely to the inactivity of their placing authorities. Records indicate that the agency does not impress firmly enough on the placing authorities at the outset of placement that one of the requirements of sustaining the placement is that educational provision is established for children and that they are not willing to accept that children simply remain unplaced in education for very long periods of time. The agency's policies do not place clear expectations on foster carers of their responsibility to provide constructive activity for children during school hours.

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

Contact is regarded as important by staff and foster carers with the agency strongly promoting contact arrangements for children and young people.

The fostering agency has developed its consultative practices over the last year. The manager places a high regard on the importance of consulting foster carers and children. This could be enhanced through the process of annual reviews for carers.

EVIDENCE:

Files and meetings with foster carers show the efforts foster carers make to promote contact even where it is difficult or time consuming. In a number of cases they have gone beyond that demanded of them. Children's questionnaires indicate that they are being enabled to "enjoy" contact.

The requirements for contact are considered at the referral and matching stage. The Foster Placement Agreement includes arrangements for contact although it is not reviewed. Foster carers are supervised in the contact task by their supervising social worker. It is discussed at each supervision and support session. Evidence was seen of the foster carers' assessment of contact being fed back to the children's social workers.

Children's guides are provided to each child by the agency. They are age appropriate. Foster carers and staff have undertaken training in communicating with children who have communication deficits. Supervising social workers meet foster and birth children during their visits to foster homes. All the questionnaires returned by children indicate that they are consulted by foster carers and that consultation leads to action.

The agency carries out regular consultation exercises with foster carers and children placed. The results of these exercises are analysed and inform changes to practice. Foster carers are consulted after training sessions and panel. Again their responses have led to changes in practice.

The fostering panel do not yet seek formal views from foster and birth children for annual reviews. The chair of panel indicated that this was something they would begin to do.

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) 14, 29

The agency places value on developing the life skills of young people preparing for adulthood. The foster carers are clear about their role in the process and pursue it actively.

The agency ensures that payments to carers are accurate and timely.

EVIDENCE:

Case tracking, interviews with foster carers, children and staff evidence that young people are being provided with guidance in developing the skills they will need for independent living.

The agency has in place very good guidance on leaving care requirements for foster carers.

Leaving care training is provided for foster carers. As the last presentation was evaluated by the carers as not meeting their needs the agency ensured that additional work was undertaken in supervision to enable foster carers to further develop their knowledge and skills in this area. The agency has identified alternative training for the future.

The Foster Placement Agreement places a responsibility on the foster carer to prepare young people for adulthood.

Foster carer questionnaires and review of agency and carer files reveal no concerns about financial provisions for 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) 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27,

This agency has a clear statement of purpose which reflects its ethos and practices. It is managed effectively, in a way which promotes good practice by social workers and foster carers. The progress of the agency in the last year has largely resulted from the manager's effective leadership.

The agency performs very strongly in training, support for carers, management, organisation, adequacy of the staff team and employment

practices. It has improved its monitoring processes but there is still room for further development.

Generally records are adequate but there are a few areas which can be further improved to meet all the details of fostering regulations.

EVIDENCE:

There is a clear statement of purpose which covers all the matters which are required by regulations. There are age appropriate children's guides which enable children to understand the functions of the organisation.

The registered manager of the agency has an NVQ Level 4 in management as well as a Diploma in Social Work. She recently received a commendation for her commitment to professional development from the college at which she was studying. She was registered by the Commission for Social Care Inspection on 24th March 2005. The manager receives supervision from an independent, professional supervisor. Staff and carers both indicate that they find the manager to be capable, knowledgeable and supportive.

The staff files and agency policies evidence a sufficient level of staff numbers and experience and that the agency operates fair and competent employment practices. The agency does not have in place a written contingency plan for dealing with staff shortages.

The functions of monitoring within this organisation have extended considerably from the last inspection. E.g. Foster carers feed back views on training. These are evaluated and the results acted upon. The manager does not presently carry out full longitudinal evaluation of all monitoring results to ensure that all areas are evaluated to aid the improvement of practice. The agency now has in place a very good model for gathering and analysing information which can be applied across all monitoring activity.

There is now a clearer delineation within this company between the roles of the directors and the social work staff with the former ensuring that they do not become involved in the social work tasks of the agency. There is a conflicts of interest policy in place to which staff and carers are required to adhere. The chair of panel handed over to the vice chair due to a declared conflict of interest concerning some carers who were to be reviewed. She left the room and took no part in the assessment. There is not a system in place to evidence that all staff have agreed to the policy. Staff and carers are able to demonstrate knowledge of the lines of accountability within the organisation.

A senior practitioner has been appointed who is able to act in place of the manager in her absence. In doing so she also has access to independent

supervision. Interviews with this supervisor and staff indicated that supervision throughout the organisation is regular, relevant and supportive.

The agency excels in the provision of training for staff and carers. During the past year the training programme has included relevant, purposeful training on a large number of practice areas. Gaps in knowledge and experience lead to provision of specific needs-led training where it has not already been provided for in the general training programme. Training was observed and was seen to be appropriate to the needs of the carers. Records indicate that on one occasion inappropriate language was used by a carer in training. This was thoroughly addressed through supervision evidencing the agency's intention to provide training in an anti-discriminatory environment.

Policies, procedures, interviews with staff and carers and observation demonstrate that the staff are organised effectively and efficiently. Form Fs were examined and showed a great improvement in standard from the previous inspection. All staff have been trained by BAAF in the completion of assessments of prospective foster carers.

Foster carers are clear that they receive a very high level of support from this agency in crisis and through the structures of formal planned supervision and support. Supervision is used to work on areas of weakness as well as proforma matters making it a purposeful activity which contributes to better outcomes for children. There is not a clear strategy in place for working with and supporting carers which includes all the requirements of fostering standard 21.2. One foster carer stated "They are very supportive at all times and we feel able to discuss any concerns we might have". This sentiment is reflected in all the questionnaires which were returned.

Children's records indicate that the placing authority does not always make full disclosure of relevant information for referral. This has been addressed earlier in the report. The carers were seen to be carrying out life story work with foster children and this is supported by the agency through training and supervision.

There are a number of small changes which are necessary to recording to ensure that it fully complies with regulations. The children's register and staff register do not fully comply with Schedule 2(1) and 2(2). The foster carers are retaining a copy of daily recordings at the conclusion of placement rather than returning them with all the other children's records. The records of each placement with foster carers are not always completed to comply fully with Regulation 30(3)(a).

The premises which are used as offices by the agency are entirely suitable for their needs.

There are clear financial procedures and a crisis management policy is in place which prioritises the welfare of children in addressing financial crisis.

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 | 2 |
| 9 | 2 |
| 15 | 2 |
| 30 | 2 |

| ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Standard No</i> | <i>Score</i> |
| 7 | 3 |
| 13 | 2 |
| 31 | N/A |

| 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 | 3 |
| 29 | 3 |

| MANAGEMENT | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| <i>Standard No</i> | <i>Score</i> |
| 1 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 2 |
| 5 | 3 |
| 16 | 3 |
| 17 | 3 |
| 18 | 3 |
| 19 | 3 |
| 20 | 3 |
| 21 | 3 |
| 22 | 4 |
| 23 | 4 |
| 24 | 2 |
| 25 | 3 |
| 26 | 4 |
| 27 | 3 |
| 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. | 15 | 20(3)(b) | Records must be kept which demonstrate direct supervision of a trainee social worker in their task | Immediate |
| 2. | 30 | 25(1) | The fostering panel must not conduct business while it is inquorate | Immediate |
| 3. | 8 | 11 | Full risk assessments must be carried out in accordance with the agency's health and safety policy | Immediate |
| 4. | 8 | 34(3) | Foster Placement Agreements must be put in place for every individual placement | Immediate |
| 5. | 30(5) | 26 | The panel must regularly evaluate matters within this regulation | 31 st January 2006 |
| 6. | 9 | 17(3) | The agency must establish clear expectation of placing authorities to ensure foster carers have all necessary information before a child is placed | Immediate |
| 7. | 13 | 16(2) | The agency must ensure that foster carers are assisted in meeting the educational needs of children placed with them | Immediate |
| 8. | 4 | 42 | Regular evaluation of monitored matters must be undertaken. | 31 st January 2006 |
| 9. | 24 | 22 SCH 2(1) | Registers of children and staff must fully comply with these | 30 th September |

| | | | | |
|-----|----|----------|---|-----------|
| | | and (2) | schedules. | 2005 |
| 10. | 24 | 40(5) | All recordings which foster carers have made in relation to children placed with them must be returned to the agency at the conclusion of the placement | Immediate |
| 11. | 24 | 30(3)(a) | Records of placements with foster carers must meet this regulation | Immediate |

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. | 4 | The agency should ensure that acceptance by staff of the conflicts of interest policy is documented |
| 2. | 8 | Foster Placement agreements should be subjected to regular review |
| 3. | 17 | A recruitment strategy should be put in place and effected which aims to increase the diversity of foster carers working for the agency |
| 4. | 11 | The carers' reviews presented to panel should include the views of birth and foster children |
| 5. | 21 | The fostering service should develop a strategy for working with carers which includes all the matters in this standard |
| 6. | 17 | The agency should draw up a contingency plan which outlines how shortfalls in staffing levels are to be addressed |
| 7. | 24(2) | A written policy should be drawn up which establishes the purpose, format and contents of files |

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