



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

Fostering Services

Alliance Foster Care

Maple Court

Ash Lane

Collingtree

Northampton

NN4 0NB

5th August 2004

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?

NO

Name of Authority

Address

Local Authority Manager

Tel No:

Address

Fax No:

Email Address

Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)

YES

Name of Agency

Alliance Foster Care

Tel No

0870 240 2395

Address

Moulton Park Business Centre, Unit G2 Redhouse Road,
Moulton Park, Northampton, Northants, NN3 6AQ

Fax No

01604 497830

Email Address

alliancefcare@aol.com

Registered Number of IFA

H070000403

Name of Registered Provider

Mr John Charles Duffield

Name of Registered Manager (if applicable)

Mrs Pamela Altena

Date of first registration

8th April 2003

Date of latest registration certificate

8th April 2003

Registration Conditions Apply?

NO

Date of last inspection

08/09/03

Date of Inspection Visit		5th August 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		10:00 am	
Name of Inspector	1	Mrs Maria Johnson	081363
Name of Inspector	2	Mrs Mary Timms	
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.		N/A	
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)		N/A	
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Mrs Pamela Altena	

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 Foster 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 Alliance Foster Care. 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.

Alliance Foster Care is an independent fostering agency based in Northampton, the organisation is owned and managed by its founders Mrs Pamela Altena and Mr John Duffield, both of whom have considerable experience in the field of childcare.

The agency support forty-seven Foster carers in Northamptonshire and the surrounding counties, and currently provides placements for fifty seven Children of varying ages who are in the care of Local Authorities.

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 inspection was undertaken using the “case tracking” process. This means that the Inspector reviewed the care of specific Children and Foster carers, “tracking” the way in which care is delivered. This was done through reviewing the Children’s identified needs and choices from the preadmission information, matching information, placement agreements and reviews, and cross checking through discussions with the Foster carers and staff, and if possible the Children and the Placing Authorities. The information gathered would establish whether the child’s identified needs and wishes are being met, and updated appropriately where needs are changing. The Inspector reviewed the assessment, training and support provided to the Foster carers, and the ability to meet the needs of the Children in placement.

The Inspector visited the Foster carers identified for case tracking and also spent time meeting other Foster carers and children at a social event organized for the families. The Inspector also had opportunity to observe children in placement, due to the children’s ages and willingness to engage it was not possible to have in depth discussion regarding the National Minimum Standards. The evidence of the children’s views has been drawn predominately from the completed questionnaires.

The ways in which the agency is managed, functions, the suitability of the premises, and the organization of staff were also scrutinized in the course of the inspection.

Standard 1 Statement of Purpose

This standard was met.

The agency Statement of purpose has been further development. The agency provides a Children’s guide.

The agency has demonstrated a strong commitment to consulting with Children and providing child focused information to all Children. The agency is to be commended on the efforts and developments that have been made to provide information to Children relating to the agency and being carded for by foster carers.

Standard 2–5 Fitness to Carry on and Manage a Fostering Service.

All standards were met.

All information provided throughout this inspection indicates that the management of the service is very good. The agency has worked with Commission for Social Care Inspection to ensure compliance with the National Minimum Standards, and a commitment to move towards best practice.

Standard 6-14 Securing and Promoting Welfare.

All standards were met.

The agency places a lot of importance on the views and wishes of the Children and foster carers.

The agency has developed systems within the organisation to ensure effective matching of Children and Foster carers, to ensure that the child’s individual needs are met. The agency has developed individual health and education plans for each child in placement.

The agency has demonstrated a commitment to equal opportunities and valuing diversity. The Agency is commended for the efforts made in the development of the individual family policies and the quality of the information provided to Children and Placing Authorities.

Standard 15-23 Recruitment, Checking, Managing, Supporting, and Training Staff and Foster carers.

All standards were met;

A sample review of staff records confirmed that members of staff had been appointed after a thorough recruitment process had been completed. A sample review of staff and Foster carers records confirmed that all required checks and references are being completed. The

organisation has systems in place to ensure that clearances are reviewed and updated within the required time scales.

Thirteen of the fourteen the foster carers' questionnaires confirmed that they were very satisfied with the support that they received from the agency.

Standard 24-25 Records

All standards were met.

In most cases records were maintained to a good standard and were in line with Data Protection guidance, in some instances the recorded information was held on the incorrect files. The Registered Manager should ensure that information is recorded accurately.

Standard 26 Fitness of Premises for use as Fostering Service

All standards were met.

Since the last inspection the agency has moved premises. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that the directors were involved in the planning of the premises, which has ensured that it meets the requirements of the agency. The premises were seen to be well equipped and well maintained.

Standard 27-29 Financial Requirements

All standards were met.

The organisations price tariff clearly details the costing of placements and additional services as required. The financial systems that the agency has implemented ensure effective oversight and management. Payments to Foster carers are paid one week in advance and Foster carers confirmed their allowances were received on time.

Standard 30 Fostering Panels

All standards were met.

The Panel complies with the regulations;

The agency in conjunction with the panel members have clearly made efforts to ensure that the panel is effective in quality assurance and control, and performs its functions in a professional and measured manner. The agency and panel is commended for the developments that have been made.

Standard 31 Short term Breaks

This service was not inspected.

Standard 32 Family Friends as Foster carers

This service is not provided.

The inspection methodology requires questionnaires to be sent to the Children, Foster carers, and Placing Authorities. The results are included in the body of the report, the following comments were made on some of the completed forms;

Questionnaires

Twenty Children's questionnaires received.

'Since I have been with Alliance it's better than the Children's' home'

'Yes I am being treated really well (now)'

'Yes I am being treated well'

'I am very happy here'

Fourteen foster carers' questionnaires received.

'Plenty of support and access to any one at any time'

'Continuity and level of support'

'Always someone to talk to and good allowances'

'We are treated as an equal'

'They remember Children's birthdays and Christmas'

Ten Pacing Authority Questionnaire received.

'Following SSD care plans, allow the child to fully integrate into family life,'

'This is an excellent placement'

'I have found Alliance to be good'

'Excellent support to child through a very difficult time'

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?

YES

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	<u>Maria Johnson</u>	Signature	_____
Second Inspector	<u>Mary Timms</u>	Signature	_____
Regulation Manager	<u>Hazel Hudson-Green</u>	Signature	_____
Date	_____		

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	

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	FS25	When reviewing the records it was identified that in some instances the recorded information was held on the incorrect files. The Registered Manager should ensure that information is recorded accurately.
2	FS1	The Registered Manager should ensure that the conclusion of complaints detailed in the Statement of Purpose states whether substantiate or not.
3	FS8	In some instances the records reviewed had not fully detailed information regarding the child's identified needs. The Registered Manager should ensure that all matching records are completed fully.

4	FS13	In some instances the records reviewed had not fully detailed information regarding the child's identified needs. The Registered Manager should ensure that all education records are completed fully.
5	FS25	In some instances the records reviewed had not fully detailed information regarding the child's identified needs. The Registered Manager should ensure that all behaviour strategies and risk assessments are completed fully

* 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	8
Survey of Placing Authorities	YES
Foster carer survey	YES
Foster Children survey	YES
Checks with other organisations and Individuals	YES
• Directors of Social services	YES
• Child protection officer	YES
• Specialist advisor (s)	YES
• 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	05/08/04
Time of Inspection	10.00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	80

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?

3

The revised Statement of Purposed was submitted to Commission for Social Care Inspection with the organisations the Pre-Inspection Questionnaire. Staff confirmed that they were aware of the Statement of Purpose and the content had been discussed in the team meetings. The Statement of Purpose clearly states the objectives of the organisation and the services that they are able to provide. Information relating to complaints is detailed in the Statement of Purpose, conclusion of complaint states resolved this should be altered to substantiated or not. Six out of ten placing authority questionnaires confirmed that they had seen the agencies Statement of Purpose and the most recent inspection report. The agency provides a Children's guide. All of the Children's questionnaires confirmed that they had received a Children's guide. The agency has developed an interactive computer program that helps younger Children and Children with disabilities to gain information regarding their foster family, as well as providing information to Foster carers about themselves. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that Children from the agency were invited to the office to discuss and review the Children's guide, from this the Children developed story boards that led to the development of the program. The Inspector was shown the program that will be a good tool for Foster carers to provide and gain useful information. The agency has demonstrated a strong commitment to consulting with Children and providing child focused information to all Children. The Registered Manager also informed the Inspector that all Children have been sent a copy of the BAAF 'Fostering What it is and What it Means'. A copy was supplied to the Inspector; the booklet provides a good guide of issues relating to being in foster care.

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?

4

The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that she is currently completing the NVQ 5 in Management Studies. Since the last inspection the Registered Manager has also completed training in the use of Broadband, and Team Teach. In order to remain up to date with current issues and practice the providers have also attended the National and Regional Forums for Independent Fostering Agencies, the manager is also a member of the Fostering Network.

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

All references detailed in schedule one are have been completed and seen to be appropriate. The Manager's and the Responsible Individual's CRB clearance was seen to be in order.

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?

3

Interviews with staff confirmed that there are clear systems of communication; staff have a clear understanding of lines responsibility. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that a monthly financial report is compiled. The report details projected expenditure and incoming payment of fees. The Directors meet with the company's accountants six monthly to review the companies financial viability. A report is provided to the company's bank Manager on a quarterly basis. The organisation has an annual audit completed, by independent auditors. The Registered Manager confirmed that a scale of charges is provided to Placing Authorities. The organisations price tariff was submitted with the Pre-Inspection Questionnaire. The information submitted clearly details the costing of placements and additional services as required. A review of records confirmed that employees are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest. This information is detailed in the contract of employment.

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

4

Death of a child placed with foster parents.

0

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

0

Serious illness or accident of a child.

0

Outbreak of serious infectious disease at a foster home.

0

Actual or suspected involvement of a child in prostitution.

0

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

0

Serious complaint about a foster parent.

2

Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.

2

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

0

Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:

0

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.4)**The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The Registered Manager provided the Inspector with a copy of her job description that clearly details her areas of responsibility. Interviews with staff confirmed that they understand the arrangements for identifying the person in charge when the Manager is absent. During the course of the inspection, at times when the Manager was absent, staff were able to identify the person who was deputising.

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?

3

A review of records confirmed that Health and Safety checks are completed as part of the Foster carers initial assessment and there after annually at the Foster carers review. A review of records confirmed that part one of the BAAF form is being completed, this section of the form requires the Social Worker to provide details of the Foster carers accommodation. A review of records confirmed that the room to be occupied is detailed in the initial Foster carers assessment. Interviews with staff confirmed the organisations policy on single occupancy bedrooms unless the Children are same sex siblings, or very young siblings. A review of records confirmed that annual Health and Safety assessments are completed. Interviews with Foster carers confirmed that Health and safety checks are being completed on a regular basis. Foster carers are provided with health and safety guidance in the Foster carers handbook, this is also discussed on the Core Training. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that during the Foster carer's assessment their driving licence, and car insurance are reviewed. All of the Foster carers that the Inspector met during the course of this inspection confirmed that they were aware that the inspection was being conducted and that they should participate in the process as much as possible.

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?

3

A review of records identified that all of the Children tracked were appropriately matched with regard to ethnic origin, language and culture. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that a recent complaint made against the agency that was not substantiated highlighted further need for the child in placement. The agency organised for an independent worker to work with the child in a befriending capacity. The worker will also work with the child on issues of identity and increasing self-esteem. Interviews with the Supporting social worker confirmed that this arrangement has been put in place and that the Child views this as a positive opportunity.

The Children identified for case tracking as part of this inspection did not have identified disabilities. A review of records confirmed that the matching matrix requires information in relation to equipment or adaptations. The Foster placement agreement also requires details of any disabilities or equipment that may be required. A review of records confirmed that supporting social workers review children's leisure activities in their monthly reports. A review of training programs confirmed that Foster carers are provided with training on promoting equality and valuing diversity.

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 Foster carer capable of meeting her/his assessed needs. For agencies providing foster carers to local authorities, those agencies ensure that they offer Foster carers only if they represent appropriate matches for a child for whom a local authority is seeking a Foster carer.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

A review of records confirmed that the organisation has implemented a matching matrix that enables the placing social workers to identify Children's needs and match these with the services that Foster carers can provide. The format also allows areas of deficit to be highlighted. In some instances the records reviewed had not fully detailed the information provided by the placing authority into the matrix or demonstrated the Foster carers ability to meet the need. (This point is subject to a recommendation).

A review of records and visits to Foster carers identified that four of the five Children tracked were appropriately matched. The fifth child was placed prior to the matching matrix being implemented. A review of records confirmed that the agency had attempted to gain sufficient information from the Placing Authorities and previous Foster carers to facilitate the matching process. Records and staff interviews confirmed that Placing Authorities of Children already in placement were consulted prior to another child being placed. A review of records confirmed that placement agreements were in place the information was detailed and identified particular areas of responsibility. Two of the Children case tracked were placed with Foster carers who were practising Christians. Details of the Children attending church activities with the Foster carers had not been recorded. Interviews with staff and Foster carers confirmed that this area had been discussed prior to placement.

A review of the organisations matching matrix confirmed that Supervising Social Workers are required to complete the information relating to the racial and cultural needs of the child. Of the five Children tracked three had had some introduction to Foster carers prior to placement. The two other Children were placed as emergency placements due to their situation.

Interviews with staff and Foster carers confirmed that when arranging non-emergency placements a pre placement meeting is convened and introductory meetings are arranged. Interviews with Foster carers confirmed that in non-emergency situations they do meet the child prior to placement.

Eight out of ten the placing authority questionnaires confirmed that there involvement and agreement with the placement plan, the two social workers that had not been involved, had not been allocated to the cases until after the placement was set up.

The Placing authority questionnaires confirmed that where Children were receiving specific therapeutic intervention this had been arranged with their agreement.

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
<p>Interviews with staff confirmed that Foster carers are provided with appropriate training to enable them to manage difficult behaviours. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that since the last inspection Foster carers have developed their own Family Policy. A review of records confirmed that Family Policies are in place; the policy details the family's own safe caring guidelines. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that all placing Social Workers are offered a copy of the family policy as part of the Placement Agreement. The Family Policy is explained verbally to each child placed. The Training officer informed the Inspector that Foster carers core training is to be extended to offer Foster carers time and support in completing their Family Policy. The Agency is commended for the efforts made in the development of the policies and the quality of the information provided.</p> <p>Interviews with staff confirmed that Supervising Social Workers are required to complete assessments of risk relating to the child in placement, and develop behaviour management strategies with the Foster carers. An interview with the Operations Manager confirmed her responsibility in overseeing and reviewing behaviour management strategies, and risk assessments. Interviews with staff confirmed that the organisations policy is that Foster carers will not use any form of corporal or humiliating forms of punishment. Information is provided to Foster carers on acceptable and unacceptable sanctions, in the Foster carers Handbook and on core training. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that a monthly report of all incidents relating to Foster carers and Children is completed. A review of the organisations duty system and interviews with staff confirmed a commitment to providing Foster carers with full information relating to all potential placements. Interviews with Foster carers confirmed that the organisation is providing them with the information that they have. The difficulty appears to be with the level and accuracy of information being provided by the Placing Authorities.</p> <p>Nine out of ten the Placing authority questionnaires confirmed that they had received information regarding the agencies guidance on Foster carers measures of control, and all were in agreement with them. All the Foster carers' questionnaires confirmed that they had received information regarding the agencies expectations of them as Foster carers and the agency is clear in relation to permissible punishments.</p>		
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

A review of records confirmed that contact arrangements are included in the Placement Agreement. Interviews with Foster carers confirmed that contact arrangements for the Children that they care for are reviewed and where appropriate are put in place. The organisations Referral form does require Supervising Social Workers to detail contact arrangements. Interviews with staff confirmed that they would request this information from the placing authority. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that contact issues are discussed at the point of referral, however in some instances the Placing authority are unable to confirm what the arrangements are to be.

Discussion with one Young person, who has been placed outside of her area, identified that she missed her friends and would like more contact. Discussion with her Foster carer confirmed the Placing Authorities plan was to move the young person back to her area of origin. The Registered Manager confirmed that she was aware of the situation.

Interviews with Foster carers confirmed that they are reimbursed for transporting Children to contact. The Supervising Social Worker reviews expenses at the support visits.

Six out of ten the placing authority questionnaires confirmed that the Children in placement were subject to restrictions on contact and that the agency was managing the restrictions well.

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?**

4

Twelve of the fourteen of the foster carers' questionnaires confirmed that they are able to take all necessary decisions concerning the foster child's care. Interviews with Foster carers confirmed that recent guidance from the Department Of Health allowing Children to have over night stays has benefited the Children. The Children's' questionnaires confirmed that they are asked their opinions and described ways in which this has happened. The Placing authority questionnaires confirmed that Foster carers where possible work well with the child's family. Interviews with Foster carers confirmed that they were aware of the importance of remaining non judgemental in relation to the child's own family.

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

Since the last inspection the organisation has developed health care plans for each child. A review of records confirmed that information relating to the child's health needs are detailed. The records also identify the treatment that the child receives whilst in placement and is updated on a monthly basis. A review of records confirmed that the supporting social worker completes a report for the child's review based on information provided by the Foster carer. The Children's questionnaires confirmed that they receive help and support from their Foster carers regarding their health and staying healthy. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that advice is sought from a variety of health professionals depending on the needs of the child.

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?**

2

The Children's questionnaires confirmed that they receive help and support from their Foster carers in relation to their education and homework. The organisation employs a resources officer with responsibility for liaising with Children's schools and Foster carers. Interviews with staff confirmed their commitments to ensuring Foster carers are provided with all the relevant information in relation to Children's education. Registered Manager explained that the agency has experienced difficulties in obtaining Children's PEP. Since the last inspection the organisation has developed a format that details the child's educational targets. The information recorded was limited and should be developed further to confirm the tasks being undertaken by Foster carers. (This point is subject to a recommendation).

A review of records confirmed that Children's educational needs are recorded in the foster placement agreement.

A review of records, interviews with Foster carers and staff confirmed that the agency is funding extra tuition in Maths and English for some Children. The agency is also financially supporting Children in extra curricular activities, individual hobbies and interests. An interview with the Operations Manager confirmed that request made to the Directors for funding relating to Life Chances for Children are met favourably.

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?

0

This standard was not assessed on this occasion, due to the ages of the Children identified for case tracking.

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 Foster 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?

3

A sample review of staff records confirmed that members of staff had been appointed after a thorough recruitment process had been completed. A sample review of staff and Foster carers records confirmed that all required checks and references are being completed. The organisation has systems in place to ensure that clearances are reviewed and updated within the required time scales. The Inspector observed panel members confirming that the relevant clearances had been complete on Foster carers. A sample review of staff records for Supervising Social Workers confirmed that they had the necessary qualifications. Interviews with staff confirmed their attendance on Post Qualifying Training. Staff also confirmed that they had attended a short course on the Role of the Supervising Social Worker provided by the British Association Adoption and Fostering. A review of records confirmed that all staff completing foster carers assessments are qualified social workers.

Total number of staff of the agency:

23

Number of staff who have left the agency in the past 12 months:

2

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?

3

A review of staff records confirmed that staff had been issued with and understand the company's equal opportunities policy, grievance and disciplinary procedures. All the placing authority questionnaires confirmed that they were notified of all significant events affecting the child. Ten the placing authority questionnaires confirmed that a Local Authority plan was in place and the Foster carers were looking after the child in accordance with their plan. The Inspector observed and staff interviews confirmed that the clerical and administrative support is very good. Since the last inspection the agency has increased the number of administrative staff. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that the agency had developed systems for feeding information into the administration staff meetings, social work meetings and management meetings to ensure effective communication. Interviews with staff confirmed that the revised system facilitated good communication.

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.7)
The fostering service has an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff and recruits a range of Foster 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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Thirteen of the foster carers' questionnaires confirmed that they consider that there are sufficient members of staff. One questionnaire highlighted problems when the Supervising Social Worker is absent through holidays or sickness. Further interviews with Foster carers confirmed that in the absence of their Supervising Social Worker they would contact the Duty social worker or the Manager. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that there had been some staff away long term sick, during these times herself the Operations Manager, and the resources worker covered the case loads.

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 Foster carers.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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A review of staff records confirmed that staff have received and understood the companies Health and Safety policy. A review of staff records confirmed that staff had been issued with and understood the companies Whistle Blowing policy. Interviews with staff confirmed that Foster carers are supplied with a copy of the whistle blowing policy.
 All Foster carers interviewed as part of this inspection confirmed that they found the management team very approachable and professional.
 The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that the agency has public liability and professional indemnity insurance, a review of records confirmed that the policy insures the staff and Foster carers up to ten million pounds.

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?	3
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A review of recently appointed staffs' records confirmed that they had completed a four week program of induction. Interviews with staff confirmed that they felt prepared to undertake the tasks required of them after completing a period of induction. An interview with the organisations Training officer confirmed her plans to work with the administration staff to further develop systems for recording and monitoring Foster carers training. The revised system will give a better over view of requirements to enable planning of future events. The Training Officer confirmed that four Foster carers will be undertaking the NVQ 3 in caring for Children and Young People, a review of the mandatory and optional units confirmed that a range of relevant subjects are covered to include promoting people's rights, protection of Children, and contributing to care programmes.
 The foster carers' questionnaires confirmed that Foster carers are attending a range of training opportunities.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)**All staff are properly accountable and supported.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

A review of records confirmed that members of staff have been issued with a clear job description and contract of employment. A review of records confirmed that staff members have a contract of supervision in place, and are receiving regular support. Interviews with staff confirmed that they feel well supported. A review of records confirmed that staff are receiving appraisals. The Operations Manager confirmed that staff development plans are being developed for all staff. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that management meetings, administration meetings and meetings with Supervising Social Workers are completed on a monthly basis. Since the last inspection two representative Foster carers have been identified to attend the Supervising Social Workers monthly meetings. This has proven to be beneficial in identifying issues affecting Foster carers and improving communication. Interviews with staff confirmed that they are attending regular staff meetings.

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.6)**The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting Foster carers.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****4**

The Inspector observed Supervising Social Workers providing support to Foster carers via the duty system. Staff confirmed the expectation that they provide support to Foster carers when covering the duty system. The Inspector observed Foster carers contacting the duty Supervising Social Worker for information and being provided with a positive response. Interviews with Supervising Social Workers confirmed that they had a clear understanding of the levels of support that are to be provided to Foster carers. This was in accordance with the organisations policy on support to Foster carers.

Interviews with Foster carers and a review of records confirmed that they are attending Foster carers support groups, and found them useful. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that a newsletter is distributed to all Foster carers. The agency invited Children to come to the offices and act as Editors for the newsletter, this was seen to be a positive way in include the Children and their views. A review of the most recent newsletter confirmed that it covered a range of subjects, gave useful information, and acknowledged achievements of the Children and young people.

The Operations Manager confirmed that Foster carers have access to the organisations Education Officer and health advisors who will provide information and support.

A review of records confirmed that Foster carers were being provided with respite care. The Inspector observed Foster carers annual reviews being presented to panel. The organisation employs an independent person to chair Foster carers reviews. Records confirmed that reviews are being completed within the allotted time scales.

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?****3**

The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that since the last inspection Foster care agreements have been developed. A review of records confirmed that the placement plans have been completed to a good standard. Interviews with staff and Foster carers confirmed that all Foster carers have a named support worker. A review of records confirmed that the information contained in the Foster care agreements was comprehensive and detailed specific areas of responsibility. A review of records confirmed that Supervising Social Worker meet regularly with the Foster carers.

A review of records confirmed that unannounced visits are being made to the Foster carers. Interviews with Foster carers confirmed that they receive good levels of support. Foster carers also confirmed their awareness of the out of hours support. Foster carers that had accessed the out of hours support confirmed that the response they received was very good. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that the organisation pays the subscription fees for all Foster carers to be members of the National Fostering Network. The Network provides Foster carers with a wide range of up to date information. Information is provided to Foster carers in the Fostering handbook regarding the procedures for complaints and representations.

Thirteen of the fourteen the foster carers' questionnaires confirmed that they were very satisfied with the support that they received from the agency.

Five of the ten the Placing authority questionnaires, all the Children's' questionnaires, and all the Foster carers' questionnaires confirmed that they had received information regarding the agency's complaints procedure.

Thirteen of the Foster carers' questionnaires confirmed that they were consulted regarding decisions and events concerning the child. All the Foster carers' questionnaires confirmed that they were invited to attend Children's reviews. Interviews with Foster carers confirmed that they had attended Children's reviews.

Thirteen Foster carers identified that they had received sufficient information about the backgrounds of the child and the reason for being in care. One Foster carer identified that information provided by the pacing authority is limited. Further interviews with Foster carers identified that the agency is providing Foster carers with the information that is provided by the placing authority, however the quality of the information in some instances is poor. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that she has attempted to develop relationships with the Placing Authorities and highlight the need for accurate information. She explained some authorities have responded well, whilst some relationships remain problematic, in some cases this has resulted in negative outcomes for the child and Foster carers.

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?**

3

A review of records confirmed that where two adults in the household are approved both Foster carers attend the Core training program, and Managing challenging behaviour. A review of records confirmed that Foster carers are accessing a range of training opportunities. Since the last inspection the organisation has completed an audit of training completed by Foster carers, this information has now been developed into individual training profiles. Registered Manager explained that all Foster carers complete safe caring training as part of the core-training program. A review of records confirmed that since the last review Foster carers have developed their own Family Policy, this incorporates the household guidelines on safe caring. Registered Manager explained that this information then forms part of the foster placement agreement and is made available to the placing social worker. Registered Manager explained that the organisation plans to develop this into a half days training to be included in the core training program. Registered Manager explained that when the Foster carers have developed the Family Policy this is then shared with their own Children, who in turn help to explain the policy to Children when they arrive to live with the family.

A review of records confirmed that Children of potential Foster carers are interviewed as part of the assessment process. Of the families tracked one family has four Children, the supporting social worker interviewed each child separately to discuss safe caring, behaviours, protective behaviours, sharing parents and possessions, confidentiality, and support provided by the agency. Registered Manager explained that at the Foster carers' annual review future training needs are identified. This information is recorded on a training database, this ensures that when the training event is organised the Foster carers are invited.

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 agency has reviewed the structure of the Children's files. The revised system that has been developed is more structured and ensures that information is easily accessible. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that staff have received training. A review of records confirmed that the basis of placement, duration and purpose is recorded in the placement agreement and the LAC paper work that is made available to the Foster carers. The records demonstrated the agency's commitment to improve on their practice, and the many areas that developments have been made since the last inspection. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that further development in the Foster carers' files is planned for the coming year.

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?

2

The agency has reviewed the structure of the Children's files. The revised system that has been developed is more structured and ensures that information is easily accessible. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that staff have received training. A review of records confirmed that the basis of placement, duration and purpose is recorded in the placement agreement and the LAC paper work that is made available to the Foster carers. A review of records confirmed that the agency has separate records for staff, Foster carers, and Children. When reviewing the records it was identified that in some instances the recorded information was held on the incorrect files. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that staff had received training relating to accurate recording. The organisation has implemented a quality assurance system for the review and update of files. The Operations Manager prepares a monthly report for the directors. During the course of the inspection the Inspector observed files were stored securely. The organisation has a clear policy relating to confidentiality. Interviews with Foster carers confirmed that they understood the policy. Information provided details the right of Foster carers and Children to see their files. Interviews and observation of the panel confirmed that information is managed and stored appropriately. A review of records confirmed that the information recorded is legible and factual. When triangulating information recorded on the Children's/cares files and interviews with Foster carers/ staff in some instances the detail of information was inadequate. Information relating to behaviour strategies and risk assessment of potentially dangerous behaviours had not always been recorded. (This point is subject to a recommendation).

A review of Foster carers' records confirmed that references and checks are completed on all Foster carers. A review of records confirmed that the organisation has systems in place for recording complaints and allegations. The systems in place also provide regular data to the Directors.

Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:			57
Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months:			26
Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months:			25
Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months:			11
Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months:			5
Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £	329.00	Maximum £	329.00

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?

4

Since the last inspection the agency has moved premises. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that the directors were involved in the planning of the premises, which has ensured that it meets the requirements of the agency. The Inspector observed that the premises have designated working areas for Supervising Social Workers, administrative staff and the management team. The premises also provides training rooms and interview rooms. Interviews with staff confirmed that they consider the agency's move to new premises will be beneficial to staff and Foster carers. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that they would be providing information and resources to Foster carers and hope that the Foster carers will access the facilities.

The Inspector observed files stored in appropriately secure cabinets. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that IT systems are password protected, the Inspector observed staff accessing computer systems by in putting pass words. The Registered Manager recently attended training regarding Broadband, which also provided information on protecting IT, systems. The Inspector observed that visitors' access to the premises is monitored via an intercom system. All visitors are required to sign the visitors' book and are informed of the fire precautions. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that the premises are protected by an interlinked alarm system. The Inspector observed the premises were appropriately equipped, and provides sufficient car parking for staff and visitors.

The premises provide easy access and facilities for physically disabled persons.

A review of records confirmed that the agency has building and contents insurance in place.

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?

3

The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that the organisation has worked with the Tax office regarding Foster carers' payments. The agency has adjusted their systems to ensure Foster carers are able to more easily calculate their tax payments. A review of staff records and the organisations staff payment system confirmed that the agency has systems in place to pay Income Tax (PAYE), National Insurance and VAT. Staff records confirmed the organization has made arrangements for stakeholder pensions.

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?

4

The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that the current financial systems are working effectively. The Inspector was shown the computerised systems that were operational and up to date. Interviews with staff confirmed their understanding of systems and the process to activate and terminate payments. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that a monthly financial report is provided to both directors. The report details projected expenditure and incoming payment of fees. The directors meet with the company's registered accountants six monthly to review the companies financial viability. A report is provided to the organisation's bank manager on a quarterly basis. An independent auditor also reviews the accounts annually.

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?

4

Interviews with Foster carers confirmed that they receive written information regarding allowances. Foster carers also confirmed that they are receiving payments on time, and the allowances are fair. The agency pays all allowances one week in advance; Foster carers confirmed that this arrangement works well. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that the agency had reviewed the holiday allowances made to Foster carers to ensure a fairer system of payment. Discussion with Foster carers and staff identified that this has been met with a range of responses; in the majority Foster carers are happy with the changes.

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 Inspector observed formulation of members in accordance with Regulation 24. The Inspector observed high number of representatives from agency; the Chairperson confirmed this was unusual. The Panel member and Chairperson confirmed that Health a representative ordinarily sits on the panel but were not present on day of inspection. The Registered person confirmed that they have now recruited a panel member with experience of living in foster care.

The Chairperson and panel member confirmed that the management of the agency does not impinge on the panel's decision making. Where there have been areas of disagreement agreements have been reached. Registered person explained that links have been made with another Independent Fostering Agency, it is planned that when appeals are made they can be heard by an independent panel.

A Panel member confirmed that if they have any issues or concerns regarding an application they could telephone the medical advisor for information. The Inspector observed panel members reviewing quality of reports. The Chairperson and panel member commented on the improvement of quality in report writing. The Chairperson considered that this is in part due to managers being more rigorous in checking reports before they are presented to panel, and the agency is now able to employ more permanent staff. This means that there are less people completing assessments, prior to this a number of agency staff were undertaking assessments this made consistency more difficult. The Inspector observed workers commended on quality of their reports, and panel members clarifying any discrepancies in the reports.

The Chairperson and panel members confirmed that they have received training in relation to the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Manager informed the Inspector that joint training with Supervising Social Workers is to be arranged.

An independent person chairs Foster carers' reviews. The outcome of the review is then presented to panel members, the Inspector observed reports being presented to panel, and outstanding issues discussed.

The Inspector observed panel members discussing the resignation of Foster carers and the reasons for this, the panel members whilst sensitive to the Foster carers situation were also clear in their legal responsibilities, when determining the outcome.

The agency in conjunction with the panel members have clearly made efforts to ensure that the panel is effective in quality assurance and control, and performs its functions in a professional and measured manner. The agency and panel is commended for the developments that have been made.

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 Foster 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?	0
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This standard was not assessed on this occasion.

Family and Friends as Foster 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 Foster carers.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.4)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	0
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This service is not provided.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

N/A

Lay Assessor N/A **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 5th August 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

YES

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 the 28 day date of the covering letter, 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

NO

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, Mr John Charles Duffield of Alliance Foster Care 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, Mr John Charles Duffield of Alliance Foster Care 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:

Providers comments and Action Plan are available at the aread Office where these have been submiited

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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S0000033794.V157660.R01

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