



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

Barnardo`s Disability Service North East

**Suite 4
Durham Business centre
Littleburn Industrial Estate
Langley Moor
Co.Durham
DH7 8HG**

Lead Inspector
Mr Bill Drumm

Announced Inspection
7th February 2006 09:30

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

Reader Information	
Document Purpose	Inspection Report
Author	CSCI
Audience	General Public
Further copies from	0870 240 7535 (telephone order line)
Copyright	This report is copyright Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and may only be used in its entirety. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the express permission of CSCI
Internet address	www.csci.org.uk

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

This report is a public document. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the prior permission of the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of service	Barnardo`s Disability Service North East
Address	Suite 4 Durham Business centre Littleburn Industrial Estate Langley Moor Co.Durham DH7 8HG
Telephone number	0191 378 4800
Fax number	0191 378 4801
Email address	judith.latheron@barnardos.org.uk
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Barnardo`s North East Region
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	Judith Latheron
Type of registration	Fostering Agencies
Category(ies) of registration, with number of places	

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

Date of last inspection 31st January 2005

Brief Description of the Service:

Barnardo's Disability Service North East is based at Durham Business Centre, Langley Moor in County Durham. Barnardo's recruit, assess and support carers who provide services to children with physical or learning disabilities or life threatening conditions. The project provides regional short break, sitting and befriending services to children and young people up to the age of 18 years. Barnardo's also provide a long term fostering service for young people with disabilities.

At the time of the inspection the service was supporting, forty four foster carers who provide services to forty eight young people and their families. At the time of the inspection the service had a staff team of ten including the manager and administrative workers.

SUMMARY

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

This announced inspection took place as part of the annual inspection programme. The inspection was carried out over five full days with extra time being set aside to observe the fostering panel. Two inspectors were involved at different times in the inspection process.

The agency provided a lot of information to the inspector before the inspection started. The agency also provided good office space and all the things needed by the inspectors. The programme that had been arranged was well organised. This was helpful to the inspectors, the staff at Barnardo's and foster carers. This helped the inspection to be carried out quickly and with a minimum of fuss.

During the inspection time was spent talking with foster carers, the chair of fostering panel, project workers from Barnardo's and other staff members. Children were not spoken to as part of the inspection due to the nature of their disabilities. Children's case files and other records were also looked at as well as staff personnel files. Written policies and procedures and other documents relating to the fostering service were also looked at.

Visits were made to four foster carers and their views and comments have been included in this report.

What the service does well:

The service is 'well managed' and works well. The manager is held in high regard and the fostering team are committed and experienced 'child care' workers. All members of staff are, well qualified and have the necessary skills to do their jobs. Foster carers are helped and supported by the projects staff and those spoken to said, "they were very happy with the quality and amount of support which they receive". Comments from foster carers included, "I feel that anyone involved in the project will give me support", "they give me time and listen to what I have to say" and "they seem to have time for the personal touch".

Young people's welfare is safeguarded the recruitment and assessment process of potential foster carers is both thorough and comprehensive. Both staff and foster carers are fully aware of the organisations child protection and safeguarding procedures.

Young people are supported and encouraged to attend school and to achieve as much as possible whilst there.

Young people's views are represented at the Barnardo's participation group and the organisation has also developed a CD Rom version of the children's

guide. Regular Looked After Reviews are also held, which are attended by Barnardo's staff who, help to ensure the needs and wishes of the young people are listened to.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the last inspection Barnardo's have introduced a process of risk assessment in relation to new placements being made. They also ensure that information for the fostering panel relating to the CRB and Health and Safety checks of foster carers are readily available.

A record of training undertaken by foster carers is also retained.

What they could do better:

One area that Barnardo's could do better is in relation to the 'Foster Carer Agreement'. This needs to be reviewed so that it is clear what respite care arrangements have been agreed for the carers of young people particularly those who are on longer term placements. The 'Foster Carer Agreement' also needs to state what training foster carers can expect as well as the terms of their approval.

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.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

CONTENTS

Being Healthy

Staying Safe

Enjoying and Achieving

Making a Positive Contribution

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

Scoring of Outcomes

Statutory Requirements Identified During the Inspection

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:

We looked at outcomes for standard 12.

The agency effectively monitors and promotes the health of young people placed with the agency's foster carers this helps to ensure the wellbeing of all young people in foster placement.

EVIDENCE:

An examination of, children's and carer's records confirmed that Barnardo's promotes children's health and wellbeing. Project Workers (supervising social workers) remain in regular contact with foster carer's and children in placement. Regular checks are made of carer's log-books. Children's care plans were examined and were found to contain information about the child's health and therapeutic needs. There was also evidence to confirm links with relevant health care professionals and specialists. Foster carer's interviewed were able to demonstrate their awareness of the health needs of the children placed with them, as well as an understanding of the need for consent to treatment.

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):

We looked at outcomes for standards 3, 6, 8, 9 15 and 30

The management and staff of Barnardo's have the necessary skills and competencies to undertake their roles. The recruitment processes are both comprehensive and thorough. The welfare of children is therefore safeguard and promoted.

Barnardo's have a thorough and successful recruitment process for foster carers. They are therefore able to provide a diverse team of carers from a range of different backgrounds.

The process of matching children with suitable foster parents is very good with formal risk assessments being undertaken prior to placements being made.

Staff and carers have a good understanding of child protection procedures and actively seek to make safe, caring and secure placements.

Those who work in or for the fostering agency are supported to achieve the best possible outcomes for children. Recruitment processes for staff and foster carers are comprehensive and robust. These processes help to support the welfare of children.

The agency's fostering panel is very effective in monitoring placements and outcomes for children.

EVIDENCE:

It was evident throughout the inspection that the organisation and manager are suitable to run a fostering service. The manager has the skills, experience and competencies necessary to promote and ensure the welfare and safety of children. This is supported by the organisations robust Policies and Procedures. An examination of the agencies recruitment records in respect of staff found them to be well ordered and structured. Personnel files were also found to contain all the evidence required to comply with the regulations’.

An examination of foster carer’ records, a meeting with the Chair of Fostering Panel and a discussion with staff members confirm that recruitment of foster carers, foster carer assessments and review processes are very thorough and comprehensive. Foster carers and project workers spoken to all stated that the young people in placement were happy with their foster placements. There were no complaints made about the service.

Foster carers and project workers spoken to all confirmed that great efforts are made to ensure a suitable and successful match between a young person and a foster carer takes place. Foster carers interviewed said they were involved in the matching process and that this process worked well. Foster carers felt that they were given sufficient information about a young person prior to a placement being made and that they were fully involved in this process.

Project workers confirmed that the young people they were responsible for were safe and free from harm. Foster carers were all able to outline what action they would take in order to safeguard a young person in their care and how to make a complaint if they needed to do so. Foster carers are all offered a range of training opportunities, which included child protection. Foster carers said, “they were encouraged to highlight their own training needs and were supported 200% by the project workers”.

An examination of individual staff files confirmed that staff members are professionally qualified and continue to develop their skills and competencies through ongoing training and development.

As part of the inspection, inspector’s attended the fostering panel. It was observed that the panel was efficient and well run, and centred on the positive outcomes for young people. Panel members have all received training in order to equip them for their role. The Chair of panel described Barnardo’s as a, “can do” service and the staff as, having a “positive attitude”.

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):

We looked at outcomes for standards 7 and 31

Barnardo's provide placements that promote equality and value diversity.

The agency has comprehensive and robust policies and procedures for the provision of short-break or shared care services.

EVIDENCE:

An examination of the individual care plans of children, and discussions with both foster carers and project workers indicated that the needs of young people were being met. Barnardo's recruit foster carers from a number of geographical areas and backgrounds. They are therefore able to offer a diverse variety of placement opportunities for young people.

Barnardo's has many years experience in delivering short-term breaks for young people and their carers. Foster carers spoken to commented that, "we feel we work with Barnardo's not for them" and "there's a good feeling of teamwork".

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):

We looked at outcomes for standards 10 and 11

The agency makes excellent provision for the promotion of contact between children, their families and their friends.

The agency actively seeks the views of young people about their lives and the care they receive.

EVIDENCE:

Expectations with regard to contact are clear and explicit to foster carers. Issues relating to contact are fully documented within the placement agreements. There were a number of examples of foster carers, Barnardo's and parents working in partnership to provide quality, safe placements for young people.

The young people placed by Barnardo's usually have communication difficulties, which can make consultation a difficult process. Some progress has been made in this area, with the development of the Children's Guide in a CD Rom format. Social gatherings are organised for foster carers. This promotes 'informal' dialogue and communication. There was evidence of young people being involved in their Looked After Reviews. Records confirmed that visits made to foster homes by staff included time with the young people.

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):

We looked at outcomes for standard 29

Foster carers receive appropriate allowances and expenses for looking after children.

EVIDENCE:

Foster carers receive an appropriate allowance for the role, that they undertake. At no time did foster carers suggest that, 'the allowances received by them was insufficient to fully meet the needs of the young people in their care'.

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):

We looked at outcomes for standards 1, 2, 4, 5, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26

There is a concise Statement of Purpose, which sets out clearly the aims and objectives of the service.

The fostering agency is managed by an appropriately qualified and experienced manager.

The agency has clear procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the fostering service.

The fostering agency is managed effectively and efficiently.

Staff members are well supported and managed.

The agency employs a sufficient number of experienced and qualified staff.

Barnardo's is a fair and competent employer.

Barnardo's staff members receive, regular training in order to maintain and enhance their skills.

Staff members', receive regular planned supervision and performance appraisal. This enables them to provide a good service.

The agency has excellent and clear strategies for supporting carers. However the Foster Carer Agreement form needs some review in order to fully meet the requirements of the regulations and Schedule 5.

The supervision and support of foster carers is very good.

Foster carers are able to access a range of different training opportunities to help ensure they have up to date skills and knowledge to care for young people.

The case files of children contain up to date and comprehensive case records.

The administrative records are maintained and kept up to date as required. Essential information relating to the children is therefore routinely recorded.

The premises used by the agency fully meet the needs of the service.

EVIDENCE:

Foster carers spoken with confirmed that they had received a copy of the organisations Statement of Purpose and that it accurately reflects Barnardo's practice. The policies and procedures looked at during the inspection reflected the Statement of Purpose. From discussion with the manager and staff and from examining the relevant personnel files, it was evident that the manager has the necessary business, management and financial skills to work efficiently and effectively.

The manager has the systems in place, that are necessary to ensure that the operations of the team are monitored effectively and efficiently. Staff

supervision systems work well. Staff commented that they found supervision to be a 'supportive experience' rather than a 'policing' one. Systems are also in place to notify the Commission for Social Care Inspection of any significant events, which may occur.

Staff members have clearly defined job descriptions. When interviewed they were clear about their individual roles and responsibilities. All staff members spoken to were very positive about the management of the service.

All staff within the team have regular formal supervision. The team are appropriately qualified and experienced and training is available for staff to continue to develop their skills and competencies. The staff team were friendly and welcoming. The office had a positive atmosphere and 'feel' to it. Foster carers interviewed were very positive about the help and support they receive from all members of the Barnardo's team.

It was evident from interviews and from examining records that Barnardo's provides an effective and efficient fostering team. The staff team are well qualified and have the necessary skills, experience and competencies to undertake their role.

Barnardo's has excellent, well-established and well-developed recruitment and selection procedures. This ensures fairness and equal opportunities.

The fostering service provides a comprehensive induction-training programme for staff and foster carers. Staff members training needs are highlighted during individual supervision sessions. A clear record is maintained of all training, that has been undertaken.

Regular, formal and structured supervision exists for all staff in addition to regular performance appraisal. Staff, have clear job descriptions and understand their individual roles and responsibilities. Staff members interviewed felt they were well managed and supported by the manager.

A number of the foster carers interviewed commented that, "they felt well supported by project workers and would have no hesitation in contacting more senior managers within the office if they need help or advice". They felt that, "this approach is encouraged and that they would be supported in their actions".

Foster carers receive regular supervision from their project workers and have regular contact with the Barnardo's office. Records examined indicate that formal supervision sessions are held on a regular basis. A group of foster carers interviewed expressed great satisfaction with regard to the contact they have with the organisation. They described communication links as being "excellent". The Foster Carer agreement form does however require some amendment in order to fully clarify what respite care arrangements have been

agreed for foster carers, what the terms of their approval are and what support and training they can expect.

Records examined and discussions with foster carers confirmed that they all undertake comprehensive induction training as part of their recruitment and assessment process. There was evidence available to confirm that training is an on-going process and continues following registration as a foster carer. It would be beneficial however if the organisation kept an up to date register of which training foster carers had completed.

Children's files examined were well structured and the information easily accessible. Those case files examined contained up to date LAC documentation. There was also evidence on individual case files to suggest that formal risk assessment had been undertaken prior to placements being made. Foster carers spoken to confirmed that they were very well informed of the identified needs of the young people in their care and are fully involved in both reviews and case discussions.

Administrative records were well maintained. Records of foster carers assessments, reviews and approval decisions were of a high standard.

The premises used by Barnardo's are easily accessible. There are suitable security measures in place to ensure that confidential information held is not accessed by any unauthorised personnel.

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	4

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	4
6	4
8	3
9	3
15	4
30	3

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
7	4
13	X
31	4

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
10	4
11	3

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
14	X
29	3

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

NO

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

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	FS 15	It is recommended that the recruitment procedures for new members of staff be reviewed in order to clarify their physical and mental fitness to undertake the work required of them.
2	FS 21	The foster carer agreement needs some minor review in order to fully reflect the requirements of the regulations. Particular attention needs to be paid to the practical support offered to carers with regard to respite care.

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Tees Valley Area Office

Advance

St. Mark's Court

Teesdale

Stockton-on-Tees

TS17 6QX

National Enquiry Line: 0845 015 0120

Email: enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.csci.org.uk

© This report is copyright Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and may only be used in its entirety. Extracts may not be used or reproduced without the express permission of CSCI