



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

Attachments Fostering Limited

**24-26 High Street
Snodland
Kent
ME6 5DF**

Lead Inspector
Sophie Wood

Announced Inspection
5th June 2006 10:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

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This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Fostering Services*. They can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

Every Child Matters, outlined the government's vision for children's services and formed the basis of the Children Act 2004. It provides a framework for inspection so that children's services should be judged on their contribution to the outcomes considered essential to wellbeing in childhood and later life. Those outcomes are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution; and
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

In response, the Commission for Social Care Inspection has re-ordered the national minimum standards for children's services under the five outcomes, for reporting purposes. A further section has been created under 'Management' to cover those issues that will potentially impact on all the outcomes above.

Copies of *Every Child Matters* and *The Children Act 2004* are available from The Stationery Office as above

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SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of service	Attachments Fostering Limited
Address	24-26 High Street Snodland Kent ME6 5DF
Telephone number	01634 244555
Fax number	
Email address	attachments@btconnect.com
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Attachments Fostering Limited
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	Mrs Dorothy Helen King
Type of registration	Fostering Agencies

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

Date of last inspection 18th July 2005

Brief Description of the Service:

Attachments Fostering Limited was first registered in September 2004 and, according to its statement of purpose, seeks to "provide a secure family base for children and young people who are unable to live at home, in order that they may grow and reach their full potential".

Whilst still in its infancy, the agency has recruited and approved a range of carers, some completely 'new' to fostering and others with a wealth of experience from both local authority provision and private independent agency backgrounds. The agency seeks to provide the following placements: short and long term, bridging, parent and child, sibling, emergency, 'difficult to place' and respite.

Currently, much work is being undertaken by the agency to establish links with therapeutic services and specialist educational provision, outside of mainstream schools and colleges; however, at the time of this inspection, all of the children / young people in placement were positively benefiting from being in full time mainstream educational provision.

SUMMARY

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

This announced inspection was the second to be conducted under the auspices of the Care Standards Act 2000 and National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2001. Commencing on 5th June 2006, this inspection was conducted over three days by CSCI inspectors, Sophie Wood and Lucy Ansell.

Time was spent interviewing the registered manager, proposed responsible individual, other employees and scrutinising all relevant written documentation, including the policies and procedures of the agency.

A case tracking exercise was undertaken, whereby two carer families and those placed with them were visited in their own homes. All associated Form F's, case records and files were read in conjunction with these visits.

Additional inspection material was gained through the receipt of questionnaires from carers, children and placing authorities and pre – inspection material, received from the registered manager.

Following the previous announced inspection of 18th July 2005 a number of the requirements and recommendations made had been implemented. Others remain outstanding, and from this visit they have therefore become immediate requirements.

Although some difficulties have been experienced during the last year, including the change of responsible individual, the loss of a link worker and recruitment challenges, the agency continues to have very clear and specific responsibilities to its carers and children and the findings of this inspection have identified major shortfalls, which must be addressed.

These areas of concern were clearly communicated at the feedback meeting, at which, the manager gave verbal assurances of full compliance.

What the service does well:

Children and young people are being placed with foster carers who are committed to providing good quality placements that meet presenting needs.

What has improved since the last inspection?

A number of pertinent policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated.

A suitably qualified and experienced social worker, with a fostering background has been recruited.

The training programme for carers has been expanded upon.

What they could do better:

Whilst it is positive that a revised health care record is currently being distributed to carers, these documents now need to be fully completed, with key and specific information copied into the case files held by the agency.

The recruitment policy and procedure of the agency should be reviewed as a matter of priority and staff personnel files require immediate review to bring them in line with regulatory requirements.

In order to provide the best possible care, foster carers need to receive, not only mandatory training, but also courses and guidance specific to their own individual learning needs, that reflect the individual needs of those in their care.

In terms of placing children with carers, the agency must ensure that clearly recorded matching evidence is available and carers require specific guidance in terms of implementing their own 'safe care' policies and procedures.

Monitoring systems and processes need to be implemented as a matter of priority and the roles and responsibilities of all staff members should be reviewed and made clear.

The agency should consider the status of its personnel, in terms of their contractual arrangements and the use of an unqualified staff member supervising carers should cease.

Formal induction, supervision and appraisal systems for agency staff need to be implemented.

A case recording policy and procedure is required and this should be supported with training for carers and staff with regards its implementation.

A policy and procedure, describing the agency strategy for supporting its carers needs to be implemented and it is further recommended that specific guidance pertaining to carers' financial responsibilities to those in their care be written and distributed.

Please contact the provider for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office.

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Scoring of Outcomes

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Being Healthy

The intended outcome for this Standard is:

- The fostering service promotes the health and development of children.(NMS 12)

The Commission considers Standard 12 the key standard to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at the outcome for Standard:

12

Although children's health needs are being promoted and supported by their carers, improvements to written records would further enhance this aspect of service provision.

The overall quality of the service in this outcome group is average.

EVIDENCE:

Four children's files were inspected and each held a separate health section; some contained more information than others and some did not contain written details pertaining to medical consent.

Through case tracking, it was evident that one child was in need of ongoing dentistry and counselling input. This was discussed with the carers and it became clearly evident that these needs were being well supported.

Following the previous inspection, during which, shortfalls were identified in terms of supporting children with medication needs, it was positive to find that specific training on this subject, as well as first aid has been booked.

The agency has also obtained a health record format from BAAF and is currently distributing this for all of the children placed. It is intended that carers will support individuals to maintain this record, which they will then take with them whenever they move.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

- Any persons carrying on or managing the service are suitable. (NMS 3)
- The fostering service provides suitable foster carers.(NMS 6)
- The service matches children to carers appropriately.(NMS 8)
- The fostering service protects each child or young person from abuse and neglect.(NMS 9)
- The people who work in or for the fostering service are suitable to work with children and young people.(NMS 15)
- Fostering panels are organised efficiently and effectively.(NMS 30)

The Commission considers Standards 3, 6, 8, 9, 15 and 30 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following Standard(s):

3, 6, 8, 9, 15, 30.

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced in child - care and foster carers are motivated and committed.
Shortfalls in staff recruitment, matching evidence and safe care guidance makes children and carers vulnerable.

The overall quality of the service provision in this outcome group is poor.

EVIDENCE:

The registered manager possesses twenty years previous experience in child - care services; she is a qualified social worker and is currently near to completing NVQ management training.
Since the previous inspection, the responsible individual for the service has left and a new director has joined. This individual was interviewed as part of the inspection process and was advised to thoroughly research the responsibilities of the responsible individual role before taking this on.
Following requirements made from the previous inspection, personnel files were scrutinised and shortfalls were again found. A review of all staff files and the agency's own recruitment practice is to be conducted as a matter of priority; this is an immediate requirement.

Two carer families were visited in their own homes; this enabled carers, foster children and birth children to be interviewed and each home to be toured. In both instances, the homes were clean, well decorated and hazard free. In the case of siblings sharing a bedroom, this arrangement had been assessed and agreed.

Both sets of carers demonstrated a very clear commitment to those in their care and explained their understanding of their own role clearly and knowledgeably.

Preparation training includes health and safety responsibilities, however; greater emphasis needs to be placed upon carers' own 'safe care' policies and this aspect is now being incorporated into ongoing training courses.

Carers have joined the agency from a variety of backgrounds; some are completely new to fostering, whilst others have transferred from other independent agencies.

All of the children seen were having their presenting needs met by their carers. This was evidenced through case tracking and interviewing the individual children and carers. Greater recorded evidence is however, needed, in terms of the agency demonstrating clearly its 'matching' processes. It is also vital that when placements are made, a clear record should identify any skills deficits the carers may have. This is particularly relevant for new carers, who may require immediate additional support, training or guidance.

Whilst a clear and informative child protection policy and procedure is in place, not all carers had received underpinning training. This must be addressed. More positively, written documentation supported the actions of the manager in identifying child protection concerns and acting very swiftly and appropriately, in liaison with the placing authority, and in the best interests of the children concerned. From the previous inspection, it was recommended that the whistle blowing policy be expanded upon, and whilst some additions have been made, further work is still needed. It was also recommended at this visit that connecting policies, such as child protection and whistle blowing, be drawn together and presented to carers as such.

Whilst records in respect of panel members and panel meeting minutes were seen, a full panel meeting is not scheduled until next month. This will be observed by the lead inspector, in order that any findings will be acted upon appropriately, depending upon the observations made.

From the evidence that was seen, the current panel consists of individuals from a good range of independent, professional disciplines. All members have been appropriately checked and a number of panel members have been provided with relevant training.

Through the sampling of panel meeting minutes, anomalies were found with regards the approval status of one set of carers. The minutes referred to a change of age range, however; there was no mention of the number of children to be accommodated. This did not 'tally' with other records and it is

recommended that greater attention be paid to the quality and explicit detail of such minutes.

Additionally, for panel members and other agency staff, it is recommended that the topic of 'conflict of interest' be explicitly covered and recorded.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

- The fostering service values diversity.(NMS 7)
- The fostering service promotes educational achievement.(NMS 13)
- When foster care is provided as a short-term break for a child, the arrangements recognise that the parents remain the main carers for the child.(NMS 31)

The Commission considers Standards 7, 13, and 31 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

7, 13

Diversity among carers and young people is valued and young people benefit through being supported to achieve their full potential at school.
Standard 31 is not applicable.

The overall quality of the service provision in this outcome group is good.

EVIDENCE:

All carers have received 'valuing diversity' training; this is underpinned by the agency's own policies and procedures regarding equal opportunities, discrimination, complaints and admissions. Carers receive written guidance in terms of supporting young people who may be bullied or discriminated against on grounds of racial origin, religion or disability. As was found last year, the agency is continuing to actively recruit carers from as broad as possible ethnic and religious backgrounds, in an attempt to offer placements that match the needs of the referrals received.

All of the children's files seen held clear and specific records pertaining to education. PEP's and Statements were in place and these were all up to date. Carers were particularly impressive in terms of demonstrating the energy and support they are devoting to this aspect of their care provision. They were explicitly clear about their own responsibilities and gave excellent examples of how they have advocated on a child's behalf with regards school placements.

All children currently within the agency are attending mainstream school, full time and one older child is being supported by carers to obtain a college placement.

It is recommended that the agency review its written guidance within the Foster Carer Agreement to be explicitly clear about where financial responsibility lies with regards educational needs, such as uniform, etc.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

- The fostering service promotes contact arrangements for the child or young person. (NMS 10)
- The fostering service promotes consultation.(NMS 11)

The Commission considers Standards 10 and 11 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

10, 11

Young people benefit through being supported to maintain positive contact with those who are important to them.

Effort needs to be made to ensure the consultation processes available throughout the agency continue to be effectively communicated and used.

The overall quality of the service provision in this outcome group is average.

EVIDENCE:

Whilst the agency demonstrates a clear commitment to ensure that positive family contact is promoted and supported for those in its care, the standard of written records in care files was variable. In one instance, contact arrangements were explicitly clear and good quality records were being made and forwarded to the placing authority, however; this was not found within another file seen.

Carers are fully aware of their own roles and responsibilities to support contact arrangements; this may involve providing transport, etc, however; they are not required to undertake tasks they are not comfortable with, such as facilitating such meetings in their own homes.

The agency provides services to placing authorities, including drivers, both for contact arrangements and school runs. As was found last time, the personnel records of such individuals did not fully comply with regulatory requirements. Such personnel are included within the immediate requirement, made from this visit, to review and update such records, in accordance with Regulation 20, Schedule 2 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2001.

Feedback received from carers with regards consultation processes was also variable. Some were extremely positive, whilst other comments were less favourable. Birth children confirmed they are included in the annual review process and stated they are often involved when the link worker visits their home. Placing authorities are routinely canvassed for their views and feedback about placements and the comments received from such individuals pertaining to this inspection were very positive.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

- The fostering service prepares young people for adulthood.(NMS 14)
- The fostering service pays carers an allowance and agreed expenses as specified.(NMS 29)

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

14, 29

Young people receive good support from their carers, which would be even further enhanced through increased training provision.

A review of payable allowances and expenses to carers would provide greater clarity.

The overall quality of the service provision in this outcome group is average.

EVIDENCE:

Whilst the agency has written guidance available, pertaining to preparing young people for adulthood, this needs to be underpinned with specific training for those carers accommodating such youngsters.

One example was seen, whereby a young person is clearly receiving appropriate guidance and support in making this transition as a direct result of the skills of the carers; an appropriate college course is being secured and the individual has also secured a part time job. This is having a tremendously positive impact upon her self - esteem and ability to broaden her own experiences and social networks.

The carers are commended for their committed approach to this individual and they would benefit from additional guidance and support from the agency. In this particular instance, it was disappointing to note the lack of input being received by the young person's own placing authority and it is recommended that this aspect be pursued by the agency also.

In the main, carers confirmed their continued receipt of allowances and expenses; financial records supported this.

In line with the previous recommendation to explicitly describe the financial responsibilities for carers in respect of meeting the educational needs of those in their care, the agency is advised to review its financial agreements with carers more widely. This recommendation is made within the context of particular carers incurring exceptionally high expenditure due to the nature and circumstances of the placement made with them.

Management

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

- There is a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and the fostering service ensures that they meet those aims and objectives.(NMS 1)
- The fostering service is managed by those with the appropriate skills and experience. (NMS 2)
- The fostering service is monitored and controlled as specified. (NMS 4)
- The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.(NMS 5)
- Staff are organised and managed effectively.(NMS 16)
- The fostering service has an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff.(NMS 17)
- The fostering service is a fair and competent employer.(NMS 18)
- There is a good quality training programme. (NMS 19)
- All staff are properly accountable and supported.(NMS 20)
- The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers.(NMS 21)
- Foster carers are provided with supervision and support.(NMS 22)
- Foster carers are appropriately trained.(NMS 23)
- Case records for children are comprehensive.(NMS 24)
- The administrative records are maintained as required.(NMS 25)
- The premises used as offices by the fostering service are suitable for the purpose.(NMS 26)
- The fostering service is financially viable. (NMS 27)
- The fostering service has robust financial processes. (NMS 28)
- Local Authority fostering services recognise the contribution made by family and friends as carers.(NMS 32)

The Commission considers Standards 17, 21, 24 and 32 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

1, 2, 4, 5, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26

General management and monitoring systems are failing to provide the safeguards required; this is further exacerbated by an inadequate staffing complement.

Standard 32 is not applicable.

The overall quality of the service provision for this outcome group is poor.

EVIDENCE:

Further to last year's inspection, the statement of purpose and children's guide still requires review and amendment; this is now an immediate requirement.

Whilst the manager does possess many years of relevant experience, she is still very much involved with all of the day to day aspects of the agency and this does not allow sufficient time and energy to be devoted to the monitoring and quality assurance aspects explicit to her role.

Although the recruitment of a qualified and experienced social worker is positive, a link worker, who is not qualified, is currently undertaking the supervision of a number of carers. Whilst unqualified staff are able to undertake a number of support tasks, the supervision of carers must only be conducted by qualified personnel.

It was also found that all of the staff working for the agency work part time hours and their terms and conditions of employment describe them to be of self - employed status. Such aspects do not encourage loyalty and stability, which is of particular importance within a new service that is trying to grow and develop.

There needs to be a very clear and explicit review of the staffing structure and status of individuals as the current situation is failing to provide necessary safeguards.

Further shortfalls were identified in terms of the induction process for new staff, as whilst individuals said they spent time reading through policies and getting to know the service, very little documented evidence was found to support a clear induction process being implemented.

It was evident that the training programme for the agency is continuing to expand and increase, however; more needs to be done in terms of recognising and providing for the very individual and specific training needs of carers. Greater evidence is also needed to demonstrate that courses are effectively evaluated.

Written guidance pertaining to the agency's strategy for working with and supporting carers requires expansion and the format used for carer supervision does not hold sufficient details. Contrary to the recommendation made last year, no unannounced visits have been conducted, although the manager advised that these are planned.

A clear and explicit case recording policy is required and this should be underpinned by record keeping training for carers and staff.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services have been met and uses the following scale.

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

"X" in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion

"N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	2

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	1
6	2
8	2
9	1
15	1
30	2

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

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
10	2
11	2

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
14	2
29	2

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

YES

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection?

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
1.	FS1	3	The fostering service provider shall compile, in relation to the fostering service, a written statement (in these Regulations referred to as the "statement of purpose"). This requirement is made within the context of the current document needing review and amendment, to include all of the elements as listed under standard 1.4. Furthermore, the Young Person's Guide requires similar review, with particular attention paid towards the complaints procedure and the role and function of the Commission. This requirement is carried over from the previous inspection and is to be implemented within 7 days.	14/06/06
2.	FS9	42(1) & (2)	The registered person shall establish and maintain a system for - (a) monitoring the matters set out in schedule 7 and (b) improving the quality of foster care provided by the agency. The registered person shall supply to the Commission a	07/07/06

			<p>report in respect of any review conducted by him. This requirement is made within the context of the ongoing monitoring role of the manager, including her responsibility to forward such reports, at regular intervals, to CSCI.</p> <p>This requirement is carried over from the previous inspection and systems are to be implemented within one month.</p>	
3.	FS15	20	<p>The fostering service provider shall not employ a person to work for the purposes of the fostering service unless that person is fit to so. This requirement is made within the context of the recruitment policy requiring review and the personnel records for all employees, both permanent and freelance / sessional being updated to include all of the elements as listed under schedule 1.</p> <p>This requirement is carried over from the previous inspection and is to be implemented within one month.</p>	07/07/06
4.	FS24	22 Schedule 2	<p>The registered person is required to review the current contents of children's case files, given the omissions found. Furthermore, a policy on case recording is to be implemented.</p> <p>This requirement is carried over from the previous inspection and is to be implemented within 2 weeks.</p>	21/06/06
5.	FS18	12	<p>The fostering service provider shall prepare and implement a written policy which –</p> <p>(a) is intended to safeguard children placed with foster carers from</p>	14/06/06

			<p>abuse or neglect.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context that a recommendation was made from the previous inspection to expand upon the contents of the whistle blowing policy and procedure. This remains outstanding and is to be implemented within 7 days.</p>	
6.	FS19	21	<p>The fostering service provider shall ensure that all permanent appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context that a recommendation was made from the previous inspection to ensure a written record pertaining to the induction of all new staff be implemented and this remains outstanding. This is to be implemented within one month.</p>	07/07/06
7.	FS22	11	<p>The fostering service provider shall ensure that the welfare of children placed with foster carers is safeguarded and promoted at all times.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context that a recommendation was made from the previous inspection to implement unannounced visits to carers, at least once, annually. This remains outstanding and the agency is required to advise the Commission of its intended programme of conducting such visits. This programme is to be submitted within one month.</p>	07/07/06
8.	FS23	17	<p>The fostering service provider shall provide foster parents with such training, advice, information and support, as</p>	07/07/06

			<p>appears necessary in the interests of the children placed with them.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context that a recommendation was made from the previous inspection to review and expand upon the training programme for carers. Whilst some progress has been made, shortfalls remain and an action plan, detailing how this will be addressed is to be received by the Commission within one month.</p>	
9.	FS12	15	<p>The fostering service provider shall promote the health and development of children placed with foster parents.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context of the agency conducting a review of the contents of the health care sections of all children's files to ensure that pertinent health information, for example, immunisations and medical consent is explicitly recorded in all cases.</p> <p>An action plan, detailing the methods and timescales as to how this requirement is to be addressed is to be received by the Commission by the date shown opposite.</p>	20/07/06
10.	FS9	11	<p>The registered person shall ensure that the welfare of children is safeguarded and promoted at all times.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context of the registered manager needing to collate and evaluate information on the circumstances, number and outcome of all allegations of neglect or abuse of a child in</p>	20/07/06

			<p>foster care. In addition, the agency must ensure that carers receive appropriate support and guidance to implement their own 'safe care' policy and procedure, which should be subject to ongoing review and monitoring.</p> <p>An action plan, detailing how and by when, such systems will be implemented is to be received by the Commission by the date shown opposite.</p>	
11.	FS30	25(2)	<p>A fostering panel shall make a written record of its proceedings and the reasons for its recommendations.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context of written panel meeting minutes conflicting with other recorded information. Such minutes must be explicitly clear, in terms of recording the actual business of such meetings and an action plan, detailing how and by when, such shortfalls will be addressed, is to be received by the Commission by the date shown opposite.</p>	20/07/06
12.	FS10	14	<p>The fostering service provider shall promote contact between a child placed and his relatives and friends, unless such contact is not reasonably practicable or consistent with the child's welfare.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context of the agency ensuring that all contact arrangements for children are clearly and accurately recorded within all children's files. An action plan, detailing how and by when, such shortfalls will be</p>	20/07/06

			addressed is to be received by the Commission by the date shown opposite.	
13.	FS14	17	<p>The fostering service provider shall provide foster parents with such training, information and support, as appears necessary in the best interests of children placed with them.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context of the agency needing to provide specific guidance and training for those carers accommodating young people approaching adulthood. In addition, explicit training with regards child protection must be secured for all foster carers as a matter of priority. An action plan, detailing how and by when, such shortfalls will be addressed is to be received by the Commission by the date shown opposite.</p>	20/07/06
14.	FS22	17	<p>The fostering service provider shall provide foster parents with support, as appears necessary in the interests of the children placed with them.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context of carers receiving supervision from an unqualified member of staff and this practice is to cease. An action plan, detailing how and by when, this shortfall will be addressed is to be received by the Commission by the date shown opposite.</p>	20/07/06
15.	FS24	22 Schedule 6	<p>The fostering service provider shall maintain and keep up to date the records specified in Schedule 2.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context of all children's files being reviewed, to ensure a</p>	20/07/06

			<p>consistent standard of documentation is held. This particularly refers to Schedule 6 Placement Agreement information.</p> <p>An action plan, detailing how and by when, this shortfall will be addressed is to be received by the Commission by the date shown opposite.</p>	
16.	FS25	22	<p>The fostering service provider shall maintain and keep up to date the records specified in Schedule 2.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context of the need to review the layout and content of carer supervision records and an action plan, detailing how and by when, this shortfall will be addressed is to be received by the Commission by the date shown opposite.</p>	20/07/06
16.	FS17	19	<p>The fostering service provider shall ensure that there is a sufficient number of suitably qualified, competent and experienced persons working for the fostering service.</p> <p>This requirement is made within the context of the agency needing to conduct a full and thorough review of its staffing structure, which should include numbers, status and roles & responsibilities. The findings are to be used to determine the need for immediate and future recruitment.</p> <p>An action plan, detailing how and by when, this shortfall will be addressed is to be received by the Commission by the date shown opposite.</p>	20/07/06

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations relate to National Minimum Standards and are seen as good practice for the Registered Provider/s to consider carrying out.

No.	Refer to Standard	Good Practice Recommendations
1.	FS3	It is strongly recommended that the proposed Responsible Individual for the service thoroughly research the responsibilities of such a role, before making application to undertake this function on behalf of the agency.
2.	FS13	It is recommended that clear and explicit systems be implemented to demonstrate the educational needs and attainment of children are being monitored.
3.	FS29	It is recommended that the agency provide clear and explicit advice pertaining to the financial responsibilities of its carers in relation to children placed with them. This should include the agency expectations with regards meeting the educational needs of children, for example, meeting the costs of school uniform.
4.	FS10	It is recommended that the section within children's files, pertaining to contact arrangements, be reviewed to ensure all are of the same good standard.
5.	FS23	It is recommended that clear systems be implemented for carers and staff to evaluate the training courses attended, in order for the agency to fully utilise this information in determining the value of the training providers it uses.
6.	FS23	It is recommended that, following the required implementation of a case recording policy, carers and staff receive explicit training pertaining to record – keeping.

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