



Making Social Care  
Better for People

# inspection report

Fostering Services

## **Anchor Fostercare Services**

12 Albany Terrace

Chatham

Kent

ME4 6TH

7th June 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**

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**Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)**

YES

**Name of Agency**

Anchor Fostercare Services

**Tel No**

01634 813414

**Address**

12 Albany Terrace, Chatham, Kent, ME4 6TH

**Fax No**

**Email Address**

**Registered Number of IFA**

H060000595

**Name of Registered Provider**

Dr Alistair John Sutherland

**Name of Registered Manager (if applicable)**

Mrs Florence Sutherland

**Date of first registration**

29th October 2003

**Date of latest registration certificate**

29th October 2003

**Registration Conditions Apply ?**

NO

**Date of last inspection**

22/04/03

<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		7th June 2004	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		10:00 am	
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	Fiona Holdaway	085810
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>	Jackie Fearon	
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>3</b>		
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>4</b>		
<b>Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)</b> 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.			
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>			
<b>Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection</b>			

**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 Anchor FosterCare Services. 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.

The agency is a non-profit limited company. Its purpose is to create and sustain family care resources for looked after children and young people and to support them through the transition to adulthood. Anchor provides single and sibling group placements for children and young people up to eighteen years of age.

The agency seeks to work with a limited number of local authorities and education authorities in order to make meaningful partnerships in the best interests of children.

The agency recruits carers who have the potential to develop fostering knowledge and skills to the highest standards. They are provided with the support and training necessary for their continuing development.

The agency is committed to minimising the discontinuities in the lives of vulnerable children and young people including the premature ending or disruption of placements.

As resources become available, Anchor will seek to contribute to meeting the needs of children and young people who have previously been cared for by Anchor families.

(Taken from the Anchor Foster Care Services Statement of Purpose – June 2004)

## **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 satisfactory and positive inspection against the National Minimum Standards. Of the 32 standards 27 were met and 2 did not apply, only minor shortfalls were identified. A summary of the inspection findings is as follows:

### **Statement of Purpose (Standard 1)**

#### **This Standard was assessed and met.**

The Statement of Purpose provided was a detailed document that fulfilled the regulatory requirements and it was evident from other documentation and from discussion with staff and foster carers that it was an accurate reflection of the service provided. Evidence was seen that the Statement of Purpose had been reviewed and modified.

The children's guide to the agency was presented in two different formats aimed at meeting the needs of younger and older children.

### **Fitness to provide or manage a fostering service (Standards 2-3)**

#### **Both standards were met.**

It was evident from the documentation provided, including financial documentation and from discussions with the Manager and registered provider that they have the relevant experience and appropriate qualifications to meet the Standards.

### **Management of the fostering service (Standards 4-5)**

#### **Both standards were met.**

Since the last inspection the agency has recruited more social work staff and the manager has reduced her own support work caseload enabling her to concentrate on the daily management of the agency. The manager stated that she also now receives supervision / mentoring from an independent person and she recently completed a NVQ level 4 Diploma in Management.

Whilst carers and staff demonstrated awareness of their responsibility to declare any possible conflicts of interest this is not stated in the guidance in the foster carers handbook or in contracts for carers or staff, the Inspectors would recommend this as good practice.

### **Securing and promoting welfare (Standards 6-14)**

#### **All 9 standards were met.**

It was evident from documentation on foster carers files that the quality of the accommodation for use as a foster home is assessed including a health and safety assessment of the home and the environment. Evidence that prospective carers had attended a 'Choosing To Foster' course was seen and records relating to the Annual Reviews of the agency's carers were also seen.

Anchor's Foster Carers Handbook provides with written guidelines on the health and safety responsibilities of carers.

The agency's policies demonstrate a commitment to value diversity and support and promote equal opportunities. It was evident from the information on the foster carers files that the agency has been successful in recruiting carers from diverse backgrounds so as to try and ensure that it has a range of carers to provide care which respect and preserve each child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

Examination of foster carers files evidenced that a detailed assessment is carried out of the carers skills and experience. Evidence of the carers suitability to foster children in respect of the child's age, sex, behavioural needs, disabilities, cultural needs, etc are specified in relation to their experience, training and background.

The responses from the questionnaires illustrated that the Social Workers or Placing Officers thought that Anchor did a good job in matching children or young people with appropriate foster carers.

A 'mentoring' service has recently been introduced providing the young people with an

advocate / mentor that they have regular contact with, carers commented that this was an effective and valuable source of support for the young people.

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

**8 of the 9 standards were met, minor shortfalls were identified in respect of recruitment of staff. Recommendations were made in respect of training.**

New staff recruitment procedures have been developed and documentation relating to recruitment and selection of staff were seen. Whilst it was evident that the management had taken measures to improve in this standard, references had not been obtained for three staff files examined and therefore 15.3 and 15.4 of the standard were not met. (These staff had either been invited to work for the agency or had been recommended to the agency by others known to it.)

The agency had established a recruitment policy and strategy for the recruitment of foster carers. Foster carers files evidenced that a thorough recruitment and assessment process is undertaken. Discussions with staff and carers demonstrated that they regarded Anchor as being a fair and competent employer. The carers commented very positively about the high levels of out of hours support they were given and the good quality support that they generally received at other times. Examination of foster carers' files showed that there were management systems in place for carer supervision, appraisal and support.

Responses made in the Foster Carers' and Young People's Questionnaires indicated that the carers and children/young people felt they were well supported by qualified and experienced staff.

Evidence was seen that new foster carers complete the 'choosing to foster' training which is a 3-day course. Whilst the carers stated that various training courses had been offered and evidence was seen on some files of qualifications obtained and courses attended by carers, it was the view of the Inspectors that a clear plan for the training and development of all staff was an area for further development (see the recommendations section of this report).

Evidence was seen that unannounced visits to Foster Carers and Annual Reviews have taken place.

**Records (Standards 24-25)**

**Standard 24 was not met with minor shortfalls in relation to record keeping as identified also in standard 15 (see above).**

The files examined demonstrated that for most children detailed information is kept. However not all the files for children contained a written care plan detailing the nature and quality of care provided and therefore 24.1 of the standard is not fully met. Where the local authorities had not provided necessary information evidence was seen on file that the agency had made repeated requests in writing for it.

It was the view of the Inspectors that the agency social workers should write care plans and provide copies of these to the local authority social workers, see good practice recommendations of this report. In one instance this had in fact been done by the agency social worker.

All confidential records were seen stored securely and systems in place to ensure access to them were restricted to the appropriate members of staff.

**Fitness of premises to be used as fostering service (Standards 26)**

**This standard was met.**

The agency has moved into new office premises fit for the purpose. There was evidence of

efficient and robust administrative systems, including IT, and communications systems and secure facilities for records.

**Financial Requirements (Standards 27-29)**

**All 3 standards were met.**

Extensive financial documentation was presented including a written set of the agencies financial procedures that provided clear details of the financial arrangements and processes and the responsibilities of individuals concerned.

**Fostering Panels (Standards 30)**

**This standard was met.**

The agency shares a joint fostering panel with another fostering agency, clear written policies and procedures were available. Documentation on foster carers files evidenced that the panels review the work of the assessors and provide feedback. At the time of the inspection the panel needed to recruit someone who had experienced being fostered. Examination of the panel minutes indicated that meetings were well attended and that the business of the meetings was properly conducted.

**Short-term breaks (Standards 31)**

**This standard does not apply.**

**Family and friends as carers (Standards 32)**

**This standard does not apply.**

## **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.

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	
<b>Comments</b>		

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	
<b>Comments</b>		

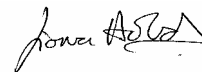
<b>Condition</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	
<b>Comments</b>		

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Compliance</b>	
<b>Comments</b>		

**Regulation Inspector**

**Fiona Holdaway**

**Signature**



**Second Inspector**

**Jacky Fearon**

**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Locality Manager**

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**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

**24 June 2004**

\_\_\_\_\_

**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	20.3 (d) Schedule 1	15 25	<p><b>Fitness of workers</b> SCHEDULE 1 Regulations 5,7, 20 INFORMATION REQUIRED IN RESPECT OF PERSONS SEEKING TO CARRY ON, MANAGE OR WORK FOR THE PURPOSES OF A FOSTERING SERVICE.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Two written references, including a reference from the person's most recent employer, if any.</p>	7/9/04

**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	4.5	It is recommended that staff and carers sign a statement as part of their contractual agreement declaring that they have or have not any conflicts of interest and that they will undertake to declare any conflict of interest that arises.  Guidance should be included in the foster carers handbook.
2	19 & 23	All foster carers and staff have a training and development plan in place.
3	24	All children should have a comprehensive plan of care on file detailing the nature and quality of care to be provided.

\* 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.

<b>PART B</b>	<b>INSPECTION METHODS &amp; FINDINGS</b>
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The following inspection methods have been used in the production of this report



Number of Inspector days spent	3
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	NO
Interview with panel chair	NO
Observation of foster carer training	NO
Observation of foster panel	NO
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	YES
Date of Inspection	07/06/04
Time of Inspection	10:00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	17

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?
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The Statement of Purpose provided was a detailed document that fulfilled the regulatory requirements and it was evident from other documentation and from discussion with staff and foster carers that it was an accurate reflection of the service provided. Evidence was seen that the Statement of Purpose had been reviewed and modified. The children’s guide to the agency was presented in two different formats aimed at meeting the needs of younger and older children.	
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## 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?	3
It was evident from the documentation provided, including financial documentation and from discussions with the Manager and registered provider that they have the relevant experience and appropriate qualifications to meet the Standards.		

### 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 information required under Schedule 1 of the regulations has been provided and is satisfactory.		

## 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

There are clear roles for managers and staff and well established lines of communication and accountability as detailed in Anchors' Statement of Purpose and the Foster Carers Handbook.

Evidence relating to 4 – 6 weekly visits and annual unannounced visits by social workers to foster carers was seen. Records of formal supervision of social workers and staff were seen.

Documentation provided evidenced that the agency has proper financial procedures that are kept under review. Questionnaire responses from local authority placing officers indicated that information regarding charges was provided to purchasers of the agency's service.

Whilst carers and staff demonstrated awareness of their responsibility to declare any possible conflicts of interest this is not stated in the guidance in the foster carers handbook or in contracts for carers or staff, the Inspectors would recommend this as good practice.

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

1

**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.**

1

**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.**

1

**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:**

X

**Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.4)**

**The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.**

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

Since the last inspection the agency has recruited more social work staff and the manager has reduced her own support work caseload enabling her to concentrate on the daily management of the agency. The manager stated that she also now receives supervision / mentoring from an independent person and she recently completed a NVQ level 4 Diploma in Management.

The agency has clear arrangements in place to identify the person in charge when the manager is absent as documented in the Statement of Purpose.

## 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
<p>It was evident from documentation on foster carers files that the quality of the accommodation for use as a foster home is assessed including a health and safety assessment of the home and the environment. Evidence that prospective carers had attended a 'Choosing To Foster' course was seen and records relating to the Annual Reviews of the agency's carers were also seen.</p> <p>Anchors Foster Carers Handbook provides with written guidelines on the health and safety responsibilities of carers.</p>		

### 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
<p>The agencies policies demonstrate a commitment to value diversity and support and promote equal opportunities. It was evident from the information on the foster carers files that the agency has been successful in recruiting carers from diverse backgrounds so as to try and ensure that it has a range of carers to provide care which respect and preserve each child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.</p>		

<b>Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.7)</b> 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.		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	3
Examination of foster carers files evidenced that a detailed assessment is carried out of the carers skills and experience. Evidence of the carers suitability to foster children in respect of the child's age, sex, behavioural needs, disabilities, cultural needs, etc are specified in relation to their experience, training and background. The responses from the questionnaires illustrated that the Social Workers or Placing Officers thought that Anchor did a good job in matching children or young people with appropriate foster carers.		

<b>Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)</b> The fostering service protects each child or young person from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation.		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	3
Foster carers files and questionnaires illustrated that they have attended training in Child Protection and Safe Care guidelines. Anchor's Foster Carers Handbook provides clear guidelines to all carers about Child Protection issues, including bullying, acceptable and non-acceptable forms of punishment and the procedures to be used if a foster child was missing from home.		
<b>Percentage of foster children placed who report never or hardly ever being bullied:</b>	11	%

<b>Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.9)</b> 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.		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	3
It was evident from discussions with carers and from the respective questionnaire responses that Anchor did make sure that each child or young person in foster care was encouraged to maintain and develop family contacts. Issues and problems relating to family contacts were discussed and worked through with carers by support workers. Carers indicated that they felt they were well advised and supported by Anchor with regard to this area and recognised the importance for the majority of children to develop and maintain good contact with their own birth families.		



**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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The responses made in the Young People's Questionnaires indicated that their views were sought by their carers. Discussions with carers and agency social workers indicated that the agency was keen to ensure that children's opinions and those of their families and others significant to the child were sought over all issues that were likely to affect their daily life and future. A 'mentoring' service has recently been introduced providing the young people with an advocate / mentor that they have regular contact with, carers commented that this was an effective and valuable source of support for the young people.

**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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Anchors Foster Carers Handbook contains guidance on promoting health care and development and states the responsibilities of all those involved in the health care of each child. It was evident from discussion with carers that they had access to relevant information concerning specialist needs. Carers were clear about the procedures governing consent for the child to receive medical treatment and an examination of children's files evidenced that the procedures were being followed.

**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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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Anchors Foster Carers Handbook contains guidance on promoting educational achievement. When children were not attending school discussion with the carers confirmed that the supervising social workers liaised with the local authority and carers in trying to get children back into school as quickly as possible. For some children the agency did pay for tuition through Write-Track so as to ensure that they continued to receive education whilst not attending school. The manager stated that the it is hoped that the agency will employ teachers as session workers to improve education achievements through support and extra lessons.

**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?**

**3**

Anchor's Foster Carers Handbook contains guidance for carers on preparing young people for adult life and states that there will be no age limit for young people who have left Anchor foster carers for receiving practical and emotional support where this can be provided without any detriment to any other children placed with the agency.

The manager stated that they were liaising with the local authority leaving care team in respect of one young person however whilst they were waiting for the appointed social worker to be confirmed some progress had been made from discussions with the young person in respect of their future plans.

## 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

New recruitment procedures have been developed and documentation relating to recruitment and selection of staff were seen.

Whilst it was evident that the management had taken measures to improve in this standard, references had not been obtained for three staff files examined and therefore 15.3 and 15.4 of the standard were not met. (These staff had either been invited to work for the agency or had been recommended to the agency by others known to it.)

All social work staff employed by the agency were appropriately qualified and the evidence from discussions with staff and an examination of staff files indicated that 15.5 to 15.8 of the standard were being met.

Total number of staff of the agency:

14

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

0

### 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

There is a clear management structure with clear lines of accountability as specified in the Statement of Purpose and the Foster Carers Handbook.

The staff files evidenced that staff receive regular supervision and that a formal system of appraisal was being introduced, contracts were also in place. The manager receives supervision from an independent consultant. Job descriptions have been developed and were seen on file, a foster carers job description is included in the handbook.

It was evident from discussions with carers and staff that on-going training and support was available and there was sufficient administrative and clerical support.

Discussions with social workers evidenced that 16.15 of the standard were met.

**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

Reference to the staffing list showed that the agency employed a range of staff that were appropriately qualified to offer the services indicated in the Statement of Purpose. Responses made in the Foster Carers' and Young People's Questionnaires indicated that the carers and children/young people felt they were well supported by qualified and experienced staff.

The agency had established a recruitment policy and strategy for the recruitment of foster carers. Foster carers files evidenced that a thorough recruitment and assessment process is undertaken and that 17.5, 17.6 and 17.7 of the standards were met.

**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?**

3

Discussions with staff and carers demonstrated that they regarded Anchor as being a fair and competent employer. The carers commented very positively about the high levels of out of hours support they were given and the good quality support that they generally received at other times. Examination of foster carers' files showed that there were management systems in place for carer supervision, appraisal and support. Anchor did have a health and safety policy for carers, children and staff, which covered all legal requirements. Copies of relevant insurance policies were presented.

**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

Evidence was seen that all new foster carers have completed the 'choosing to foster' training.

Whilst foster carers stated that various training courses had been offered and evidence was seen on some files of training plans and courses attended by carers, not all the carers had a training and development plan. It was the view of the Inspectors that a clear plan for the training and development of all staff was an area for further development (see the recommendations section of this report).

<b>Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)</b>		
<b>All staff are properly accountable and supported.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>Job descriptions have been developed and were seen on file, a foster carers job description is included in the handbook. The staff files evidenced that staff receive regular supervision and that a formal system of appraisal was being introduced. Staff stated that meetings are held on a monthly basis.</p>		

<b>Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.6)</b>		
<b>The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>From discussion with foster carers and from the questionnaire responses it was evident that carers had regular contact with their supervising social worker and there was out of hours support available. The carers indicated that they valued their support groups in that they were able to discuss problems and issues as they arose.</p> <p>It is the policy of the agency that foster carers became eligible for paid respite care after six months of fostering and one of the approved carers had decided to specialise in respite care rather than full time fostering so as to provide a respite service to the agency.</p> <p>Evidence was seen that an Annual review took place.</p>		

<b>Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.10)</b>		
<b>The fostering service is a managed one that provides supervision for foster carers and helps them to develop their skills.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
<p>Discussions with carers and staff, examination of the Anchor Foster Care Agreement and foster carer files indicated that this Standard was met.</p> <p>Discussion with social workers, foster carers and carers files evidenced that foster carers receive regular support by a named, appropriately qualified social worker; supervision meetings were properly recorded and issues followed up appropriately. Evidence was seen that unannounced visits and Annual Reviews have taken place.</p> <p>Significant Events were being properly recorded.</p> <p>The Foster Carers' Handbook contained well-presented policies, procedures and guidance, legal information and insurance details. Systems of practical support as indicated in 22.7, and information about complaints and investigations 22.8 and 22.9 of the standard were in place as documented in the handbook.</p> <p>Documentation seen suggested that Performance Indicators 22.8, 22.9 and 22.10 were met.</p>		

**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

Evidence was seen that new foster carers complete the 'choosing to foster' training which is a 3 day course. Some foster carers files contained certificates of courses attended and a training plan. Whilst it was clear from discussion with carers that they were aware of when courses were available not all the carers had a training and development plan.

As previously indicated (see standard 19) it was the view of the inspectors that training was an area in which the agency could develop, ensuring that all carers had a training and development plan and that the agency's training plan reflected a range of courses for both experienced and new carers (see the recommendations section of this report).

## 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?

2

The files examined demonstrated that for most children detailed information is kept. However not all the files for children contained a written care plan detailing the nature and quality of care provided and therefore 24.1 of the standard is not fully met. Where the local authorities had not provided necessary information evidence was seen on file that the agency had made repeated requests in writing for it.

It was the view of the Inspectors that the agency social workers should write care plans and provide copies of these to the local authority social workers, see good practice recommendations of this report. In one instance this had in fact been done by the agency social worker.

Foster carers comments on the safekeeping and importance of personal effects, memorabilia, photographs, 'life-story' books belonging to the children indicated that 24.5 and 24.7 of the standard were met.

Discussion with foster carers and children questionnaire responses indicated that 24.4 of the standard were met.

### 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

Files examined were well ordered and separate records were kept as indicated in 25.2 standards. All confidential records were seen stored securely and systems in place to ensure access to them were restricted to the appropriate members of staff. Evidence seen indicated that Anchor had systems in place for the recording of allegations and complaints and their outcomes and that separate records were maintained which brought together data in these areas.

As previously indicated not all the files for children contained care plans and references had not been obtained for three staff files examined and therefore 25.1 of the standard was not met.

<b>Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:</b>			9
<b>Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months:</b>			8
<b>Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months:</b>			6
<b>Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months:</b>			5
<b>Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months:</b>			1
<b>Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £</b>	322	<b>Maximum £</b>	350



## 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?**

3

The agency has moved into new office premises fit for the purpose. There was evidence of efficient and robust administrative systems, including IT, and communications systems and secure facilities for records.

## 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

Examination of the extensive financial documentation presented evidenced that this Standard was met.

### 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?

3

A written set of the agencies financial procedures were provided and clearly detail the financial arrangements and processes and the responsibilities of individuals concerned.

**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?**

3

An examination of relevant financial documentation on carers files and discussion with foster carers evidenced that this Standard was being met.

## 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?
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The agency shares a joint fostering panel with another fostering agency, clear written policies and procedures were available. Documentation on foster carers files evidenced that the panels review the work of the assessors and provide feedback. At the time of the inspection the panel needed to recruit someone who had experienced being fostered. Examination of the panel minutes indicated that meetings were well attended and that the business of the meetings was properly conducted.	3
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## 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?	9
Not applicable.		

## 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?	9
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Not applicable.

**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 07/06/04 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

NO

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

NO

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

YES

**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 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 Florence Sutherland of Anchor Fostercare 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 Florence Sutherland of Anchor Fostercare 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.