



Champions for
Social Care
Improvement

inspection report

Fostering Services

London Borough of Haringey Fostering Service

Childrens Division
40 Cumberland Road
Wood Green
London
N22 7SG

2nd February 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?

YES

Name of Authority

London Borough of Haringey Fostering Service

Address

Childrens Division, 40 Cumberland Road, Wood Green,
London, N22 7SG

Local Authority Manager

Ms Rachel Elizabeth Clare Oakley

Tel No:

020 8489 0000

Address

Childrens Division, 40 Cumberland Road, Wood Green,
London, N22 7SG

Fax No:

Email Address

Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)

NO

Name of Agency

Tel No

Address

Fax No

Email Address

Registered Number of IFA

Name of Registered Provider

Name of Registered Manager (if applicable)

Date of first registration

Date of latest registration certificate

Registration Conditions Apply ?

NO

Date of last inspection

10/3/03

Date of Inspection Visit		2nd February 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:00 am	
Name of Inspector	1	Mrs Angela Grier	079915
Name of Inspector	2		
Name of Inspector	3		
Name of Inspector	4		
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the NCSC. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Rachel Oakley	

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 National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) 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 NCSC in respect of London Borough of Haringey Fostering Service. The inspection findings relate to the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services published by the Secretary of State under sections 23 and 49 of the Care Standards Act 2000, for independent and local authority fostering services respectively.

The Fostering Services Regulations 2002 are secondary legislation, with which a service provider must comply. Service providers are expected to comply fully with the National Minimum Standards. The National Minimum standards will form the basis for judgements by the NCSC 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 Haringey fostering service recruits, assesses, trains and supports a range of fostering resources to meet the diverse needs of Haringey's Looked After Children. At the time of the inspection the fostering service provided fostering placements to 174 children and recruited 19 new foster carers in the last year. The fostering service is divided into three teams, the Under 11's, the Over 11's and the Long Term and Kinship Care team. Each team has a manager and supervising social workers. A Senior Team Manager oversees the work of the three teams and an independent reviewing officer. There is a Family Link team which provides fostering and respite support to children with disabilities. There are two administrative posts within the teams and a designated Panel administrator for the Fostering and Adoption panels. There are two support worker posts which are currently vacant. The financial services cover the whole of the Looked After Children's service and is managed by the Service Manager for Looked After Children.

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 is the second inspection of the Haringey Fostering service which began on 2nd February 2004 and was completed on 27th February 2004. At the previous inspection seven requirements were made. All these requirements have been met. At this inspection two requirements have been made and these concern the training of staff and the follow up of decisions on foster carer's files.

The inspector found staff and managers were extremely helpful and cooperated fully with the inspection process. The senior management team will support staff to comply with the new requirements made in this report.

Statement of Purpose [standard 1]

Standard met.

The statement of purpose has been reviewed and adopted by the Council. There is a new Children's Guide which is about to be circulated.

Fitness to provide or manage a fostering service. [standards 2-3]

2 out of 2 standards were met.

The fostering service is provided and managed by those with appropriate skills and experience. The person managing the service is qualified and experienced as a manager and all recruitment checks seen by the inspector were in order.

Management of the fostering service. [standards 4-5]

2 out of 2 standards were met.

There are clear procedures for monitoring and controlling the work of the fostering service. The fostering service is managed efficiently and a staff were clear about the roles of managers and senior managers.

Securing and promoting welfare. [standards 6-14]

9 out of 9 standards were met.

The continual monitoring through the assessment process and from regular visits from their supervising social workers ensures that foster carers provide a safe, healthy and nurturing environment. The fostering team has a social worker working in the duty team to ensure that placements represent appropriate matches for the child. Training is provided to foster carers on valuing diversity. There was evidence from the questionnaires completed by children and young people that children are encouraged to develop their personal interests and talents.

There is on going training and written guidelines for foster carers to promote safe care and protect children. The need for contact was clearly understood and supported by foster carers. Looked After Children have computers in the foster homes and Haringey have provided a new on line package called Carezone for children who are in Public care. Health and Education support is provided through the dedicated LAC teams. The Leaving Care Team works closely with the fostering service to support a young person moving towards independence.

Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers. [standards 15-23].

7 out of 9 standards were met.

There are clear written recruitment procedures. Staff are suitably qualified and organised and managed properly. The recruitment policy for staff and for foster carers is based on sound employment practices and on going training is identified and provided. Staff and foster carers have access to a range of advice and support systems. There is a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers. The one standard not met in this group relates to the standards of reports submitted to Panel by the supervising social workers. The inspector was advised that a training course for staff will be provided in the summer. Three out of four files seen by the inspector did not have a Foster Care Agreement. Staff need further training in the completion of the Form F reports.

Records [standards 24-25]

2 out of 2 standards were met.

Records of checks and references for staff have been completed. The administrative records contain all the necessary information.

Fitness of Premises. [standard 26]

This standard was met.

The premises are fit for purpose although there is still a problem regarding the soundproofing of meeting rooms.

Financial Requirements [standard 27]

This standard was met.

The fostering service is part of the London Borough of Haringey and is financially viable.

Financial Processes. [standard 28]

This standard was met.

The fostering service follows the accounting procedures set down by the local authority.

Payment to Carers. [standard 29]

This standard was met.

Allowances are reviewed annually and a new payment for skills scheme has been introduced to recognise the development of foster carers.

Fostering Panels. [standard 30]

This standard was met.

There are clear written policies and procedures for the conduct of the fostering panel. The panel has identified issues as part of the quality control function.

Short term breaks. [standard 31]

This standard was met.

Short term breaks are provided to children and to carers.

Family and Friends as carers. [standard 32]

This standard was met.

Kinship care forms part of the work of the long term and kinship care team.

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:

YES

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:

The inspection of the Haringey fostering service identified two instances where there are failures to meet the National Minimum Standards [standards 19,22] and accompanying regulations [regulations 28, 27].

Two requirements with accompanying timescales are notified to the local authority, detailing actions that need to be taken in order to attain full compliance with the National Minimum Standards.

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 National Care Standards Commission to monitor compliance with the above requirements.

COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION (IF APPLICABLE)

(Registered Independent Fostering Agencies only)

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

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Lead Inspector Angela Grier **Signature** _____
Second Inspector _____ **Signature** _____
Locality Manager Frank Clarke **Signature** _____
Date 12 March 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 and recommendations 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	27 [2]	FS19	The manager must ensure that all staff are properly trained to complete an assessment of prospective foster carers as detailed in this regulation.	30.6.04
2	28[5][b]	FS22	The manager must ensure that each foster carer has a signed and dated copy of the foster care agreement on their personal files.	30.6.04

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	FS 6	The manager should consider including the children of foster carers in safe play activities when babies are being fostered.
2	FS 24	The manager should consider providing separate diaries for each child placed.
3	FS 29	The manager should consider providing to foster carers an annual breakdown of their allowances for tax purposes.

4	FS 24	The manager should consider how review decisions can be monitored.
5	FS 22	The manager should consider issuing a policy and procedure which enables a clear reassessment of any new information on approved foster carers and their families.

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

PART B INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS

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

Number of Inspector days spent	16
Survey of placing authorities	YES
Foster carer survey	YES
Foster children survey	YES
Checks with other organisations and Individuals	YES
• Directors of Social services	YES
• Child protection officer	YES
• Specialist advisor (s)	NO
• Local Foster Care Association	NO
Tracking Individual welfare arrangements	YES
• Interview with children	YES
• Interview with foster carers	YES
• Interview with agency staff	YES
• Contact with parents	NO
• Contact with supervising social workers	YES
• Examination of files	YES
Individual interview with manager	YES
Information from provider	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group discussion with staff	YES
Interview with panel chair	YES
Observation of foster carer training	NO
Observation of foster panel	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	YES
Date of Inspection	4/2/04
Time of Inspection	9.30
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	109.5

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

The scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

Statement of Purpose

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

Standard 1 (1.1 - 1.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The statement of purpose has been revised and approved by the Council. Staff confirmed that they were consulted on the document and had their own copies. The new Children's Guide has been delayed at the printing stage, the inspector saw the draft document and was advised that this will be completed by the end of February. The manager confirmed that a copy will be forwarded to the NCSC as soon as it is available

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
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At the last inspection the reorganisation of the fostering service had begun. At this inspection staff were in place and the teams all have their own manager. A senior manager and Service Manager oversee the work of all three teams. During the course of the inspection the managers of all three teams were interviewed and were seen supporting their staff at Panel and strategy meetings. All the managers are suitably qualified and have experience of working with children.

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
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The inspector examined five staff files. All files seen had the results of the CRB checks noted on the file. The service manager told the inspector that following a visit from a CRB inspector information on these checks had to be held in a certain way for staff and for foster carers, this requirement was being addressed during the inspection. The files seen by the inspector contained all the relevant information as required in Schedule 1 of regulation 7.

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

The Service manager has budgetary control for the fostering service and through the local authority systems there are proper financial procedures which are reviewed regularly. A letter outlining and explaining a new package of payments to foster carers was on all the foster carer files seen by the inspector. The manager's self assessment form confirmed that rules governing conflict of interest are contained in the Haringey Employee folder seen by inspectors last year, the 'A-Z of Additional Information' and the 'Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Rules' section.

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

0

Death of a child placed with foster parents.

0

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

0

Serious illness or accident of a child.

0

Outbreak of serious infectious disease at a foster home.

0

Actual or suspected involvement of a child in prostitution.

0

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

3

Serious complaint about a foster parent.

6

Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.

1

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

0

Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:

0

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.4)

The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The managers have clear job descriptions setting out their duties and responsibilities, staff interviewed by the inspector were also clear about the lines of accountability within the service. There were job descriptions on all files seen by the inspector.

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>The fostering service provides a high level of training and support to both new and approved foster carers. Responses to the questionnaires from foster carers confirmed this. Health and safety checks are carried out by the supervising social workers as part of their regular visits and included in the annual review of foster carers. The foster carers visited by the inspector confirmed their commitment to health and safety matters. The training programme for foster carers for January to March 2004 includes a session on first aid for babies and safe caring. The inspector recommends that the children of foster carers should be included in safe play activities when babies are being fostered. All the foster carers contacted by the inspector knew and understood the role of the NCSC.</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>Information in the pre inspection questionnaire describes the fostering service operating within the Haringey Council's Equal Opportunities Policies which aim to 'achieve equality and respect diversity.' The Audit Commission graded the Council as reaching CRE standard level 3. Recruitment campaigns are targeted to meet the needs of Haringey's looked after children. Foster carers are given the contact details of the Social Services Equalities Officer with their training packs. The inspector noted that anti discriminatory practice is part of a rolling agenda in team and service meetings. The inspector was advised that there is a specialist fostering resource in the Borough which can provide respite for foster carers looking after children with disabilities.</p>		

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.7)		
Local authority fostering services, and voluntary agencies placing children in their own right, ensure that each child or young person placed in foster care is carefully matched with a carer capable of meeting her/his assessed needs. For agencies providing foster carers to local authorities, those agencies ensure that they offer carers only if they represent appropriate matches for a child for whom a local authority is seeking a carer.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The four children's files seen by the inspector as part of the welfare tracking process contained the Looked After Children's placement agreement forms. The foster carers interviewed by the inspector confirmed the matching reasons for the placement of the children they were caring for. A staff meeting attended by the inspector included information on future placements and the matching issues. A member of the fostering service forms part of the duty team to ensure that children and young people are offered foster placements which match their needs.		

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)		
The fostering service protects each child or young person from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The inspector met a young person living with a foster carer who had been bullied at school. The young person confirmed that she had been supported by her foster carer during this time and was in the process of obtaining a move to a new school. The fostering service provides guidelines and training on safe care and the use of acceptable punishment. The child protection team routinely advises the NCSC if concerns are raised about a child who is fostered. The new children's questionnaires sent to children and young people who are using the fostering service do not include a question on bullying. There is a written procedure for foster children who are missing from home. The information from the foster carer's support group indicated that foster carers were generally being provided with more information about the children they were being asked to care for. At a staff meeting attended by the inspector staff identified the need to have better links between the Child Protection team, the District Social Worker for the child and the fostering service. This would ensure that the Supervising Social Worker is informed immediately an allegation or complaint is made and enable contact with the foster carer to offer the appropriate support during any investigation. The team manager agreed to look into this matter with the managers of the other teams involved. This would prevent difficult decisions such as the removal of a child being taken by the Children's services teams prior to a strategy meeting taking place.		
Percentage of foster children placed who report never or hardly ever being bullied:	100	%

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Contact with their families were part of the agreement for three out of the four children visited as part of the welfare tracking. In one case it was siblings who were placed with separate carers getting together, in another case it was support to enable a young person to return to their parent, a third child was receiving frequent visits from a parent. The inspector saw that in February 2003 there was a training programme entitled ' Keeping in Touch' which emphasises the importance of including contact with birth families. Foster carers confirmed their commitment to family contact in their response to the foster carers questionnaire.

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.5)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The views of children are sought as part of the annual review of foster carers. The new Children's guide will continue to provide information to children and remind them of their rights. There is a Children's Rights Officer who can provide information and advice to children. The fostering service is in the process of providing computers to children in foster care. The Council has also signed up to Carezone which is a range of safe secure online services for children living in public care. It also has a separate site for carers and professionals working with children in the care system. Parents and carers are consulted wherever possible in the completion of a placement agreement and in the ongoing care of their children usually by the social worker for the children. The response from the children's questionnaire and from speaking to children directly confirms that children know how to complain.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

The service manager outlined the changes which have taken place in the last year to ensure that children in foster care receive appropriate health information and treatment. All children living with foster carers are registered with a GP. Evidence of training courses provided to foster carers including Nutrition, First Aid, Sexual Health and Sexuality and Relationships, was seen by the inspector. A joint workshop between the Looked After Children's health team and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service took place last year to facilitate improving links between the health agencies.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Information on the pre inspection questionnaire showed that only two children were without a school placement. Information from a manager in a team meeting stated that an Ofsted report had stated that improvements in Haringey schools was satisfactory. Training for foster carers included courses on PEPS and Working with Children taking Exams. The computers supplied to foster children include the Encarta programme and training is provided to foster carers in the use of the computer for children. One of the three children's files seen by the inspector did not have a completed PEP for a young person who was changing schools. Both foster carers interviewed by the inspector were supporting the child in their school placements.

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

The inspector was provided with a Leaving Care Pack which is given to young people by the Leaving Care Team. The pack contains information in leaflet, and CD format which explains the help available to young people leaving care. The information also includes a multi faith guide which needs to be more consistent with the details it offers. Views expressed by foster carers at the Foster carer's support group attended by the inspector were generally very positive about the preparation time given to foster carers and young people before cases are transferred to the leaving care team. In the last year there were four modules of leaving care training which was attended by 14 foster carers. At a staff meeting the inspector was told that staff from the fostering service attend the staff meetings for the Leaving Care team and that this team is encouraging Care Leavers to attend the Induction training for carers.

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?

3

The inspector examined five staff files. All files had job descriptions and personal identification information. Four out of five files had confirmation of CRB checks with the identification number, one file had a note that the CRB check was clear but no identification number. There was evidence on all these files that information required in Schedule 1 of Regulations 5,7,20 had been included. There was evidence on the files that staff have the appropriate qualifications to work with children.

Total number of staff of the agency:

34

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

1

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

The reorganisation started last year has now been completed although there are still some vacancies to be filled. There is a clear management structure with clear lines of accountability. There is a separate reviewing officer for foster carers. There is a clear written process for the recruitment and follow up of new foster carers. There is separate admin support to the training section and a dedicated admin person for the fostering panel. The inspector met a new locum social worker who had been given a copy of the documents set out in standard 16.16. The staff in the fostering service provide 'roadshows' to the staff in the Children's teams to promote greater understanding of their work and facilitate better inter departmental communication. All social workers have their own computers. Independent Fostering Agencies used by the service are part of the Pan London agreement which monitors the quality of care provided.

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
The fostering service has one vacancy for a supervising social worker which is currently being advertised. A locum social worker with relevant experience is covering this post. There were two support worker posts vacant in the pre inspection questionnaire response. All staff interviewed by the inspector confirmed that they received regular supervision and appraisals. There is a staff retention policy. The statement of purpose identifies the need to recruit a wide range of foster carers and the pre inspection questionnaire identifies where there are shortages in the number of foster carers and the need to focus recruitment in those areas. The statement of purpose clearly sets out the assessment process defined in standard 17.6 and the competences in 17.7 are covered by the use of the BAAF Form F.		

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
The fostering service follows the sound recruitment practices of the local authority. The inspector saw the recruitment policy for all applicants for jobs in the authority. This is in line with current employment practice. There is an out of hours service provided by the fostering team in addition to the emergency duty team which covers all the services of the local authority. There is a dedicated reviewing officer for foster carers and a new project has been developed with the Tavistock Clinic to offer support to foster carers on an individual basis. Foster carers are trained to consider health and safety matters in their own homes. There is a whistle blowing policy which is part of the local authority's corporate policies and procedures.		

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?	2
One of the managers interviewed by the inspector spoke positively of the management training she is receiving and described how she was applying this information to her work. The fostering service works with the Trainer to provide courses to carers. A group of supervising social workers has been trained to facilitate the Action Learning sets for carers. The inspector was told that there are 12 study days available per year for each member of staff. Managers hold personal development plans for staff and use these as part of their performance appraisal which takes place on a twice yearly basis. The inspector discussed the level of report writing and panel information with the team manager. The inspector was told that the department had recognised the need to provide further training to managers and staff regarding the completion of the Form F assessments. This is planned for May/June 2004.		

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

The inspector attended a staff meeting for the over 11's team. Members of the team take it in turns to chair the meeting and there are set items on the Agenda which include anti discriminatory practice, feedback from groups and admin issues. The inspector interviewed the newest member of the team who is a locum covering a newly vacant post. Staff files seen by the inspector had job descriptions. All staff spoken to by the inspector confirmed that they had regular supervision and appraisals.

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

There is a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers. The evidence for this is in the statement of purpose and the pre inspection questionnaire. Staff were quite clear about their role as supervising social workers. Foster carer questionnaires and the comments made in the support group confirmed that foster carers knew how and where they would receive support. Communication between the foster carers and the children's social workers has improved since the last inspection although there was still some instances where difficulties had arisen. Foster carers then relied upon their supervising social worker. The supervising social workers appear to be more pro active to ensure that placement agreement meetings occur promptly after a placement has been made. There is a pro forma for the three and six weekly visits to carers by their supervising social workers and these records were seen on the foster carer's files.

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.10)**The fostering service is a managed one that provides supervision for foster carers and helps them to develop their skills.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****2**

The Foster Care Agreement seen by the inspector is in line with Schedule 5 of the Regulations Three out of four files seen by the inspector did not have foster care agreements. One foster carer interviewed by the inspector stated that she had received the agreement but the contents of it were not properly explained to her. The inspector was concerned to see on one file that a recent CRB check returned for a close family relative who stays over in the home had details of recent offences. The supervising social worker had visited the foster carer to discuss this matter but had not submitted a full report to either her manager or to the panel. The inspector recommends that a procedure be set in place to ensure that foster carers understand the purpose of the agreement including the responsibility to notify the fostering service in writing of 'any changes to the composition of the household' [FCA para 6 [a]]. Each foster carer has a named supervising social worker and there are records of the three weekly and six weekly visits made to carers. There is a system of practical support as outlined in standard 22.7. Additional support to foster carers has been offered by the Tavistock Clinic and referrals can be made by the supervising social worker. There was evidence of support to foster carers own children when a long term placement came to an end and the child of the family was upset by the foster child leaving. There is independent support now available to foster carers if an allegation is made against them. However the inspector was asked to intervene in a case where the foster carer was

still waiting for a response from the children's social worker four months after the complaint had been made. The inspector was handed a letter from the manager of the children's team which was dated 4/12/03, this letter was not on the foster carer's file. The annual review of this carer took place four weeks after the original complaint was made and requested that the social worker follow up the complaint made by the foster carer against the district children's social worker. There was no evidence that this had happened in the notes of supervision dated 21/10/03. The issue of following up review decisions is dealt with in another standard. This case highlights the need for closer communication between the children's teams and the fostering teams.

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

There is a developing package of training for foster carers. Pre approval and induction groups are ongoing and linked wherever possible to the NVQ Level 3 [Caring for Children and Young People] . Further training is identified through supervisory visits and annual reviews. Training is available at times to suit most carers and takes into account the carer's other responsibilities such as school times and provision of a crèche. Following a welfare visit to one foster carer the inspector suggested to the supervising social worker that it may be necessary to consider offering some age appropriate training to the children of foster carers who care for babies and toddlers. Applications for training are followed up by the training course administrator and the trainer attends staff meetings to feed back from courses and to plan further courses. The statement of purpose outlines in detail the different types of courses and how staff and foster carers are trained together whenever possible. The questionnaires returned by foster carers indicated the commitment to training by many foster carers.

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 inspector was provided with a copy of the fostering team's case recording policy. The inspector saw six foster carer files and four children's files as part of the welfare tracking process. The children's files were in order and contained the relevant LAC forms, where there were siblings placed together there was sometimes an overlap of information. The foster carer's files still need attention. Three out of six files seen did not have signed foster care agreements. Decisions reached at reviews do not appear to have been followed through. Changes in approval have not been clearly identified leading to confusion over what is a current or past approval decision. Two foster carers interviewed by the inspector were completing one diary for two children. This diary is often the best record of the child's time with the carers and needs to follow the child into their next placement. For babies it is also an account of their early development and may be necessary to form part of the Life Story work if adoption is planned. The inspector recommends that the manager consider providing individual diaries of events for each child placed with a foster carer. The inspector also recommends that decisions agreed at reviews are discussed in supervision and have an audit trail to ensure they are followed through. The manager must ensure that each foster carer has a signed and dated copy of the foster care agreement on their files.

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?

3

The inspector saw that each foster carer file has a separate section for complaints and allegations. The inspector saw two separate files where information on strategy meetings or complaints had been recorded. The statement of purpose provides a list of complaints made about the service for the last year. The Team Manager is responsible for logging and checking complaints. The system for keeping records is congruent with the Looked After Children's system. There are leaflets which explain the access to files policy. The Service Manager has been advised by the Criminal Records Bureau to maintain police records in a certain manner and this system was in the process of being completed during the inspection.

Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:			179
Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months:			176
Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months: including emergency placements.....			183
Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months:			19
Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months:			11
Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £	315	Maximum £	365

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

At the last inspection staff had recently moved to their present building and were concerned that the offices were noisy and interview rooms were not soundproof. Staff appear to have settled but the problem with the lack of soundproofing in the meeting rooms and individual offices persists. The room occupied by the inspector on the second floor provided no privacy for sensitive meetings.

Financial Requirements

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

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

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The fostering service is part of the London Borough of Haringey and is financially viable. A budgetary monitoring spreadsheet was seen by the inspector which confirmed this.

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

The Fostering Service is part of the local authority and it has clearly documented financial systems. Foster carers are advised of the annual changes in charges.

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

The foster care allowance is updated annually and this information is sent to all foster carers. Details of a new Payment for Skills scheme has been sent to every foster carer advising them of how the scheme will work, evidence of this was seen on the foster carers files and in the inspection documentation. At the support group foster carers told the inspector that the method of payments had changed and the system had improved but more detail was required. The two supervising social workers running the group suggested that foster carers keep a photocopy of their statement of payment which has all the relevant codes for future reference. The social workers acknowledged the need for a form similar to an employment P60 which would break down the allowances paid to carers for tax purposes. The manager should consider providing an annual break down of the allowances paid to individual carers.

Fostering Panels

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

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

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The inspector read the minutes of three previous panels and attended the February panel. The chair of the panel was interviewed following this meeting. The chair's assessment of the work of the panel since the last inspection identified various recurring themes.[1] There is a lack of information from the district social workers for the annual reviews of the foster carers. [2]There appears to be no quality control before papers go to Panel thus cases are brought with sets of papers which are incomplete and with workers who are not properly prepared to discuss the cases. [3] Some of the reports appear to be of poor quality which makes decision making difficult. [4] There is a pressure on workers to bring cases to panel as quickly as possible.

The chair stated that there have been discussions regarding the attendance of applicants to the panel and has written a leaflet explaining the process but no decision has yet been taken. The decision to place outside the carer's approval status appears to be taken by the team manager in the fostering service or by the team manager in the Children's Service and will only be taken to Panel if the placement is expected to be long term. The inspector interviewed the team manager following this discussion. She confirmed that the department has recognised the need for more training in the completion of the Form F and this is planned for the summer.

The written policies and procedures are in order. There has been a problem with attendance which is being addressed by the department in order to ensure that the Panel remains quorate. The chair stated that Panel training has been discussed and she would like to see a planned programme devised to meet the needs of all the panel members. This standard is based on the written policies and procedures for the Fostering Panel and no requirements will be made as these are in order. However the Panel scrutinises the work of the fostering service and highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the team and requirements and recommendations have been made to address some of these issues in other parts of the report.

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?
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Short term breaks for children are provided as part of the Family Link service, this was not inspected.	
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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?	3
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The long term and kinship care team consider the needs of children who are cared for by a relative or friend. There are separate allowances to cover this type of care.

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 of London Borough of Haringey Fostering Service conducted on 2 February 2003 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

NO COMMENTS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED BY THE PROVIDER.

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

Amendments to the report were necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments were received from the provider	<input type="checkbox" value="NO"/>
Provider comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 9 April 2004, 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	<input type="checkbox" value="YES"/>
Action plan was received at the point of publication	<input type="checkbox" value="NO"/>
Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provider has declined to provide an action plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: Please provide an action plan within 7 days of receipt of this report	<input type="checkbox" value="YES"/>

Public reports

It should be noted that all NCSC inspection reports are public documents. Reports on children's homes are only obtainable on personal application to NCSC 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 David Derbyshire of London Borough of Haringey Fostering Service confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted from 2 February 2004 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 David Derbyshire of London Borough of Haringey Fostering Service am unable to confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted from 2 February 2004 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.