



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

**Reading Borough Council Fostering and
Adoption Team**

**P O Bx 2624
Reading
RG1 7WB**

Lead Inspector
Maire Atherton

Announced Inspection
18th January - 9th February 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	Reading Borough Council Fostering and Adoption Team
Address	P O Bx 2624 Reading RG1 7WB
Telephone number	0118 9390900
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Email address	fosteringandadoptionteam@reading.gov.uk
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Reading Borough Council
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	
Type of registration	Local Auth Fostering Service
Category(ies) of registration, with number of places	

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration: N/A

Date of last inspection 5th January 2005

Brief Description of the Service:

Reading Borough Council fostering service provides substitute family care to meet the needs of Reading children and young people who are looked after by the authority on either a short term/temporary or longer term/permanent basis. The service also supports children who continue to live within their family of origin by providing regular periods of family based care. To this end the service recruits, trains and supervises a range of foster carers.

The fostering service offers:

- A general fostering scheme that provides planned and emergency short term, bridging, relief and longer-term task centred placements for children 0-16 years.
- A pool of Family and Friends foster carers, who provide short term and permanent placements to specific children, originating from their own extended families and networks.
- The fostering service recruits foster carers offering permanent placements.
- The Community Parent scheme provides fee paid emergency and short-term foster carers for the most challenging children and young people aged 8-16 years.
- Fee-paid foster carers are recruited to care for specific individual children and young people with complex needs on a task centred and long-term basis.
- The family link scheme provides children with disabilities with specialist family based day and overnight care to support them and their families.

(Taken from the statement of purpose for the fostering service.)

Other fostering services provided by Reading Borough Council, not line managed by the fostering team manager are:

- **Directions.** This is part of a national programme of Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care in England (MTFCE), which is supported by the Department of Education and Skills (DfES), and the Maudsley hospital in London. The treatment programme for each young person on the Directions project is based on social learning theory and a programme of points and levels that stabilises their behaviour and is designed to prevent placement breakdown. Directions foster carers receive a high level of support and supervision, and regular planned breaks from fostering.
- **Supported Lodgings.** This is managed by the Leaving Care team. Supported Lodgings carers are primarily used for young people aged 16 to 18 who are on care orders or are accommodated (under Section 20 of the 1989 Children Act) by Reading Borough Council. Occasionally young people under 16 years may live with Supported Lodgings carers.

- Crisis Carers. These are managed by The Adolescent and Family Resource Team to provide a placement for a young person involved with the scheme in an emergency on a short-term basis.

These three schemes have the same senior manager as the fostering service.

SUMMARY

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

This inspection took place over a three week period. In this time the inspector:

- Attended three foster carer support groups.
- Met with a group of children and a group of young people.
- Met with four children and young people in their homes with their foster carers.
- Met with the assistant manager with lead responsibility for fostering, the assistant manager with lead responsibility for family link, the worker with lead responsibility for supported lodgings carers, the MTFC (E) team and the Service manager for all the fostering provision by Reading Borough Council.
- Read a sample of files and other records.
- Observed the panel and met with the panel chair and the agency decision makers.
- Questionnaires were sent to foster carers, foster children (over 7 years of age) and placing authorities. 5 responses were received from children (15%), 15 from carers (16%) and 13 from placing social workers (38%).

Since the last inspection of this service there have been many changes:

- In April 2005 the fostering team, as part of children's services moved from the Social Services Department to a newly formed Directorate of Education and Children's Services, in line with Government policy.
- As part of this reorganisation in June 2005 the fostering service manager was seconded to the role of service manager, initially for six months, to the end of 2005. This was extended to March 2006 and when the Director resigned the interim arrangements were extended until July 2006.
- The post of manager was vacant from June to October 2005, with the three assistant managers (fostering, adoption and family link) sharing the responsibilities. One assistant manager applied for and was appointed acting manager for a three-month period and stepped down from this role at the end of December. The Service Manager told the inspector that it had proved difficult to recruit to the post when it was advertised in June 2005 and they hoped to be more successful this time.

- A new electronic database is being introduced. The inspector was informed that resources had been allocated to manage this.
- There had been changes to the administrative support team for the fostering service.
- There is a 0.6 vacant post in the team. A consultant had been brought in to provide supervision for staff two days per week.

These changes have had a significant impact on the service.

What the service does well:

There is a range of support systems for foster carers. These include a long-term carers group, a teenage carers group, out of hours and monthly telephone support provided by Reading Carers' Link.

The fostering service has developed a family and friends assessment and has established a family and friends panel.

The education, health and contact arrangements for children and young people are well supported and promoted by the foster carers.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The fostering service has developed a group of foster carers to support other foster carers looking after children from different cultural backgrounds.

What they could do better:

The fostering service needs to develop management systems to ensure that the children are kept safe by meeting the legal requirements of the regulations.

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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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

The foster carers and the fostering service promote the health and development of the children and young people. A more consistent approach to written health care records needs to be adopted.

EVIDENCE:

In conversation and in the questionnaires returned by children and young people the inspector gained the clear impression that the children had a good understanding of what being healthy meant. This included “a healthy diet”, “feeding me well” and support to do physical activities such as “cycling, swimming and football”. A young person said that the foster carer “Helps me to look after myself”. All confirmed that they had regular routine healthcare appointments and specialist input where necessary, attendance at an orthodontist for example.

There is a 'Looked after Children' Health Advisor attached to the multi-agency support team. The children and young people spoken with during the inspection had met this person and had a clear understanding of her role and had found it helpful to talk to her about health issues.

The foster carers spoken with had a clear understanding of the health records they needed to keep. Any health appointments attended by the child were seen to be recorded in the monthly summaries written by the foster carers. Not all foster carers had a written health record, for one foster carer the health records came with the children when they were admitted on an emergency basis. Another who had looked after a child for eighteen months had not been given this. For one child who required a hospital admission and treatment there was good liaison between the foster carer and the birth parents to appropriately manage the consent and support arrangements for the child during a difficult time.

The record of training available showed that a Paediatric first aid course is part of the core training for foster carers and should be renewed every two years. Health and safety for foster carers is also part of the core training and the information showed that health and hygiene issues are covered in this course. The fostering service has a clear expectation that all carers will attend training. Not all foster carers have attended the core training.

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 and 30.

There are some significant deficits in the service, which could potentially compromise the safety of the children and young people placed.

EVIDENCE:

The post of manager was vacant at the time of this visit. An assistant manager had been in the post in an acting capacity from October to December 2005. The previous manager of the fostering service retained senior line management for the team. The acting service manager hoped to recruit to the post in the near future.

Four foster homes were visited during the course of the inspection. The homes were warm and comfortable and the children were relaxed and at ease. The previous report recommended that link workers be given more detailed guidance for assessing a foster home environment in respect of health and safety issues. The Service manager understood that this was being done as part of the foster carers' annual review. This was not evidenced on all the foster carers files seen. There was one health and safety checklist brought to panel as part of the reporting process. There was no clear evidence what system was in place to follow up the issues identified. The training programme offers regular health and safety courses for foster carers. The record of training showed that these courses were well attended.

Foster carers are given clear guidance on providing safe and appropriate transport for children. The fostering service asks for up to date copies of their driving licences and insurance details. These were seen on some but not all of the files inspected. One child told the inspector that she was concerned about the school taxi arrangements. The foster carer confirmed that she had raised this issue with the taxi driver and a social worker. This was followed up during the course of the inspection and the child told the foster carer that the arrangements were changing at the end of term.

In one of the cases tracked there was good detailed evidence of a thorough matching process. This included consideration of "Best Interests" by the adoption and permanency panel, and updated paperwork, for foster carers and child, for the fostering panel for the change of approval of foster carers to long-term carers for a named child. There was also evidence of a thoughtful, planned introduction to the long-term arrangements.

The last three inspection reports have required that foster placement agreements should be put in place. There were no foster placement agreements seen on the sample of files inspected. A new electronic recording system was being introduced and the inspector was told that the Placement Information Record was being completed for new placements and the inspector was shown an example of this. The fostering service was still working with paper records whilst the children's teams had moved to electronic records, which included the Placement Information Record, which contains the information needed for a foster placement agreement.

There was evidence that one carer had been approved to care for one child. Two siblings had been placed with the agreement of a senior manager and a signature was seen to confirm this on the foster carer's file. The placement had continued for more than eighteen months and the foster carer had not been back to panel for change of approval. In addition more than three years had passed since the foster carer's Criminal Records Bureau check had been done. A case tracked during the last inspection highlighted the fact that one child placed was older than the foster carer's approval range. This carer had not been brought back to panel for change of approval. At the time of this visit both children placed were outside the terms of the foster carers' approval.

The supported lodgings service needs to develop the "Living Together Contract" to ensure it covers the requirements of the foster placement agreement.

There was evidence that where transracial placements were made consideration was given as to how to meet the children's needs appropriately and sensitively and strategies were developed.

The training programme for 2005-06 showed that it was planned that child protection training was to be offered, as was safe care, but dates had not been

set. The training records showed that some carers had attended "Safeguarding Children" in January 2006. Not all carers had attended the core training since approval. This has not changed since the last inspection and also includes some carers approved in the last year.

The safe caring guidelines include child protection as recommended in the last report. They have not been developed with each family to form the basis of individual safe caring guidelines.

There is a clear management system in place to evaluate all allegations made. One young person told the inspector how the complaint he had made against a previous carer had been taken seriously and had resulted in a change of placement.

There are clear recruitment and selection procedures in place. There was evidence that there has been difficulty in recruiting to the vacant manager's post. The shortfall was covered by the use of sessional staff. The personnel files of staff appointed to permanent posts showed that the checks required by the regulations had been done. There was no evidence that telephone enquiries had been made in addition to the written references. Sessional staff files seen did not evidence that the full range of checks had been undertaken. The fostering service needs to evidence that all the information required by Schedule 2 of the Fostering Service Regulations 2002 is held in respect of panel members and other consultants working for the fostering service.

The inspector observed the Panel meeting on 9th March 2006. There was a range of cases on the agenda:

- A long term match, requiring a change of approval
- The presentation of a new assessment for approval
- Change of approval for a supported lodgings carer
- Seven foster carer reviews, which included some family and friends foster carers.

There was also a presentation to the panel on Reading Borough Council's "Change for Children" agenda, which opened the panel business. This was useful as it provided panel members with the framework within which the fostering service is to develop, with an emphasis on consulting with children and young people.

There was clear evidence that the panel provides a Quality assurance function in respect of reports submitted. There was little evidence as to how this feedback was used to inform practice. The Panel Chair has requested that all overdue reviews are brought to panel and there was clear evidence that this is happening. The inspector was informed that the panel chair signs off all foster carers annual reviews that are not brought to panel. This was not evidenced in

the panel meeting minutes and it was not clear how this information is shared with other panel members.

The Panel were thorough in their consideration of the cases that were presented on the day. The meeting was effectively chaired and all panel members were encouraged to contribute. Five reviews were deferred, as there was insufficient time to address the issues fully. The Chair outlined the additional information that was to be included for the next panel meeting.

There was one instance where the agency decision maker had not accepted the recommendation of the foster panel. There was evidence from discussion with the Agency Decision Makers how this decision had been made. The information relating to this was not recorded in the panel meeting minutes.

The panel membership provides expertise in education and child health. The panel membership as outlined in the pre-inspection information was not fully in accordance with the membership on the day. It was not completely clear whether two people deputised for each other or were members in their own right. This needs to be clarified, as deputising arrangements are not permitted by the Regulations.

The inspector was informed that a new family and friends fostering panel was being developed, as this is an increasing area of work. This panel will focus on the approval and reviews of family and friends foster carers. The chair of the existing panel is changing role to that of vice chair and will be taking the chair of the new panel. The vice chair of the existing panel will become the chair.

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 and 31.

The fostering service and the foster carers provide children and young people with good opportunities to enable them to enjoy and achieve.

EVIDENCE:

There was evidence from discussion with foster carers and in the records seen of a clear understanding of the importance of valuing diversity and promoting equality. The young people spoken with felt that these needs were well met, if not in placement then by other means that they were comfortable with. There has been no training for foster carers on this area in the past year.

Foster carers in a group discussion were sharing information about communication issues with children whose first language was not English, particularly asylum seekers. This was reported to be most relevant for supported lodgings carers. There was evidence that the supported lodgings service makes good use of interpreters.

In the team meeting attended the inspector learned of the development of a group for carers from different cultural backgrounds. This group was developing a mentoring role to support foster carers with transracial placements. It is intended that the link will provide foster carers with practical advice, a resource pack and a mentor.

In the questionnaires and in group discussions the children and young people reported that they felt well supported in beginning and maintaining activities.

Some examples given were "swimming", "football", "horse riding", "cadets" "clarinet" "dancing" "cubs" and "Warhammer". Day trips to Madame Tussaud's and Beale Park had been enjoyed. Older children talked about the activities provided by MAST and reminisced about a holiday in Cornwall and talked about a planned summer holiday in Spain.

The children and young people spoken with felt very well supported by their foster carers in their education. They gave examples of attending parents' evenings and Personal Education Plan meetings. They also talked about the multi agency support team and one young person gave a very clear example of practical support she had been given.

The fostering service has different strategies to manage structured occupation for children and young people excluded from school, for example, placement with fee paid carers and day care arrangements.

Foster carers both individually and in a support group setting demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring the children and young people in their care had their educational needs met and that regular and proportionate contact was maintained with the school.

The Family Link scheme has maintained a discrete identity whilst forming part of the fostering service. There is a part time assistant team manager for the scheme and 1.2 full time equivalent workers in post.

The Family Link scheme adopts a modular approach to assessment based on the type of care they are offering. This approach enables carers to move to providing day care to overnight care within carefully defined parameters, whilst meeting the regulations. There was evidence from one case tracked where this had worked well; to ensure consistency for a child who became looked after receiving short-term breaks over a number of years.

There is a separate family link preparation course and consideration is being given to the development of post approval training on a rolling programme. The service has approved six carers in the last year, bringing the total to 26. One foster carer has become a fee paid carer, providing respite every other weekend to one child and providing six other children with short breaks.

Reviews for children receiving respite were in the process of development.

Following a review of the fostering service, as required in the last report, there has been agreement in principle for an additional full time worker for the family link team. The interim Heads of service informed the inspector that budgetary approval for this had been granted.

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 and 11

The children and young people cared for are generally well supported in contact arrangements and consultation is promoted.

EVIDENCE:

Discussion with children, young people, foster carers and evaluation of the records showed that contact arrangements are well promoted and supported when this is in the best interests of the young people. The young people confirmed that their views were sought when contact arrangements were being discussed. There was also evidence that the impact of contact on children was monitored and recorded by carers.

The questionnaires returned by the children showed that they had a good understanding of the ways in which foster carers consulted with them about day-to-day things, "normal things you ask kids", "what to eat", "what to do, where to go".

The children and young people the inspector met felt that they were listened to and their views taken into account through the 'Looked after Children' review system. Children who receiving relief care are now included in the 'Looked after Children' review system.

One young person who made an allegation told the inspector that he was listened to and that there was a good outcome for him.

Reading Borough Council is working on the development of children's participation through the "Change for Children" initiative. Consideration is to

be given as to how fostered children can be included and how the lessons learned can be used to inform day-to-day practice.

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)

The Commission considers Standards 29 the key standard to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

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

14 and 29

There are some systems in place to equip young people to feel confident as they approach adulthood. Budgeting skills were identified as an area for development.

There is clear information for foster carers about the different scales and they receive their allowances promptly.

EVIDENCE:

The standard relating to preparation for adulthood was evaluated on the basis of conversation with the young people. They confirmed that they were supported and encouraged by their respective carers to develop the skills needed for independent living. There were considerable variations in the allowances received and a lack of clarity about what the allowances were for. There was no evidence of a consistent system to equip young people with the necessary budgeting skills.

The young people spoke positively of the work undertaken by the Leaving Care Team. It was not clear how changes for young people recorded through their review process would be reflected in the foster placement agreements, which should also be updated to reflect these changes.

In general foster carers' were happy with the clear scale of payments and had a good understanding of how the system worked. The service pays all its carers above the Fostering Network recommended rates; there is a reward element in the scheme. The one reservation that was expressed related to the arrangements for payments for respite carers. These were reported to be not always consistent with the rates for full time carers, particularly when a child is placed for a two-week period.

Foster carers reported that payments were made on time.

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, and 24 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

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

17, 21, 22, 23 and 24.

The fostering service has suffered from the lack of a full time manager in post. The staff were working hard on their individual areas of responsibility without a robust management approach to ensuring that key fostering tasks were being undertaken.

EVIDENCE:

As a result of the fostering service review of staffing a business case was submitted for a full time assistant team manager and half time social work posts for family and friends, a half time main stream fostering post and a full time post for family link. The elected members had granted budgetary approval for two and a half posts at the time of this visit. Appointments to these posts should ensure that the staffing complement is adequate to meet the needs of the fostering service.

The manager said that the service is successful in recruiting prospective foster carers. There is a clear competency based assessment process in place and the assessment presented to panel was of a good quality.

Three staff had been appointed since the last inspection, one on secondment from another team within the local authority. The manager's post was vacant at the time of this inspection. The perception of approximately 60% of foster carers, gathered from questionnaire responses and discussions, was that the staff team were stretched to meet the demands of the service. This was not reflected in the support foster carers reported they received from allocated link workers, which all who responded to the questionnaire said was good or OK most of the time.

The service manager believed that the appointment of an independent worker to progress the backlog of overdue reviews had addressed the issue. This was not the case. On the sample of foster carers files seen, the reviews presented to panel and conversation with foster carers indicated that the review process was not happening annually. Some were overdue by up to three months, others by a year or more. This is in breach of the Fostering Service Regulations. In the review reports seen there was no evidence that the views of the children who foster or fostered children were routinely included. Annual reviews should also be undertaken on all carers approved by the panel.

The inspector attended three support groups. Foster carers singled out the long-term carers support group as being invaluable in providing them with a forum to discuss issues and provide practical advice on the management of some difficult behaviour. This group is chaired by an independent forensic psychologist with a wealth of experience in fostering and social work. There are clear protocols in place for the sharing of information with the fostering service management. The support group for carers of teenagers recommenced during the course of this inspection after a four-month break. At the time of this visit the foster carers and fostering service staff were redrafting the terms of reference for this group and identifying areas for discussion/training. The third group was called an 'Open Forum' and was run by foster carers themselves. This provided foster carers with an opportunity for discussion,

which was appreciated by those attending. Other support offered by foster carers to foster carers, called the Reading Link, has a monthly newsletter, a website and offers monthly telephone calls to all registered foster carers. Foster carers appreciated the role of Reading Link, particularly the phone calls to foster carers without a child in placement as they reported they had limited contact with link workers. They also provide an out of hours service during the evening and weekend, in addition to that provided by the Emergency Duty Team.

There was some concern expressed in the discussion groups and in the questionnaires about the lack of independent support for foster carers when an allegation was made against them. This should be reviewed by the fostering service.

There was considerable variation in the standard of record keeping in relation to children's files. This could be due to the process of moving towards an electronic system of record maintenance. The information held electronically was not viewed during this inspection.

There was no evidence that new foster carers had received induction training. There is an incentive scheme to encourage foster carers to attend training. One experienced carer had requested some advanced training and had recently had funding approved for an external course. The training programme supplied showed 5 courses between July and December 2005, four of which were core induction courses. The training department records showed that the last Child protection introduction course for foster carers was in October 2004. There had been no training for supported lodgings carers since September 2005; a new programme was being developed at the time of this visit.

There were separate records for children and young people placed by Reading Borough Council but for children placed by other Authorities this was not seen.

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	X
6	2
8	1
9	2
15	2
30	2

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

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
10	3
11	3

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

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

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	FS12	17(3)(a)	Foster carers are to be provided with a written health record for each child placed in their care; this is to be updated during the placement and move with the child. A consistent method for the recording of healthcare appointments is to be adopted.	31/03/06
2	FS8	Regulation 34 (1)(b)	Children and young people are to be placed with carers who are approved to care for them.	31/03/06
3	FS13 FS10 FS8 FS22	34(3) Schedule 6	Foster placement agreements are to be written for all placements in accordance with Schedule 6. This requirement is to be met by 31/03/06 and ongoing. (Previous timescales of 01/09/04 and 15/08/05)	31/03/06
4	FS15	20(3)(d)	All personnel files are to include a recent photograph and copies of relevant professional qualifications. This applies to sessional staff, panel members and permanent staff. Written evidence that any gaps	30/04/06

			in employment history have been satisfactorily explained must be available on personnel files. All foster carers are to have current Criminal Records Bureau checks in place.	
5		24	The panel membership is to be reviewed in the light of the regulations.	30/04/06
6		29(1)(2)(3)	Reviews of the approval of foster carers must be carried out in accordance with the Regulations. This requirement is to be met by 30/04/06 and is ongoing.	30/04/06
7		17(1)	Foster carers are to be provided with training in child protection.	30/04/06

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	FS9	Safe caring guidelines should be developed with each family to form the basis of individual safe caring guidelines.
2	FS30	A system to evidence that the fostering panel receives management information about the outcome of foster carers' reviews is to be developed.
3	FS22	The fostering service reviews availability of independent support to foster carers during an investigation of an allegation.
4	FS6	Staff should be provided with more detailed guidance for assessing a foster home environment, to demonstrate a robust approach to Health and Safety and space issues.
5	FS16	Carers should be supported and encouraged to maintain a

		training portfolio.
6	FS22	There should be at least one unannounced visit each year.
7	FS24	Case files should be established for children placed by other local authorities.

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