



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

Five Rivers Fostering

**South Park Business Centre
306A Green Lane
Ilford
Essex
IG1 1LQ**

Lead Inspector
Stanley Phipps

Announced Inspection

14 November 2005 to 27 January 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	Five Rivers Fostering
Address	South Park Business Centre 306A Green Lane Ilford Essex IG1 1LQ
Telephone number	020 8599 5251
Fax number	
Email address	
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Five Rivers Consortium (Family Placement) Limited
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	Mrs Usha Jobanputra
Type of registration	Fostering Agencies
No. of places registered (if applicable)	0
Category(ies) of registration, with number of places	

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

Date of last inspection 18th October to 1st November 2004

Brief Description of the Service:

Five Rivers Fostering Service is a private fostering agency that has been operational since September 2001. Five Rivers Fostering Service is located within the London Borough of Redbridge. The registered provider, Five Rivers family Placement Limited, is a national organisation with the head office situated in Wiltshire.

There are a total of six branches of the foster service throughout the country. Fostering services include both short and long-term services for children and young people aged between 0-18 years. The service aims to meet the identified needs of the children placed and to fully support carers in achieving this.

The manager and staff work in partnership with children and their families and every effort is made to link children with foster carers who reflect their cultural, and racial backgrounds.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection took place over the period 14th November 2005 through to 27th January 2006.

The initial part of the inspection involved attending the London (Essex) office to assess the systems in place to support the young people and their foster carers. To this end the registered manager assisted in this process and her cooperation was most invaluable. It was clear even at the initial stage that significant progress had been made with regards to improving the quality of services provided by the agency. This is evidenced by a further reduction of requirements as well as, in some cases the national minimum requirements being exceeded.

As part of the inspection, visits were made to the homes of two foster carers during which three foster children and their respective carers were spoken to. From these visits, the inspection concluded that the young people were happily placed and the foster carers highly satisfied, not only with the success of the placements, but also the support provided by Five Rivers Fostering. A third visit was planned, but the carer had no child/children placed with them at the time, so a telephone interview was undertaken. This interview indicated that the foster carer was pleased with the systems in place to support her and this was positive.

The inspector also attended a foster carer's support group and though the group comprised a small number of foster carers, the context and objective of the group was fulfilled. All carers present were happy with the group, which was attended by the manager and they expressed overwhelming support for it to continue. In essence they felt that was of benefit to them.

No visits were made to fostering panel for the Five Rivers Fostering Service during this inspection, as one panel is normally held for all its branches. This Wiltshire Area Office of the CSCI assessed this element of the Standard. Information regarding the fostering panel is included in the report for the Salisbury office of the Five Rivers Fostering Service.

What the service does well:

Five Rivers Fostering Service has demonstrated over the last year that they are keen to provide a high quality service, by constantly looking at ways to improve. Examples of this could be drawn from the fact that they have complied with all outstanding requirements and introduced new systems e.g. a 'respite pack', to ensure continuity of the service. The main carer compiles the relevant details, which included personal, health, medication, risk assessment/s, education and an individual child safe-care policy. This is positive as it ensures continuity for the benefit of the young person on respite.

It was clear that consistent support is provided to foster carers in a number of different forums e.g. Team meetings (held weekly), supervision visits (three weekly), the carers support group (monthly) and attendance by the manager to reviews on complex cases. For new carers supervision is provided weekly for up to eight weeks and an on-call system is also in place. All foster carers spoken to spoke highly of the support provided by the Five Rivers Fostering Services.

An experienced individual, who is committed to supporting the needs and development of young people, manages the service. As a result, all policies and procedures required by regulation were not only in place, but also accessible and updated. In essence adequate guidance and direction was in place to provide a quality service.

Adequate systems were also in place to promote the safety of young people. This includes the robust recruitment of foster carers, closely monitoring their work, clear guidance on matters relating to: child protection, health and safety, reporting accidents, incidents, absconding, harassment and/or bullying, complaints and the provision of training for staff.

What has improved since the last inspection?

There was evidence that appropriate arrangements were in place to ensure that all health details relating to the young person are acquired prior to the commencement of a placement. This involves working closer with the placing authorities and insisting that this information is made available prior to agreeing the placement. This is useful in ensuring that a full health picture of the child is gathered, to enable adequate arrangements to be made to meet any health needs identified. Foster carers spoken to, were satisfied with the health information provided to them.

There was both recorded and verbal evidence to confirm that robust monitoring systems were now in place with regard to the frequency of supervision provided to foster carers. One of the systems observed was the completion of monthly reports by foster carers, which has increased the monitoring of the work they carry out with the young people. This is in addition to the formal supervisions held, support group and weekly team meetings. It was concluded that this aspect of the service exceeded the minimum standards.

The foster carer's handbook has been updated and found to be in line with the requirements of National Minimum Standard 22.5 for Fostering Services. Carers that were visited were in possession of the handbook and this was positive.

There was good evidence that greater efforts have been placed on the matching of foster carers to young persons. Greater emphasis has been placed on matching with regard to religion and culture. As far as feasibly possible, the young persons are placed with foster carers with a similar religion. Where this

is not possible then the foster carers are encouraged to access resources that are consistent with the religious needs of the child. Examples of the cultural appropriateness included the use of Halal meat for Muslim children as well as purchasing specialist skincare products for young persons requiring this. This is positive.

Improvements were also made with regard to ensuring that child protection monitoring systems are robustly implemented to promote the safety of young people. Supervisions were taking place within the prescribed frequency (3-weekly), foster care staff are provided with child protection training, clear guidelines are in place for reporting incidents relating incidents of abuse, incident logs are maintained by the agency and this includes ABC (Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence) charts, and Child Protection issues are monitored on a monthly basis. This provided greater safeguards for the young people using Five Rivers Fostering Services.

What they could do better:

There were no areas identified in this report for improvements, but the registered persons could look towards keeping abreast of developments in regulation and guidance regarding children and use them to continue improving their services. The registered manager has identified areas of development and this included undertaking a management qualification, encouraging foster carers to undertake an NVQ qualification in childcare and to be able at some point in the future, to host panel meetings in London. These developments are welcomed by the Commission and would benefit the service overall.

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 outcomes these Standards are:

- 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 outcomes for the following standard(s)

(12)

Greater efforts have been made by Five Rivers Fostering in the last twelve months to acquire health details of the young persons in foster care. This serves to protect and promote their health and development.

EVIDENCE:

Concern was raised at the last inspection regarding a failure by the agency to acquire the health details of children, which would have compromised the quality of care provided to the young person concerned. However from assessing the files held at the office and those held by the foster carers, it was clear that detailed healthcare records were as in place for the young people. All foster carers spoken to were satisfied with the quality of the information they had in relation to the children's health.

Although it remained the responsibility of the placing authority to provide this information, prior to the commencement of a placement, invariably they did not oblige initially in all cases. Evidence gathered indicated that this was followed up by the supervising social workers; they would either write or phone to chase up the relevant authority for the information. The provision of this information enables the young people to access appropriate health care services.

The registered manager provided evidence of monthly summaries that are written by carers, containing ongoing assessments of the healthcare needs of the young people. These assessments are shared with the placing authorities. There were difficulties in getting them completed however the agency took action to improve consistency through, three-weekly supervision of carers and in team meetings.

There was also the introduction of a respite information pack, which is completed by the main carer for the benefit of respite carer. This information sharing is positive and crucial to ensuring consistency of support to children.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes 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, and 15 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

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

(3,6,8,9,15,30)

A robust recruitment procedure ensures that individuals working with or for the young people are fit to so do. Improvements in the matching process and in the supervisory arrangements for carers now provide a safer support system for children.

EVIDENCE:

The agency's recruitment procedures are robust and in line with regulation (Fostering Regulations 2002). The appointment of managers included: evidence of CRB checks, proof of identity, satisfactory references, qualifications and employment histories – all in place. Monitoring systems were also in place to ensure that all CRB checks were maintained and updated.

During visits to foster carer's homes they were all found to be warm, adequately furnished and decorated to a high standard of cleanliness. Each child had their own private bedroom as they were all over the ages of three. All children spoken to were extremely satisfied with their private spaces. There was evidence that the homes of all foster carers had a health and safety check prior to the placement and annually thereafter. The health and safety responsibilities of carers are clearly outlined in the foster carer's handbook. All foster carers were in receipt of the updated handbook and this was an improvement from the last inspection. Foster carers also had the benefit of preparation training and this covered health and safety.

From case tracking it was clear that greater emphasis went into appropriately matching young persons with carers. In one case the siblings were matched according to ethnic origin and a risk assessment was in place to identify potential risks. Reviews were also scheduled to pick up any issues that may have arisen from the placement. The agency has made a clear commitment to matching carers with young people and evidence was provided in the placement of a Muslim child; that satisfactory arrangements were in place to meet his cultural and religious needs. Arrangements are now in place to ensure that during emergency placements – the ethnic and cultural needs of the placement is taken into account as a matter of course. All foster carers spoken to were happy with the matching process of the agency.

There was evidence of a rolling programme of training in place both for prospective and existing carers. Key areas of the training included; child protection awareness training and working with challenging behaviour. There is also information provided to carers relating to corporal punishment, anti-bullying and 'missing from care' guidelines. Child protection issues are monitored on a monthly basis by the agency and since the last inspection there has been one child protection matter. This was initiated by London borough of Haringey with an outcome that 'no further action' is required. A log of all incidents is maintained by the agency and an 'Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence' chart has been introduced in dealing with more challenging behaviours. This is a useful tool. A duty system is also in place at Five Rivers Fostering to support foster carers.

Personnel files assessed and found in order with appropriate references, CRB checks and thorough screening of all staff. The inspector was therefore satisfied that individuals working for and in the fostering service were suitable to work with children.

The inspector did not attend the fostering panel during the course of the inspection. There is one panel for the Five Rivers Fostering branches and inspectors for the Wiltshire Area Office of CSCI undertook observation of its operations. The inspectors found that the composition and operation of the panel was satisfactory, except that the panel serves more than the permitted three 'branches'. A requirement was therefore made in this respect. A fuller report on their findings could be found in the report for the Salisbury Office of the Five Rivers Fostering Service.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes 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)

(7,13,31)

At Five Rivers Fostering, sound arrangements are in place to promote diversity, as well as the educational achievements and aspirations of young people.

EVIDENCE:

There was evidence that foster carers receive training on discrimination and valuing diversity as part of their initial preparation training. This is complimented by very clear and accessible policies on staff recruitment, anti-discriminatory practice, meeting children's ethnic needs and celebrating special events e.g. children's birthdays and cultural and religious festivities like Christmas, Eid, Chinese New Year and Divali. The agency has recognised and taken consideration of the fact that London is a cosmopolitan city and as such has recruited successfully, foster carers from a range of ethnic backgrounds.

From discussions held with foster carers and in one young person, it was clear that children are given good support to pursue their educational aspirations. Foster carers attended parents' evenings and maintained positive links with educational establishments in support of the young person. One young person spoken to, was now attending college and had his own computer in his bedroom to enable him to progress his studies. He was in high praise for his carer and from all accounts was doing really well. Documentation held on files included Personal Education Plans, School Reports and Statements of Special Education needs. There was also evidence of school contact details and it was clear that the agency is keen on promoting the educational aspirations of young people. It was noted that all young persons placed with Five Rivers Fostering were in education. This is a strong area of the agency's operations.

Five Rivers Fostering Service does not provide short-term placements within the meaning of Regulation 37 of the Fostering Service Regulations.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes these Standards are:

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

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

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

(10,11)

Five Rivers Fostering Service ensures that appropriate family contact is made in the interest and welfare of each child. Adequate systems are in place to obtain the views of children and their families.

EVIDENCE:

From feedback received, it was clear that children were not only pleased with their placement, but also the level and quality of contact made with their family. This is documented in their placement plans and is determined at the initial placement arrangement. It is also discussed in reviews and, 'as and when' necessary. Contact details and outcomes are clearly recorded and monitored to ensure that both the needs of the child and the family are met. This may involve recording the behaviour and/or mood of a child following a visit. The contact arrangements are coordinated with the involvement of the child's social worker who also receives feedback on the outcome/s. All foster carers spoken to were clear on the policies around maintaining contacts as well as their role in enabling them. This is a strong area of the home's operations.

From discussions held with the manager, foster carers and young people, it was clear that the fostering service actively sets out to acquire the views of children. Foster carers were central to seeking this information, which is also communicated to the placing social worker. Young people's views are also sought at their carer's annual review and there was evidence that supervising social workers also gather views and pick up issues, during their supervision visits to foster carers. An appropriate complaints procedure is in place and accessible to young people placed with Five Rivers Fostering. One young person spoken to made clear that if he was unhappy – he knew who he would contact to raise his concern.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes 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)

(14,29)

Sound systems are in place to ensure that young people are supported and prepared for adulthood. At Five Rivers Fostering, satisfactory arrangements are in place for carers to receive their allowances and agreed expenses.

EVIDENCE:

The inspector had the benefit of interviewing a young person who was sixteen years at the time of the visit. There was evidence that he was prepared to move into adulthood and this begun from the support and guidance he received in the home. A leaving care programme was in place and detailed a comprehensive range of daily living skills in preparation for adult living. At the time he was attending college as part of his educational pathway, and took him along the road to his career pathway. He had crucial resources e.g. a desktop computer to enable him to proceed with his coursework and research work and this was positive. He complimented the support and guidance he received from his carer, which he felt was crucial to his success. The agency also provided evidence of its work with the local authority in preparing the young person for adulthood. This involved attending meetings and carrying out agreed strategies as identified in the leaving care plan. This is a strong area of the agency's operations.

All foster carers spoken to were satisfied with the timely manner in which the agency paid their allowances. Foster carers were in receipt of fees that were in line with the Pan London agreement, although most of the carers spoken to informed that they were not in foster care for the money. The registered manager advised that fees are reviewed annually and on this evidence, this aspect of the agency's operations were deemed satisfactory.

Management

The intended outcomes 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)

(1,2,4,5,16,17,18,20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27,28,32)

The management of Five Rivers Fostering London (Essex) is committed to the work they do. Lines of accountability, communication, training provisions and support for foster carers are improved and hence effective in improving the service as a whole. Key improvements nationally e.g. financial, panel, provide a sound platform for further improvements to the London (Essex) Service and this could only be positive for young people who come into contact with the agency.

EVIDENCE:

An organisational statement of purpose is in place, it is clear and in line with Regulation. A statement of purpose that is specific to the London (Essex) office has also been developed and sets out clearly differences such as the staffing structure, the number of carers, placements and staffing qualifications. The document is updated and consistent with the service provision in the London (Essex) office. A children's guide is also in place and designed in two formats: one for children below the age of eight and another for those, eight years and above. Foster carers and one person spoken to felt that this document was useful and informative. The registered manager indicated that the documents were being translated in Urdu and Gujarati at the time of the visit.

The registered manager is qualified social worker (CQSW) for over fourteen years and has considerable experience in working with children (twenty years). She also has achieved a teaching practice award (CCETSW), a certificate in Memorandum Training and a National Diploma in Business Studies. For over five years she has managed the London office and has developed key management skills to compliment her business acumen and her experience in training, leading and developing staff. She plans to pursue a Diploma in management to further enhance her expertise and this should have an even greater impact on improving and developing the services provided by the London (Essex) office. She has positive relationships with her management, external professionals, foster carers, her staff and the young people she comes into contact with. She is particularly effective in monitoring the service e.g. through monthly summaries, incident forms, matters relating to Schedule 7 child protection issues, supporting staff – through regular team meetings and supervisions, and ensuring that robust policies and procedures are maintained for the benefit of the service as a whole.

There was evidence that information regarding fees is made available to purchasers of the services and financial procedures are made clear to foster carers in writing. Feedback received from foster carers indicated that they were clearer about information regarding the payment of fees and this was an improvement from the last inspection. It was also widely accepted that the lines of communication were clear between the agency and all foster carers, as the latter were confident that they could access either the manager or their supervisor when necessary.

The roles and responsibilities of the manager are clearly defined and a clear staffing structure is in place at the London (Essex) office. A senior practitioner deputises for the manager and satisfactory arrangements are in place to cover her absence. There is also a duty system in place that is covered in ten-day

spells by the manager and two of her most senior staff. This provides support to foster carers as and when necessary.

There was an improvement in this standard as the supervision of newly registered foster carers was in line with the statement of purpose. One of the foster carers interviewed confirmed that she was having weekly supervision and was provided with telephone support if required. Documentation examined also confirmed this. Weekly supervision is initially carried out for up to eight weeks and this is reduced to three weekly meetings thereafter. The registered manager meets with the link workers on a two weekly basis and this forum is used to monitor the support carried out in the supervision of foster carers.

In addition to the registered manager, there is a senior practitioner, one social worker, one full-time and one part time- administrator. The combined expertise and qualifications of the staff team currently provides adequate support to the foster carers and young people. It is envisaged that given the demand for placements by the local authority, that this would have an impact on the number of approved foster carers required in the future. This is under close monitoring by the registered manager.

A valid certificate of insurance was in place for the fostering service. Foster carers confirmed that they were clear about the out-of-hours arrangements of the agency and a duty rota was in place to confirm this. An assessment of the documents relating to the management systems of the agency were satisfactory in that supervisions and appraisals are carried out in line with guidance.

An appropriate induction programme was in place for fostering service staff and prospective carers attend an appropriate residential training programme. A rolling training programme is in place and some of the training provided over the last year included: Preparation training (4 days), First Aid, Working with challenging behaviour, Attachment and Theory, baby and Child saver Course, Child Protection Training and Food Hygiene. In addition to this, five carers started their NVQ level 3 training, three of which have completed and are awaiting their certificates. Plans were in place for others to pursue this training with support and relevant funding. Although the inspector did not attend a foster carer training, there was evidence that they were happening frequently and feedback received from foster carers was generally positive about both the content and appropriateness. At the foster carer's group participants were of the view that some of the training could be more interactive, rather than in a lecture style. They would like the training to tease out issues that may be faced with, in the application of theory. In essence they were seeking more group work. The manager took this forward for action.

There was good evidence in place to confirm that the current supervision arrangements across the agency were satisfactory. The manager coordinates formal supervision and takes responsibility for the administrative staff the field supervisors. The supervision of foster carers is then split between the manager

and the field supervisors. Records indicated that supervision was regular, planned and all foster carers were happy with the support provided at these sessions. The structure of the London (Essex) office clearly sets out the lines of accountability and both the internal and external staff (to the agency) were aware of it. Regular team meetings are held with a rolling agenda and notes are detailed and pertinently recorded.

Discussions held with foster carers indicated that the support provided by the agency was good. This begins with their preparation training and followed by weekly supervision meetings for new carers. Key to the support is the prompt and clear dissemination of information to carers regarding their payments. For most, payments were made on time and foster carers were pleased about this. The out-of-hours support is well established and effective and carers spoke well of it. In discussion with carers many felt that the training provided by the agency was a key element of support to them.

A copy of the fostering service agreement is provided to all foster carers and this was in line with Schedule 5 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2001. An updated fostering services handbook was also in place and this detailed all the standards identified in Standard 22.5 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2002. A named link-worker was in place for each foster carer and there have been improvements with regard to frequency of visits to foster carers. Foster carers now receive supervision on a three-weekly basis with notes kept. It was also clear that the agency maintained a record of allegations of abuse and this information is appropriately notified to the Commission.

A rolling training programme was in place and this was specific to the needs of all foster carers. The main aim of training is for foster carers to develop competencies in three core areas i.e. childcare skills and knowledge, working in partnership with families, the Five Rivers Fostering and other agencies and for personal progress and change. As part of this a residential training programme is in place and all prospective carers are required to attend the residential training weekend. Some foster carers have achieved their NVQ level 3 Award while others have started. There is a push by the agency to support more carers to undertake this training. Foster carers spoken to were happy with the training provided by the agency.

Several case records were examined during the inspection and they were updated and contained all relevant statutory information. The records contained detailed information regarding medical and educational information and included life story work. Foster carers interviewed showed a good understanding of the importance of enabling children to retain items that are significant to them. This is good practice and also encouraged by the agency.

All case records examined contained information required by regulation. They were securely stored and the manager monitors this. A satisfactory policy is in

place with regard to accessing records held by the agency and staff interviewed were aware of this. A complaints record was in place and no complaints were recorded since the last inspection. Detailed statistical information regarding the operations of the agency were in place and this is also monitored by the manager.

The premises were adequate for the business operations of the agency. It was well maintained and the lease was due for renewal in March 2006. The manager confirmed that this was in hand, as arrangements for renewal of the lease had been made.

This standard (NMS 27) was not tested at this inspection as the Wiltshire Area Office of CSCI inspected this aspect of the organisation's operations. The report surmised that the standard was met and this is an improvement from the previous inspection. The full findings in relation to this standard could be found in report for the Salisbury office of the Five Rivers Fostering Service.

This standard (NMS 28) was not tested at this inspection as the Wiltshire Area Office of CSCI inspected this aspect of the organisations operations. The report surmised that the standard was met and this is an improvement from previous inspection. The full findings in relation to this standard could be found in report for the Salisbury office of the Five Rivers Fostering Service.

This standard (NMS 32) does not apply to the Five Rivers Fostering Service.

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	3

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

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

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	3
29	3

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

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

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