



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

Fostering Services

Staffordshire Social Services Fostering Service

Walton Building
PO Box 11
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Stafford
Staffordshire
ST16 2LH

28 February 2005

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Launched in April 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is the single inspectorate for social care in England.

The Commission combines the work formerly done by the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI), the SSI/Audit Commission Joint Review Team and the National Care Standards Commission.

The role of CSCI is to:

- Promote improvement in social care
- Inspect all social care - for adults and children - in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Publish annual reports to Parliament on the performance of social care and on the state of the social care market
- Inspect and assess 'Value for Money' of council social services
- Hold performance statistics on social care
- Publish the 'star ratings' for council social services
- Register and inspect services against national standards
- Host the Children's Rights Director role.

Inspection Methods & Findings

SECTION B of this report summarises key findings and evidence from this inspection. The following 4-point scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The 4-point scale ranges from:

- 4 - Standard Exceeded (Commendable)
- 3 - Standard Met (No Shortfalls)
- 2 - Standard Almost Met (Minor Shortfalls)
- 1 - Standard Not Met (Major Shortfalls)

'O' or blank in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

'9' in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not applicable.

'X' is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

FOSTERING SERVICE INFORMATION

Local Authority Fostering Service?

YES

Name of Authority

Staffordshire Social Services Fostering Service

Address

Peel Building, St Chad`s Place, Stafford, Staffordshire,
ST16 2LR

Local Authority Manager

Mrs Marian Richards

Tel No:

01785 277088

Address

Peel Building, St Chad`s Place, Stafford, Staffordshire,
ST16 2LR

Fax No:

Email Address

Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)

NO

Name of Agency

Tel No

Address

Fax No

Email Address

Registered Number of IFA

Name of Registered Provider

Name of Registered Manager (if applicable)

Date of first registration

Date of latest registration certificate

Registration Conditions Apply ?

NO

Date of last inspection

15/09/03

Date of Inspection Visit		28th February 2005	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am	
Name of Inspector	1	Sarah Moore	148259
Name of Inspector	2	Elizabeth Taylor	
Name of Inspector	3		
Name of Inspector	4		
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Ms Marian Richards	

Introduction to Report and Inspection
Inspection visits
Description of Fostering Service

Part A: Summary of Inspection Findings
Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State
Implementation of Statutory Requirements from last Inspection
Statutory Requirements from this Inspection
Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection

Part B: Inspection Methods & Findings
(National Minimum Standards For Fostering Services)

- 1. Statement of purpose**
- 2. Fitness to carry on or manage a fostering service**
- 3. Management of the fostering service**
- 4. Securing and promoting welfare**
- 5. Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers**
- 6. Records**
- 7. Fitness of premises**
- 8. Financial requirements**
- 9. Fostering panels**
- 10. Short-term breaks**
- 11. Family and friend carers**

Part C: Lay Assessor's Summary (where applicable)

Part D: Provider's Response

- D.1. Provider's comments**
- D.2. Action Plan**
- D.3. Provider's agreement**

INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Independent and local authority fostering services which fall within the jurisdiction of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) are subject to inspection, to establish if the service is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and the requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000, the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and the Children Act 1989 as amended.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Staffordshire Social Services Fostering Service. The inspection findings relate to the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services published by the Secretary of State under sections 23 and 49 of the Care Standards Act 2000, for independent and local authority fostering services respectively.

The Fostering Services Regulations 2002 are secondary legislation, with which a service provider must comply. Service providers are expected to comply fully with the National Minimum Standards. The National Minimum standards will form the basis for judgements by the CSCI in relation to independent fostering agencies regarding registration, the imposition and variation of registration conditions and any enforcement action, and in relation to local authority fostering services regarding notices to the local authority and reports to the Secretary of State under section 47 of the Care Standards Act 2000. The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

- Inspection methods used
- Key findings and evidence
- Overall ratings in relation to the standards
- Compliance with the Regulations
- Notifications to the Local Authority and Reports to the Secretary of State
- Required actions on the part of the provider
- Recommended good practice
- Summary of the findings
- Report of the Lay Assessor (where relevant)
- Providers response and proposed action plan to address findings

This report is a public document.

INSPECTION VISITS

Inspections will be undertaken in line with the agreed regulatory framework with additional visits as required. This is in accordance with the provisions of the Care Standards Act 2000. The following inspection methods have been used in the production of this report. The report represents the inspector's findings from the evidence found at the specified inspection dates.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

Staffordshire County Council provide a fostering service as part of the range of social services provision for the county. The fostering service provides carers from all parts of the county and they take placements from within the same remit. The head office for the department is in Stafford and this is where the manager responsible for the service is based. The fostering service is provided by four teams. One based at Madford House in Stafford is responsible for the recruitment, training and review of foster carers and the development of foster carer support groups. The same team recruits and trains prospective adopters. Two other teams have a mainly geographical split between north and south Staffordshire. They are based in Lichfield, which has a specific interest in Link care and Uttoxeter, with specific interest in Remand fostering. They undertake assessment, supervision and support of foster carers

Staffordshire's fostering service offers a range of different types of fostering; Task Centred. Long Term, Link, REACH, Remand and Family and Friends Carers. REACH is a developing service which it intended to provide skilled foster carers able to meet the needs of some young people presently placed in external residential placements. Staffordshire also contract services from NCH for the provision of a specialist respite service for children and young people. Staffordshire has developed various support systems including CAMHS which focuses on mental health issues for young people, SUSTAIN which works with looked after children whose foster placements are under stress and CARS which provides advocacy and support to looked after children. There is an Out of Hours support system and regular foster carer's groups which meet at established locations across the county. A recent development is a weekend 'phone support line staffed by experienced foster carers.

Staffordshire provides a wide range of services across a wide geographical area. The approach appears open and innovative, including the use of "Reggie" a converted bus for recruitment and training. There is a sound attempt to address the needs of carers and to provide quality placements for the children and young people who need them.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

Inspector's Summary

(This is an overview of the inspector's findings, which includes good practice, quality issues, areas to be addressed or developed and any other concerns.)

This was a very positive inspection during which the inspectors found high morale and an appreciation of the fostering service amongst both staff and carers. The files read were well maintained and good use was made of the LAC paperwork system. The council has clearly invested substantially in the fostering service and there were many examples of innovative practise, for which all concerned deserve congratulations.

In the light of the good outcomes demonstrated in the previous inspection, the inspectors agreed with the fostering service manager to focus primarily on the Key Standards for fostering, while also reviewing the requirements of the previous inspection report. In addition, the training programme for carers was inspected as the fostering service consider this an area of particular strength.

During the inspection six foster homes were visited, the associated files were reviewed and the family placement social workers interviewed. In addition, the inspectors met with a group of family placement staff, a group of foster carers, and a group of young people. Interviews were also held with key staff, including administrative staff, the chair of the fostering panel and the manager.

The inspectors would like to thank all staff, carers and young people for their help with the inspection process. Questionnaires were returned by 38 young people and 29 foster carers, and the feedback from these questionnaires has been included in the report.

Statement of purpose (Standard 1)

This 1 standard was not met.

Two requirements from the last inspection, to amend the Statement of Purpose and to update the policies and procedures, remain outstanding. There is also a recommendation from that inspection that the service provide a range of handbooks for children of different ages and abilities and this, too, remains outstanding.

Fitness to provide or manage a fostering service (Standards 2 & 3)

1 of the 2 standards was met. 1 of the standards was not inspected.

The manager of the service, and the Child Care Manager who deputises for the manager, are both suitable people with extensive experience and relevant qualifications. Checks and references had been obtained and recorded.

Management of the fostering service (Standards 4 & 5)

These 2 standards were not inspected.

Securing and promoting welfare (Standards 6 – 14)

6 of the 8 standards were met; of these 1 was exceeded. 3 standards were not met due to a minor shortfall.

The evidence of this inspection was that the fostering service provides good quality care for the young people in foster homes. The feedback from each young person in their questionnaire was overwhelmingly positive about the foster carers with whom they were living. The service was seen to be proactive in providing literature and toys for all carers to promote an understanding of diversity in our society, and is considered to have exceeded the standard in this respect. The weakest area was seen to be the matching of children and carers, and there is concern that carers are too often asked to care for children outside their approval criteria.

Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers (Standards 15 – 23)

3 of the 9 standards were met; of these 1 was exceeded. 4 of the standards were not inspected. 2 standards were not met due to a minor shortfall.

The quality of support given to both staff and carers was reported to be good, and morale in both groups was good. The training programme for carers is well developed and offers a range of training opportunities, and a choice of venue. The recruitment processes are generally soundly based and demonstrated some examples of very good practice, but it is important that references are followed up verbally, as required after the last inspection. The supervision of foster carers is well established but needs to take place at the required intervals. There is a need for all carers to have a Foster Care Agreement that conforms with the regulations.

Records (Standards 24 & 25)

1 of the 2 standards was met. 1 of the standards was not inspected.

The children's records were found to be well maintained and to contain useful and relevant information.

Fitness of premises for use as fostering service (Standard 26)

This standard was not inspected.

Financial requirements (Standards 27 – 29)

These 3 standards were not inspected.

Fostering panels (Standard 30)

This standard was not met due to a minor shortfall.

The service has an appropriately constituted fostering panel which was observed to be carrying out its functions with knowledge and rigour. There is a need for an expansion of the panel policies and procedures, and foster carers must receive a formal notification when an exemption to the usual fostering limit is granted

Short-term breaks (Standard 31)

This standard was met.

The arrangements for short term breaks were found to be operating well and working within the fostering standards and regulations, while recognising the special nature of this form of

fostering.

Family and friends as carers (Standard 32)

This standard was not met.

Although this standard has not yet been met, due to the difficulty in recruiting staff, a dedicated team has been set up to provide support and supervision for these carers on a par with other carers, and considerable progress has been made since the last inspection, for which the service is commended.

Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State

(Local Authority Fostering Services Only)

The following statutory Reports or Notifications are to be made under the Care Standards Act as a result of the findings of this inspection:

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(3) of the Care Standards Act 2000 that the Commission considers the Local Authority's fostering service satisfies the regulatory requirements:

NO

Notice to the Local Authority under section 47(5) of the Care Standards Act 2000 of failure(s) to satisfy regulatory requirements in their fostering service which are not substantial, and specifying the action the Commission considers the Authority should take to remedy the failure(s), informing the Secretary of State of that Notice:

NO

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(4)(a) of the Care Standards Act of a failure by a Local Authority fostering service to satisfy regulatory requirements which is not considered substantial:

NO

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(1) of the Care Standards Act 2000 of substantial failure to satisfy regulatory requirements by a Local Authority fostering service:

NO

The grounds for the above Report or Notice are:

Implementation of Statutory Requirements from Last Inspection

Requirements from last Inspection visit fully actioned?

NO

If No please list below

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Identified below are areas not addressed from the last inspection report which indicate a non-compliance with the Care Standards Act 2000 and Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

No.	Regulation	Standard	Required actions	

Action is being taken by the Commission for Social Care Inspection to monitor compliance with the above requirements.

COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION (IF APPLICABLE)

(Registered Independent Fostering Agencies only)

Providers and managers of registered independent fostering agencies must comply with statutory conditions of their registration. The conditions applying to this registration are listed below, with the inspector's assessment of compliance from the evidence at the time of this inspection.

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Lead Inspector Sarah Moore

Signature *Sarah Moore*

Second Inspector Elizabeth Taylor

Signature *Elizabeth Taylor*

Regulation Manager George Plant

Signature *George Plant*

Date 29 April 2005

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS IDENTIFIED DURING THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The appropriate Officer of the Local Authority or the Registered Person (as applicable) is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how requirements are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Identified below are areas addressed in the main body of the report which indicate non-compliance with the Care Standards Act 2000, the Children Act 1989, the Fostering Services Regulations 2002, or the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services. The Authority or Registered Person(s) is/are required to comply within the given time scales in order to comply with the Regulatory Requirements for fostering services.

No.	Regulation	Standard *	Requirement	
1	3(5)	FS1	The Policies and Procedures are up-dated in line with the Fostering Services Standards and Regulations (Timescale of 25.8.04 not met)	Immediate
2	3(1)	FS1	The current Statement of Purpose must be amended to comply with the areas specified in NMS1.4 (Timescale of 8.3.04 not met)	Immediate
3	11(a)	FS6	The service must develop guidelines for carers on their health and safety responsibilities and support this with training.	3 months
4	33(b)	FS8	Children and young people must be placed with carers who are approved to meet their range of needs.	3 months
5	16(5)	FS14	Clear evidence should be consistently in place on young people's files of Pathway Planning. (Timescale of 25.3.04 not met)	Immediate
6	20	FS15	Action is taken to ensure that there is compliance with Schedule 1 in terms of information sought and recorded on staff and carers, including photographs on file and telephone contact with referees (Timescale of 8.3.04 not met)	Immediate
7	17(1)	FS22	All foster carers must receive supervision at the agreed frequency.	3 months

8	28(5)(b)	FS22	All foster carer agreements must comply fully with Schedule 5 of the Fostering Service Regulations 2002 (Timescale of 26.5.04 not met)	Immediate
9	17(1)	FS22	The foster carer handbook must be updated and must cover all the required areas.	3 months
10	Children Act 1989 63(12) & Schedule 7	FS30	Where an exemption to the usual fostering limit is granted, the foster carer must be issued with a notice detailing the agreement.	1 month
11	17	FS32	All the Standards need to be reflected in the service provided for family and friends carers. (Timescale of 25.8.04 not met)	Immediate

GOOD PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS INSPECTION

Identified below are areas addressed in the main body of the report which relate to the National Minimum Standards and are seen as good practice issues which should be considered for implementation by the Authority or Registered Person(s).

No.	Refer to Standard *	Recommendation Action
1	FS1	Consideration is given to the provision of a variety of Handbooks for children and young people, which are accessible and relevant for differing ages and abilities.
2	FS4	Foster carers should be made aware of their responsibility to declare any possible conflict of interest.
3	FS8	The foster care agreement should contain specific reference to elements of matching that were taken into consideration in agreeing the placement, and identify areas where additional support is needed to compensate for any gaps in the match.
4	FS9	Safe caring guidelines should be developed for each household as set out in FS9.3
5	FS10	Clear details of contact arrangements should be obtained as quickly as possible and set out in writing to the foster carer.
6	FS12	Carers should be given full medical information regarding the young people in their care.
7	FS12	The arrangements for consent to medical treatment should be clearly stated, and this should be formally delegated to the foster carer wherever appropriate.

8	FS15	A memo should be placed on staff and carer files regarding CRB checks completed, with the date and reference number, and whether or not the check was enhanced, signed by someone with appropriate authority.
9	FS22	The record of supervision sessions should clearly state the date of the session.
10	FS30	The policies and procedures of the Fostering Panel must cover decision making when panel members are not in agreement, and the requirements regarding the suitability of panel members.

* Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix e.g FS10 refers to Standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS**

The following inspection methods have been used in the production of this report

Number of Inspector days spent	16
Survey of placing authorities	YES
Foster carer survey	YES
Foster children survey	YES
Checks with other organisations and Individuals	NO
• Directors of Social services	NO
• Child protection officer	NO
• Specialist advisor (s)	NO
• Local Foster Care Association	NO
Tracking Individual welfare arrangements	YES
• Interview with children	YES
• Interview with foster carers	YES
• Interview with agency staff	YES
• Contact with parents	NO
• Contact with supervising social workers	YES
• Examination of files	YES
Individual interview with manager	YES
Information from provider	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group discussion with staff	YES
Interview with panel chair	YES
Observation of foster carer training	NO
Observation of foster panel	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	YES
Date of Inspection	07/03/05
Time of Inspection	09.30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	126

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the CSCI assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards have been met. The following scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The scale ranges from:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 4 - Standard Exceeded | (Commendable) |
| 3 - Standard Met | (No Shortfalls) |
| 2 - Standard Almost Met | (Minor Shortfalls) |
| 1 - Standard Not Met | (Major Shortfalls) |

"0" in the "Standard met?" box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

"9" in the "Standard met?" box denotes standard not applicable.

"X" is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

Statement of Purpose

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- There is clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and the fostering service ensures that they meet those aims and objectives.

Standard 1 (1.1 - 1.6)

There is a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and of what facilities and services they provide.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

It was acknowledged by the fostering service that the Statement of Purpose had not yet been amended as required following the previous inspection, and that the Policies and Procedures had not yet been updated. The two requirements from the previous inspection therefore remain in place and are matters for immediate attention.

Fitness to Carry On or Manage a Fostering Service

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The fostering service is provided and managed by those with the appropriate skills and experience to do so efficiently and effectively and by those who are suitable to work with children.

Standard 2 (2.1 - 2.4)

The people involved in carrying on and managing the fostering service possess the necessary business and management skills and financial expertise to manage the work efficiently and effectively and have the necessary knowledge and experience of childcare and fostering to do so in a professional manner.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	0
This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.		

Standard 3 (3.1 - 3.4)

Any persons carrying on or managing the fostering service are suitable people to run a business concerned with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The manager of the fostering service has been in post since 1997. She is professionally qualified and holds a Masters Degree in Social Work. In addition, she has a Diploma in Management Studies, which is recognised as an appropriate qualification, and has recently completed leadership training. A CRB check was obtained in October 2003, and the local authority has a system to ensure renewal of these checks every three years. The relatively recently appointed Child Care Manager holds NVQ4 in Management, and deputises for the manager in her absence.		

Management of the Fostering Service

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The fostering service is managed ethically and efficiently, delivering a good quality foster care service and avoiding confusion and conflicts of role.

Standard 4 (4.1 – 4.5)

There are clear procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the fostering service and ensuring quality performance.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.

It was noted, however, that a recommendation from the last inspection to ensure that foster carers are informed of their responsibility to declare any possible conflict of interests had not been met, and that recommendation is therefore repeated.

Number of statutory notifications made to CSCI in last 12 months:

Death of a child placed with foster parents.

X

Referral to Secretary of State of a person working for the service as unsuitable to work with children.

X

Serious illness or accident of a child.

X

Outbreak of serious infectious disease at a foster home.

X

Actual or suspected involvement of a child in prostitution.

X

Serious incident relating to a foster child involving calling the police to a foster home.

X

Serious complaint about a foster parent.

X

Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.

X

Number of complaints made to CSCI about the agency in the past 12 months:

0

Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:

X

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.4)

The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.

Securing and Promoting Welfare

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The fostering service promotes and safeguards the child/young person's physical, mental and emotional welfare.

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.9)

The fostering service makes available foster carers who provide a safe, healthy and nurturing environment.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

All foster homes visited provided warm, welcoming and well maintained environments for the children placed. The fostering service provides carers with all the safety equipment necessary for the age group of children fostered and this is replaced as needed.

A Health and safety assessment is done at the time of approval, plus an assessment of pets. The inspector noted that the annual review of carers includes any safety issues that have arisen since the last review, including fire escape plan and smoke detectors. The safety checklist is reviewed on an annual basis in preparation for the review and is filed in the carer's portfolio. Any issues which arise are reported to the annual review.

The foster carers handbook contains a page on Health & Safety, which covers standard health care, and makes reference to Safe Caring, but does not provide any guidelines for healthy and safety issues in the foster home. There is no health and safety training in the post-approval training programme for carers, and there is very little in the fostering preparation course. The service must develop guidelines for carers on their health and safety responsibilities, and support this with training.

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)

The fostering service ensures that children and young people, and their families, are provided with foster care services which value diversity and promote equality.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

While none of the children spoken to during the inspection were from a minority ethnic group, discussion with various staff members provided information about specialist projects and services which were in place to meet their needs. For example, a small number of staff and carers had been recruited within the Burton area to match with the needs of the Asian community. A specialist phone help line had also been established for their use.

Practical advice was said to be provided to carers about religious places, nursery provision and so on. Education for carers, to raise awareness and understanding of the need to preserve a child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background, was being promoted via the use of literature and toys provided by the department.

Senior managers spoke about having successfully sought placements outside Staffordshire where asylum seeking young people could be looked after within an established community of their own ethnic background.

One young person informed the inspectors in her questionnaire that the carers provide her

with transport to her church twice a week and that they arranged her christening.

There was evidence carers were encouraging and facilitating each child's access to various leisure and recreational activities in accordance with their interests and hobbies.

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.7)

Local authority fostering services, and voluntary agencies placing children in their own right, ensure that each child or young person placed in foster care is carefully matched with a carer capable of meeting her/his assessed needs. For agencies providing foster carers to local authorities, those agencies ensure that they offer carers only if they represent appropriate matches for a child for whom a local authority is seeking a carer.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	2
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There was evidence that Staffordshire does not always have the choice of foster placements which would provide good matches in every case, but the inspectors will look to see what elements of matching have been taken into consideration in each placement, and what actions have been taken to meet any shortcomings.

At the end of the referral form in use at the time of the inspection was a sheet with summary decisions including matching. This covers placement with siblings, continuity of education, whether health and disability needs are met, whether contact is possible, whether ethnic, cultural and religious needs are met and the distance between the placement and home. This does not, therefore, include any reference to the experience or the knowledge of the carer in relation to the needs of the child. A new referral form had been developed, but this did not include any details of the matching of the child with the carer.

Written foster placement agreements are recorded on LAC paperwork, and do not contain specific reference to elements of matching which were taken into consideration in making the placement, as required by this standard.

The inspectors spoke to a number of carers who expressed satisfaction with the match between their skills and the children placed, even where the placement was outside their approval. One carer had a child placed five years older than their approved age range but explained to inspectors that she was perfectly happy to care for an older child, but simply preferred to foster toddlers.

However, there were other examples of difficulties in this area. The first review of a new carer presented to panel on 16 February had noted the carer had had placements outside their approved age range and that they felt they had been let down by Family Placement Duty who had not given them accurate information about young people. They were commended for standing their ground when offered inappropriate placements.

Another new carer had been asked to take the placements of children with complex medical needs which she felt unable to manage. One carer who had refused some unsuitable placements told the inspectors that, having done so, she then felt very guilty. While the pressure on local authorities is acknowledged, it is vitally important that carers are not asked

to take placements outside their approval range, and it is especially important that newly approved carers are not put in this situation.

In response to the questionnaire some 40% of carers indicated that they were approved to take emergency placements, but over 80% stated that they had actually been asked to take placements in an emergency.

The requirement of the last inspection therefore remains in place.

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)

The fostering service protects each child or young person from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

No child protection concerns were identified during the inspection. One carer was noted to have expressed an interest in caring for a young person suspected of having suffered from sexual abuse but considered that they required some training in this area. There was no evidence that this had been followed up by the family placement social worker. Child protection and other related training was seen to be made available to carers on a regular basis, as part of the annual training programme. All carers commented positively on the training in respect of 'Safe Care', recognising that it was intended to support them as well as the young people. Carers spoken to were clear about the permissible forms of punishments they could administer, as well as those they could not.

Managers said that any allegations against carers, including the outcomes, are recorded on their individual files. This enables the identification of any patterns or issues requiring further action.

Managers spoke about the whole fostering process embracing 'the safeguarding of children,' from the recruitment of carers, the checks, training opportunities for carers, the matching process and sharing of significant information, and the review of placements. The young people were seen to have been provided with details about various agencies with whom they could raise any concerns.

Inter-agency ACPC training was being promoted as well as joint training between family placement, family link (Shared Care), and area staff.

A variety of agencies were offering support to carers to enable them to work effectively with young people who displayed sexually harmful behaviour. Direct work was also being undertaken with young people by the NSPCC.

Percentage of foster children placed who report never or hardly ever being bullied:

X

%

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.9)

The fostering service makes sure that each child or young person in foster care is encouraged to maintain and develop family contacts and friendships as set out in her/his care plan and/or foster placement agreement.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

Most referrals for a foster placement contained some information about contact, but this was rarely clearly defined. Placement agreements did not always define the arrangements either, and it is recommended that details are clarified as soon as possible and provided to the carers in writing.

The service had just developed a new format for referrals to family placement and this contained a risk assessment which included contact issues in relation to the child. At the next inspection of Staffordshire's fostering services the inspectors will be looking to see this used in an effective manner.

However, carers the inspectors spoke to were happy with the arrangements for contact and the individual levels of expectation regarding themselves as carers. They were aware of risk assessments being carried out prior to changes in contact arrangements.

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.5)

The fostering service ensures that children's opinions, and those of their families and others significant to the child, are sought over all issues that are likely to affect their daily life and their future.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

Young people the inspectors spoke with during the course of the inspection said that their carers listened to them, and many said this was one of the best aspects of being in foster care. The young people's questionnaires indicated that every young person was consulted by their foster carer about matters that affected them, with well over half saying they were often asked for their views.

Every young person who responded to the questionnaire said that their social workers sometimes met with them alone to ask their views and over a third said that this happened often, although a number of young people also commented that they would like to see more of their social workers.

The views of young people are now sought as part of the foster home review, as are the views of any daughters or sons of the carers. Nearly three quarters of young people said they had been asked for their views about their carers.

There is a project for looked after children, the Children's Voice Project, which runs groups for young people on a regular basis and supports them to express their views. There are also independent visitors and advocates available for young people who do not see their families or who have communication difficulties. Young people are assisted in contributing to their LAC reviews, and may use a CD Rom called 'Viewpoint' to assist them.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.8)

The fostering service ensures that it provides foster care services which help each child or young person in foster care to receive health care which meets her/his needs for physical, emotional and social development, together with information and training appropriate to her/his age and understanding to enable informed participation in decisions about her/his health needs.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

Health information is provided for carers on the LAC paperwork. More information is found on the Initial Health Assessment record, which is a very useful document, but carers do not receive a copy of this. It is recommended that consideration be given to providing carers with this report as soon as it is available.

One carer had the experience of hearing of a hospital appointment on the morning of the appointment from the child's parent, but it is not clear whether or not the department was aware of the date.

It was reported to the Fostering Panel that a carer had not been informed that a child needed an asthma inhaler, and the child subsequently had an asthma attack. An emergency hospital appointment was required.

First Aid training is available for carers and a high proportion were seen to have taken up this opportunity. Standard adult focused training is available but so also is training in first aid for children, which is obviously very appropriate.

The consent for medical treatment was not always completed on Placement Plan part 1, or was not appropriately signed, and the delegation of consent to the foster carer was not completed properly on any child's file seen. On one form, this part had been signed by the mother but then the mother's name had been inserted as the person to whom permission to consent to treatment has been delegated.

Most carers understood that they could not give consent to treatment, and had obtained this through the department, but greater accuracy in completing this part of the LAC paperwork could reduce this need.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.8)

The fostering service gives a high priority to meeting the educational needs of each child or young person in foster care and ensures that she/he is encouraged to attain her/his full potential.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

The files read for the inspection indicated satisfactory arrangements for the education of young people in foster care. Personal Education Plans were found on about half of the young person's files examined, and had often been appropriately reviewed.

On one young person's file read, the school had reported to a core group meeting that since being placed in foster care the young person had developed a motivation for learning and had progressed significantly academically. It was evident to the school that the young person has been reading with the foster carer and has been doing the homework set each night. The young people's responses to the questionnaire also indicated a high level of support from foster carers with homework and other educational issues.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.5)

The fostering service ensures that their foster care services help to develop skills, competence and knowledge necessary for adult living.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

This standard was not fully inspected but it is noted that a Pathway plan was seen on one young person's file, and this had also been reviewed, and that plans were in the process of development for another young person.

Progress has therefore been made in respect of this requirement from the last inspection, although this had not yet been consistently achieved in all cases.

Recruiting, Checking, Managing, Supporting and Training Staff and Foster Carers

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The people who work in or for the fostering service are suitable to work with children and young people and they are managed, trained and supported in such a way as to ensure the best possible outcomes for children in foster care. The number of staff and carers and their range of qualifications and experience are sufficient to achieve the purposes and functions of the organisation.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.8)

Any people working in or for the fostering service are suitable people to work with children and young people and to safeguard and promote their welfare.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

In respect of the recruitment of staff the authority has developed an Enhanced recruitment checklist, which covers a number of issues that would need further discussion at interview, such as driving convictions, gaps in employment history, sickness absence, disciplinary action, criminal convictions declared and any discrepancies in personnel details. Unfortunately this system had failed to identify some minor discrepancies in recent applications and needs to be rigorously applied in future.

It is positive to note that qualifications are routinely confirmed with the awarding body and that checks are now being made with the GSCC. However, photographs were not found on files, and references had not been followed up by telephone.

Most files contained no evidence of police checks but a list of checks with the reference numbers and dates received is maintained electronically by the personnel department. It is recommended that a memo is placed on the personnel file, noting that a satisfactory check has been received, with the date and reference number. The original check should be filed securely until CSC1 inspectors have had a chance to view the checks and then destroyed, unless there is reason to retain it.

It is disappointing to note that there was no evidence of telephone enquiries being made to follow up written references for any of the appointments made in the past year, although this was a requirement of the last inspection. This requirement therefore remains

in place. All staff files viewed included appropriate relevant job descriptions and, with the restructuring of the service, new job descriptions are to be issued to all staff.

All staff are appropriately qualified and training has been provided in the assessment of foster carers, including competency based assessments.

The authority conducts thorough checks in respect of prospective carers and is to be commended for checking every previous local authority area in which applicants declare they have lived. However, the fostering service had no system for checking if applicants were subject to the Disqualification Regulations, or for the result of any previous applications to foster, adopt or childmind. This could most appropriately be added to the detailed information form which is completed by prospective applicants at an early stage.

There is a system for the renewal of checks for foster carers which was generally seen to be effective, but in respect of one carer the last police check had been completed in Jan 2001 and had not been renewed at the date of the inspection, although this was in process. This fact had not apparently been noted at the foster home review dated April 2004.

Total number of staff of the agency:	58	Number of staff who have left the agency in the past 12 months:	X
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Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.16)

Staff are organised and managed in a way that delivers an efficient and effective foster care service.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	0
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This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.7)

The fostering service has an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff and recruits a range of carers to meet the needs of children and young people for whom it aims to provide a service.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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At the date of the inspection the service had two management vacancies and twelve social work vacancies. The authority was about to advertise these posts for the fourth time, and was also interviewing four candidates at the end of the month. The issue reflects the national shortage of social workers and the fact that the service had not compromised on standards in previous interviews. Within Staffordshire, the area team staff have two additional increments, a system designed to retain staff in those teams, but one which provides a disincentive to such staff to move into family placement. In addition, five of these vacancies were in new projects, the REACH project for intensive fostering and the Family and Friends Team, which had been recently established. As a result of this staff shortage, some kinship carers were unallocated, and transfer of caseloads within the new structure for fostering and adoption was expected to be achieved only slowly.

However, the service has a workload management scheme. Staff reported that their caseloads were at a workable level and that they were supported by their team managers at times of pressure.

The manager responsible for the recruitment of foster carers reported a very marked reduction in the number of applicants in the past year or so, despite the continuation of very

active recruitment efforts. There were therefore occasions on which it was very difficult to find appropriately matched foster placements, hence the issues discussed under standard FS8. The authority uses independent fostering agencies where needed to provide appropriate placements, and these agencies are subject to the recommended checking processes. In the light of the difficulty in recruiting carers, the service was placing great emphasis on the retention of existing carer and an annual awards ceremony recognises carer's length of service with the authority. There are also a number of other social events arranged for carers.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.7)

The fostering service is a fair and competent employer, with sound employment practices and good support for its staff and carers.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.7)

There is a good quality training programme to enhance individual skills and to keep staff up-to-date with professional and legal developments.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)**All staff are properly accountable and supported.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****0**

This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.6)**The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

Carers were complimentary about the support they received from their family placement social workers. Some spoke about there being a gap between one worker moving on and the re-allocation of their case. However, all carers said they had the number of the local manager who they could contact if needed during this period. Records showed that support visits varied between fortnightly, monthly and three monthly. The frequency of visit had been agreed between carers and their family placement worker. Telephone contact was also frequent between the parties. Record keeping about contact by family placement workers was seen to be good.

Carer's views about contact with the young people's social workers varied from good to poor. There was also some frustration about the number of changes some young people experienced in their allocated worker although it was acknowledged that there were difficulties due to a shortage of staff at present.

Support strategies were noted to include working with SUSTAIN and the NSPCC to provide support to carers who have young people who display sexually harmful behaviour or whose behaviour is likely to result in a breakdown of placement.

Carers have access to nine support groups around the county as well as a support group specifically for male carers, which was seen to be viewed very positively by carers. There was also a plan to develop a support group for the carer's own children.

Carers have access to the Fostering Network Advice and Mediation Worker, although the facility was better understood by some carers than by others, due partly to this post having been vacant for some eighteen months until recently.

Annual reviews were seen to be monitored and planned on a systematic basis, and had been recently revised to provide an inclusive format for all involved. The vast majority were seen to be taking place within the legal timescales.

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.10)

The fostering service is a managed one that provides supervision for foster carers and helps them to develop their skills.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

There was evidence of supervision visits on files, but these were not always carried out at the agreed frequency, particularly where there had been a gap in allocation of a family placement worker. Supervision was based on a contract drawn up between the carers and workers, and was recorded on a dedicated format. However, the format did not contain the date of the supervision session and it is recommended that this omission be rectified.

It was positive to note that unannounced visits were recorded on carer's files, as required by this standard, and that this had clearly been the practise in Staffordshire for some time.

The Foster Care Agreement had been revised and was found to cover most areas required by the regulations. However, the agreement did not include the arrangements for meeting any legal liabilities of the foster carer arising from a placement, the requirement for carers to inform the fostering service of any change in their personal circumstances or any other event which may affect the ability of the carer to care for the child placed, nor the requirement for the carer to comply with child protection procedures and the fostering service's policy on measures of control.

In addition, foster care agreements found on the files of carers approved as recently as 2003 was drawn up under the 1991 Regulations. The service must ensure that there is an up to date agreement with each foster carer, which covers all the areas required.

The foster carer's handbooks had not been updated since January 2003, and also did not cover all the areas required.

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

The fostering service ensures that foster carers are trained in the skills required to provide high quality care and meet the needs of each child/young person placed in their care.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

Carers were seen to have certificates recording their training, sometimes issued to cover a number of courses. The team responsible for training have a database which records the training each carer has undertaken, and this information is provided for foster home reviews. However, in a majority of cases, the training record on carer's files were not completed at all, and it would be recommended that a method is developed which enables this to be easily maintained.

There is a full programme of pre- and post-approval training. Pre-approval training is provided through the 'Skills to Foster' programme, which is co-presented by a carer and a family placement worker, and includes other input from experienced carers. The service plans to provide the material designed for daughters and sons of prospective carers as soon as there are enough young people to make it a viable group, which will probably be in May this year. A consultation group of daughters and sons of foster carers had also been recently established.

Post-approval training is set out in an annual Catalogue, and includes some very valuable courses. It is particularly pleasing to note the course for Men in Foster Care. There is a course on Safe Caring and Allegations, a subject which is also introduced in preparation

training. As a further development, it is suggested that some courses such as this should become mandatory training for carers at an early stage in their fostering career. Training is provided at a choice of venues and most courses are available at either evening or daytime sessions. Carers spoke very positively of the quality and value of the training courses they had attended.

Training is evaluated through feedback at the end of each session, and on an annual basis

Records

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- All appropriate records are kept and are accessible in relation to the fostering services and the individual foster carers and foster children.

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.8)

The fostering service ensures that an up-to-date, comprehensive case record is maintained for each child or young person in foster care which details the nature and quality of care provided and contributes to an understanding of her/his life events. Relevant information from the case records is made available to the child and to anyone involved in her/his care.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The fostering service does not maintain children's files themselves, other than to place papers such as the reports of LAC reviews on the carers file for children currently placed. The inspectors therefore viewed the records kept by the placing social workers.

Although many of the files were very full and bulky, it was relatively easy to find paperwork and the files were well maintained. The file has a front sheet of summary information, and these were found to be up-to-date. The authority uses the LAC documentation and most files had full LAC paperwork plus Personal Education Plans for the young person. There were some examples in which some documentation such as Essential Information Records were missing, and some files contained no educational paperwork, even though in one instance the young person was said to have had a PEP, IEP and a statement of special educational needs. Records of contact with the young person and of supervised contact were found on files and were of good quality.

There was a Placement Plan Part 2 on each file, and inspectors were informed that the placing social workers are responsible for arranging these plans.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.13)

The fostering service's administrative records contain all significant information relevant to the running of the foster care service and as required by regulations.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.

However, the 'Comments, compliments and complaints' summary sheet maintained at the front of each carers file is noted as a piece of good practice.

Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:			405	
Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months:			X	
Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months:			X	
Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months:			13	
Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months:			27	
Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £		72.31	Maximum £	382.76

Fitness of Premises for use as Fostering Service

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- The premises used as offices by the fostering service are suitable for the purpose.

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5)

Premises used as offices by the fostering service are appropriate for the purpose.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.

Financial Requirements

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The agency fostering services are financially viable and appropriate and timely payments are made to foster carers.

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3)

The agency ensures it is financially viable at all times and has sufficient financial resources to fulfil its obligations.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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	0
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This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.7)

The financial processes/systems of the agency are properly operated and maintained in accordance with sound and appropriate accounting standards and practice.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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	0
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This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.2)

Each foster carer receives an allowance and agreed expenses, which cover the full cost of caring for each child or young person placed with him or her. Payments are made promptly and at the agreed time. Allowances and fees are reviewed annually.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not inspected on this occasion, as it is not one of the key standards for fostering services.

Fostering Panels

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- **Fostering panels are organised efficiently and effectively so as to ensure that good quality decisions are made about the approval of foster carers, in line with the overriding objective to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in foster care.**

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.9)

Fostering panels have clear written policies and procedures, which are implemented in practice, about the handling of their functions.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The Fostering Panel has an appropriate membership, but there was one vacancy at the time of the inspection. This was for an independent member of Panel and plans were well advanced to appoint a young person who had previously been placed in foster care. There is an independent chair who has relevant experience, including the management of a local authority fostering service and who was appointed after a thorough and competitive selection process.

The minutes of the Panel are clearly set out, with the panel's recommendation and the signature of the chair for each item. The decision of the agency decision maker is also noted at the end of the minute of each matter. It is particularly useful to have a note of the documents considered in each case. The main items of Panel discussion and comments are noted as bullet points, but the responses to these issues were not recorded. This is seen as a significant omission, as the minutes then fail to adequately demonstrate the reasoning behind and justification for the Panel's recommendation.

Interim approval was given for one carer – but this is not a legal status. It appears to be used for Family and Friends carers, when 6 weeks Reg 38 approval had expired.

It was noted that one carer had previously been approved for 2 named and two task centred placements, and another was approved for 3 placements plus EDS. Carers may not be approved for more than three placements, unless an exemption is granted.

Panel had recently asked for more information when considering exemptions, such as the number of bedrooms, sleeping arrangements etc. It is noted that carers do not receive a notice of exemption granted, and the Children Act 1989 states that this should be done. This is therefore a requirement of this inspection.

The authority has a Policy and Procedure Item regarding the Fostering Panel, which accurately reflects the requirements of the regulations. However these procedures do not cover either decision making when all members of the panel are not in agreement, or requirements about the suitability of foster panel members other than satisfactory CRB checks.

Several leaflets are available in draft form, including feedback from prospective foster carers covering the process of information, application and assessment as well as panel attendance. There is also a leaflet with information about Panel Membership and the Panel process to help carers prepare for attendance at Panel. Finally there is a process of

Performance Assessment for panel members which explores the member's perception of both their own role and the performance of the panel as a whole, and concludes with agreed actions, which could include training, and timescales for that action. These are commended and the inspectors anticipate their implementation positively.

Short-Term Breaks

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- When foster care is provided as a short-term break for a child, the arrangement recognises that the parents remain the main carers for the child.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.2)

Where a fostering service provides short-term breaks for children in foster care, they have policies and procedures, implemented in practice, to meet the particular needs of children receiving short-term breaks.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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One carer selected for case tracking for this inspection was providing short-term breaks for a young person. The arrangement was long lasting, having been established for more than three years. The carers considered the arrangement was working well and that communication between themselves and the child's parents was good. They were involved in the young person's review meetings and were aware of decision making. However, they were concerned that plans for future respite for the young person, who was soon to become eighteen years of age, were unclear, as he would transfer to adult services. The carers said they felt unable to help him to prepare for any future move as no firm plan was identified.

It was positive to note that Staffordshire County Council undertake six monthly LAC reviews of all young people receiving shared care, and that this includes a first review after the first month of placement. Social workers do not visit the child in placement, but telephone contact is made with the shared carers.

Family and Friends as Carers

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- **Local authority fostering services' policies and procedures for assessing, approving, supporting and training foster carers recognise the particular contribution that can be made by and the particular needs of family and friends as carers.**

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.4)

These standards are all relevant to carers who are family and friends of the child, but there is recognition of the particular relationship and position of family and friend carers.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

It was noted that a number of developmental projects had either commenced or were planned to promote the profile of family and friends as carers. A Coordinator had been appointed and had undertaken a visit to all but one family to ascertain their support and training needs and to provide a contact point. The intention is to allocate a family placement social worker to each family as these staff members are appointed to the new project.

Consideration was being given to the need to review the content of some training sessions to make them more applicable to family and friends carers.

The Coordinator is a member of the Fostering Panel and through this role will be able to raise the level of understanding of the value of family and friends carers. Draft policies and procedures have been developed as guidance for family and friends carers and it is intended that these will be produced in a booklet for them.

The fostering service is clearly committed to establishing the same quality of service for family and friends carers as for other foster carers, but had been hampered in their progress by recruitment difficulties. The requirement of the last inspection had therefore not yet been achieved, but the inspectors wish to note the considerable progress that has been made and the very positive prospects for the future of this part of the service.

One family and friends carer was seen during the inspection. They had been approved for many years. They were seen to work well with the department, and to take up the same training opportunities as other carers. Their earlier experiences had not always been so positive and they felt they had had to fight for some assistance in the past. However, they were satisfied that matters had now been resolved and considered they were receiving good support from the fostering service.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____
Date _____

D.1 Registered Person's or Responsible Local Authority Manager's comments/confirmation relating to the content and accuracy of the report for the above inspection.

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 17 March 2005 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

A copy of the Providers comments and action plan are available at the Area Office, where these have been submitted.

Action taken by the CSCI in response to the provider's comments:

Amendments to the report were necessary

Comments were received from the provider

Provider comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report

Provider comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate

Note:

In instances where there is a major difference of view between the Inspector and the Registered Provider responsible Local Authority fostering service Manager both views will be made available on request to the Area Office.

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 27 May 2005, which indicates how statutory requirements and recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

Status of the Provider's Action Plan at time of publication of the final inspection report:

Action plan was required

Action plan was received at the point of publication

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

Other: <enter details here>

Public reports

It should be noted that all CSCI inspection reports are public documents. Reports on children's homes are only obtainable on personal application to CSCI offices.

D.3 PROVIDER'S AGREEMENT

Registered Person's or responsible Local Authority Manager's statement of agreement/comments: Please complete the relevant section that applies.

D.3.1 I _____ of _____ confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I agree with the statutory requirements made and will seek to comply with these.

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

Or

D.3.2 I _____ of _____ am unable to confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) for the following reasons:

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

Note: In instance where there is a profound difference of view between the Inspector and the Registered Provider both views will be reported. Please attach any extra pages, as applicable.

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