



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

## FOSTERING SERVICE

### **Knowsley Council Fostering Service**

**Astley House  
Astley Road  
Huyton  
Liverpool  
Merseyside  
L36 8HY**

*Lead Inspector*  
Mrs Lynn Paterson

*Announced Inspection*  
16th October 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

<b>Reader Information</b>	
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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](http://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](http://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

<b>Name of service</b>	Knowsley Council Fostering Service
<b>Address</b>	Astley House Astley Road Huyton Liverpool Merseyside L36 8HY
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 489 6000
<b>Fax number</b>	
<b>Email address</b>	
<b>Provider Web address</b>	
<b>Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)</b>	Knowsley Council
<b>Name of registered manager (if applicable)</b>	Mrs Terry Douglas
<b>Type of registration</b>	Local Auth Fostering Service

# **SERVICE INFORMATION**

## **Conditions of registration:**

**Date of last inspection**      24.10.05

## **Brief Description of the Service:**

Knowsley Social Services Fostering Team is based at Astley House, Huyton, in ground floor premises, which is open and accessible. The accommodation is situated in a residential area, close to shops and public transport and has good parking facilities to the front and rear of the building. The team comprise of specialist workers who are trained and experienced in the areas of fostering with their main functions being to recruit, assess, train and support foster carers. Professional and experienced administrative staff provides assistance and support to the team.

# SUMMARY

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

The inspection of Knowlsey Local Authority Fostering Service commenced on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2006 and was carried out over a five -day period. Prior to the inspection discussions had been held with the management team and a timetable had been arranged as to how the visit would be organised.

The first day was spent meeting with the service manager team manager and staff and reading files. The following days involved discussions with agency staff, supervising social workers and visits to foster carers and young people.

Ten foster carers and young people looked after files were examined in detail. 3 agency staff files and 8 panel files were looked at and panel records viewed.

Seven carers had been contacted by telephone for discussion about their perception of the agency and letters had been sent to one hundred and thirty six foster carers and young people in placement to gain insight into how they viewed the level of support provided to them from the agency.

Pre inspection questionnaires were also sent to the fostering agency, which they completed and returned before the inspection commenced.

Policies and procedures were also looked at during the site visit and a tour of the premises was undertaken.

Fieldwork also included discussions with health workers, social workers and safeguarding officers.

Over seventy completed questionnaires were returned from foster carer's, social workers and young people.

## **What the service does well:**

Knowsley's Fostering service is a well managed highly organised department staffed by people who show true commitment to ensuring positive outcomes for young children and young people looked after. Comments received from young people included -:

"I am very well looked after by my foster carers and I love being here",

"The fostering workers always check that me and my foster carer are OK",

"I love it here it is my home".

Knowsley's foster service provides excellent support for Foster Carers.

Foster carers said they were very much supported by the fostering service and comments included-:

"My social worker is so helpful, s/he offers so much support and is always there for us".

"Our social worker calls to see us on a very regular basis and gives us help and advice all the time. We do not know what we would do without her/him".

"We get so much help and support from the agency, nothing is too much trouble for them".

Records show that the service has a well - designed foster carer recruitment system in place and pre- approval assessments were carried out to a very high standard. Comments received from foster carers included -:

"The recruitment and assessment programme was very good indeed. We were given information to make sure that our eyes were clearly open to what was expected of us as foster carers".

"The pre approval assessment was carried out well. We were give all the facts about being a foster carer and of the difficulties we may encounter but we were provided with excellent training to enable us to feel confident about our role".

"The person who assessed me was wonderful. S/he enabled me to gain confidence in myself and think about issues or things I may get concerned about. S/he then supported me through the training and I love being a foster carer it's the best thing I have ever done".

All records viewed were well maintained and policies and procedures were clear and relevant.

Staff records revealed that staff, are all qualified, experienced and have the current registration with the general Social Care Council.

Staff said the service is very well managed and they are supported and encouraged to develop their skills. Staff advised that the team work well together and are well supported by the presence of other professionals dedicated to the looked after children's services to include health and education staff.

Records show that the service has effective quality- monitoring systems, which are carried out by way of various panels, reviews, references, checks, medicals, risk assessments and consultations methods.

## **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Documentation viewed show the service constantly monitors and reviews its performance to ensure it meets the needs of looked after children.

As a consequence the service have updated many policies and protocols.

Care plans have been amended to ensure children's individual wishes and feelings are fully included. For example a young person with a physical disability requested not to move from his/her foster home whilst his/her carers went on holiday. This information was clearly written up in his/her care plan and foster carers with the necessary skills were able to move into the home to provide care on a respite basis.

The service has provided updated training and information to ensure all staff has full understanding of equality and diversity issues. This included all staff undertaking an Impact Assessment, promotional literature being reviewed and updated to ensure that all information can be produced in any language or format on request.



The service has produced a book "Happy, Healthy and Safe" which provides updated information for foster carers.

Training records show that the service has encouraged more foster carers to attend post approval training and foster carers said the training was varied interesting and useful.

Foster carers said that the service had greatly improved upon its consultation systems. Carers said they are now consulted regularly about all aspects of the service.

Recruitment and retention strategies for foster carers continue to improve and the service has started to address the individual training needs of carers to make sure they have the opportunity to continuously develop their skills.

The agency premises have been subject to an expansion and refurbishment programme and now appear fit for purpose.

### **What they could do better:**

The inspection of Knowsley's Fostering Service was most positive and as a consequence no shortfalls were identified at this time. It was noted that the premises had greatly improved since the previous inspection and staff appeared to have more working space and facilities. However the crèche arrangements are situated at the rear of the building and this necessitates foster carers and children accessing the crèche via the administrators working space. Whilst this is not seen as a shortfall to the service it is recommended that the entrance to the crèche be reviewed to ensure that administrative staff are able to carry out their work without constant interruption.

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](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk) or by contacting your local CSCI office. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

# **DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS**

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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.

## JUDGEMENT – we looked at the outcome for Standard:

12.

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The agency and its foster carers are proactive in promoting children's/ young person's health and any specialist needs, by providing foster care services which help each child/ young person to receive health care which meets his/ her individual needs.

## EVIDENCE:

High priority is given to the health of looked after children. Documentation shows that the service report issues of health to the DFES and records show Knowsley Local Authority has achieved 97% of health checks for looked after children to include medical, dental checks and immunisations.

Discussions and observations show the department has close working relationships with health colleagues and 2 nurse posts are dedicated to the health and well- being of looked after children.

Foster carers said they had been provided with a book called "Happy Healthy and Safe" which they said contained useful information. Foster carers said they were provided with lots of good quality training around health issues to include-:

1. Drugs and alcohol and the effects on the unborn child.

2. Drugs and alcohol and the effects for young people.

3. First aid.
4. Looking after babies and toddlers.
5. Communicating with children with disabilities.
6. Health and safety.
7. Alcohol awareness.
8. Nutrition and eating disorders.

Young people in discussion and views obtained from questionnaires identified they had full awareness of healthy eating and general good practice in respect of health needs. Records show that all young people have registration with General Practitioners, Dentists and any other health related service as appropriate.

Foster carers said they were also supported in their caring role by the provision of social workers that were part of Children Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Foster carers advised that social workers from this service would work with young people who experienced emotional and behavioural difficulties and would also give help and advice to carers at their monthly support group meetings.

Discussions with staff and foster carers revealed the Looked After Children's (LAC) nurse undertakes an assessment of children/young people's strengths and difficulties on entry into the looked after system. Records show that this assessment indicates whether an early referral in to CAMHS team is required.

Records, discussions, feedback from questionnaires and observations show that the fostering agency work very hard with foster carers, young people and others who are involved with the health and development of children and young people to ensure most positive outcomes.

# 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.

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

3.6.8.9.15.30.

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The agency has clear effective recruitment practices, which ensure that children and young people are fully safeguarded. Through a process of information sharing and the involvement of all relevant professionals and individuals, the agency is able to offer children and young people the most suitable match they are able to provide.

## EVIDENCE:

The managers of the fostering service hold relevant academic and professional qualifications and have many years experience in the care of looked after children. The team has a structured line management system to enable all staff to have effective communication channels and support.

All staff of the service have been recruited within the Knowsley recruitment and selection procedures and have been interviewed, referenced and have been subject to all appropriate checks to include Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosures. Records show that all staff are appropriately qualified and have current registration with The General Social Care Council.

Records show that the service functions within the overall policies and procedures of the Local Authority and other related Fostering Policies and Procedures. It was noted that the service constantly monitor and review all their policies and practices to ensure they meet changing needs.

Foster carers spoken with and comments provided on questionnaires reveal that they are trained and supported to provide a safe, health and nurturing environment for looked after children. Foster carers training relevant to this area includes, Safe care, managing difficult behaviour, child protection awareness, indicators of bullying and how to help the child cope with this.

Foster carers comments included: -

"We are provided with lots of good quality training to enable us to understand our role and the needs of the looked after children who live in our homes".

"Training support and encouragement is always provided to us by our Social workers".

"Safe care policies are clear and we have annual health and safety checks carried out on our homes to make sure everything is OK".

"Our social workers look at our houses and they will get us health and safety equipment if it is needed. For example I have had a fireguard and child car seats provided for the children I have looked after".

File records show that the agency carry out an annual review of carers and staff advised that this is undertaken to ensure that all risk assessment and health and safety issues are addressed.

Foster carers said social workers needed to see details of their means of transport to include tax, insurance and MOT to ensure the safe travel of looked after children.

Records show that in general the matching process is undertaken through permanence panel meetings, at which relevant professionals attend. Foster carers said they felt the matching process was good and they were provided with full information about the child/young person prior to placement wherever possible.

The agency has Professional Abuse procedures, which are followed in the event of any allegations of abuse or neglect of a child in a foster home. Records seen show that the agency investigates and records all information and deals with the outcomes accordingly. Allegations are also investigated with the processes set out in the safeguarding procedures.

The foster carers manual holds clear information to include advice about how to deal with Bullying, Children Missing from Care and out of hour's emergency duty social work intervention.

It was not possible to observe a fostering panel meeting at this visit. However panel meetings were observed at previous inspections and were well managed. Records show the panel format for constitution remains the same and all documentation awaiting presentation to panel was examined and presented as clear detailed and informative.

Feedback from foster carers and other professionals associated with the foster panel was most positive and indicated that the panel was managed well, all information shared and decision making transparent.



# 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.**

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

7.13.31.

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The agency works with the child/ young person, foster carers, local education authority and placing authority to promote the best educational outcomes for the child/ young person.

Issues of diversity and the promotion of equal opportunities for children/ young people, and their families are discussed and addressed through training and policy/ procedure to ensure that these issues are promoted in practice throughout the fostering service.

## **EVIDENCE:**

Discussions with staff and foster carers revealed The Knowsley's Foster Care Association (KFCA) is financially supported to provide opportunities for Looked After Children and young people to have holidays in the 2 caravans', which they manage. Foster carers said they are also supported by KFCA who organise trips for Looked After Children and their families throughout the year. Feedback from foster carers and young people identified that the trips are age focused and have included visits to Pantomimes and Blackpool Lights.

Children and young people said they were asked questions about things that happen in their placements for example: - how much pocket money they were given: where they go on holiday: what interests/activities they enjoyed. Staff

advised that this information is used at the foster carers review and identifies if the carer is utilising the placement to meet the individual needs of the child.

Staff spoken with and documentation viewed revealed that all children and young people in foster care have their needs identified by their social workers and matching is overseen by the respective panel .For example Accommodation Panel, Fostering Panel or Permanence Panel. As part of the matching process careful consideration is given to issues in relation to ethnicity, religious practice, sexual orientation, disability or cultural needs and linguistic background of the carers as well as the ability to respond to the children/young peoples care needs, such as a history of abuse and experience of working with challenging teenagers. Records show that if assessed needs cannot be met within Knowsley's own resources, suitable alternatives are sought through The Merseyside Region Consortium and The Independent Sector.

Pre approval training for prospective foster carers includes deep discussions about the need to promote, understand and ensure that foster carers carry out their role in an anti-discriminatory manner and addresses the needs of individual children in their care. Foster carers spoken with said they fully understood diversity and equality issues and received training in these areas as an ongoing process. Comments from foster carers included "our social worker always gives us full details of the needs of looked after children who are cared for in our home. She makes sure we have our eyes wide open to all individual needs to enable us to provide the appropriate care".

Foster carers said they were provided with all aids and adaptations necessary to care for children with a disability.

The service have further addressed ways of promoting equality and diversity and have reviewed promotion literature and produced literature in various languages and formats on request.

Documentation viewed shows the looked after population is supported by Educational Staff and foster carers spoken with said they felt this support system was a valuable asset to the children and young people. Foster carers revealed that Education Staff provide them with Training and support and also provide packages of support to individual children. Foster carers said they received training and support from the fostering service to ensure the children in their care were able to obtain an education suitable for their capabilities to enable them to achieve maximum potential.

Records show "The Right To Read project" has provided 200m books to 135 looked after children and young people aged 5 – 15 years. Foster carers said this project is a partnership between Knowsley's Council, Knowsley's Primary Care Trust and Foster Carers.

Agency staff and foster carers said Knowsley's Borough celebrates the achievement of its children and looked after children are represented at this event, which is held annually in The Philharmonic Hall.

Knowsley's Action Team for Youth (KATY) runs 3 groups every year with 12 looked after children in each group. Records show KATY provides educational and leisure activities and a residential weekend is included in each group. Children with disabilities are integrated into these groups and the achievements of children are celebrated at the end of each project. Foster carers said KATY has been very successful and has enabled young people to develop their skills and confidence.

Records show that the agency has a limited number of carers with specific approval to provide short-term breaks to meet the assessed needs of families as a support to parents who retain parental responsibility and all of its central functions. The placements are reviewed six monthly and foster carers receive training and support.

## **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.**

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

10.11.

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The agency and its foster carers work in partnership with children/ young people, their families and others significant to the child/ young person, to ensure that they are consulted about all aspects of their lives, according to their age and understanding.

Contact arrangements are clearly known and followed so that each child/ young person is encouraged to maintain and develop family contacts and friendships as appropriate.

### **EVIDENCE:**

The fostering service identified full commitment to supporting contact between children/young people in foster care with all people who play a significant part in their lives.

Foster carers said they received good training in Positive Contact and understanding of the issues for the child.

Records show that core groups and reviews for looked after children include discussion around contact and contact arrangements are monitored and reviewed as appropriate.

Carers advised they are supplied with memory boxes and memory books for the children they care for, to enable children/young people to have positive images and memories of their own lives and people who are important to them.

Files examined show consultation with children and their birth family's is undertaken at the children/young peoples review. Independent reviewing officers check if children/young people and their families have any concerns about the service offered. In this setting the child is able to comment on the care they receive.

Records show that children/young people placed in foster care and who are of an appropriate age are encouraged to contribute to their foster carers reviews. All contribution's, are monitored by the foster care reviewing officer who will record the information and share any necessary information with the fostering manager as appropriate.

Staff advised that children who are old enough, contribute to their form E's which express their views for their individual plans for the future.

The service arranges focus groups in which children / young people looked after meet with a view to them having a voice to participate in decisions which affect them. The service is now planning to arrange more age appropriate consultation groups to "have a say " about the service in general.

The service has clear policies and procedures in place to deal with allegations against a carer. Children/young people and foster carers said they are encouraged to advise the service of complaints and compliments.

Foster carers said they felt valued by the service and were always consulted with and provided with information about any proposed changes. Foster carers advised the Knowsley's Foster Care Association is a large consultative group for the service and any changes of practice is discussed and considered in the light of their views. They gave an example of how this worked as being the current review of the agencies skill based payment scheme, as they said, not all foster carers felt happy with this scheme. As a consequence issues identified are being worked through and the scheme will be reviewed.

Carers revealed they were consulted with about their training needs and had been provided with a review and evaluation of training document, to enable them to state their views and the agency to revise training accordingly.

# Achieving Economic Wellbeing

## The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

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

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

14.29.

Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. Foster carers help to develop the skills and competences of young people and begin to prepare them for adulthood.

Each foster carer receives an allowance and agreed expenses, the policy and process ensure that payments are made promptly and at the agreed time.

## EVIDENCE:

Records show that young people looked after who are 16years of age and above are provided with additional support from a social worker from The Leaving Care Team. Young people advised they had been provided with a Pathways plan that they contributed to as a means to leaving care and gaining their independence.

Foster carers said they had training in Pathways Planning, which they found most useful.

Record show that weekly payments to carers are made through BACS payments to bank accounts.

Foster carers said that they are provided with clear details of the table of payments as agreed by Council and these rates are reviewed annually. Carers said they were sent an annual statement of their payments for the year to enable them to "sort out taxes".

Staff revealed that The Foster Carers manual contains full information about payments to include the provision of discretionary payments.

# 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 1, 16, 17, 21, 24, 25 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.**

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



1.2.4.5.16.17.21.22.24.25.26.32.

Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service. The fostering service is well managed and has a clear strategy in place for working with and supporting carers and provides a support network that enables foster carers to develop their skills.

The fostering service has an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff. Children/ young people and foster carers benefit from a well-organised, consistent and reliable service that meets the needs of the children/ young people for whom it provides a service.

### **EVIDENCE:**

The statement of purpose has been reviewed and all foster carers have access to the document and it is also available in electronic format on The Knowsley's Website. The children's guide to fostering remains current and the Children's Guide to the Office of The Children's Rights Director has been provided to all fostering households for the children's information.

The Knowsley's Fostering Policy remains current although work has been completed to update the Private Fostering Policy.

The management team are very experienced, each having in excess of 20 years social work experience. Records show they are qualified social workers with relevant managerial qualifications. The manager is deputised for by 2 senior practitioner's, in her absence, and has staff available to provide support in respect of financial and administrative matters.

Agency staff and children's social workers spoken with said the manager was very highly thought of by all professionals associated with the service. It was said she was viewed as "a fountain of knowledge", "very supportive", "approachable and easy to talk to", "wants the very best for the service and all who use it".

Documentation shows the service is managed within the Council's financial regulations and the particular payments through the Boarding out budget.

Records show all staff are registered with General Social Care Council. Systems for quality assuring the work of the service include supervision, statutory checks and references for carers and staff, review meetings and the fostering panel.

Staff and Foster carers said training opportunities are an ongoing process with the service and staff revealed they are encouraged to seek individual development opportunities, to enhance their progress.

Job descriptions were seen to be clear and relevant to each position and staff advised that they did not hold similar positions in any other organisation.

Records show the service has sufficient qualified staff, and systems in place to ensure assessments, reviews and foster carers are managed appropriately. Foster carers comments included: -

"The service is managed very well, we have complete confidence in the manager and her staff"

"We get 24 hour support ",

"We feel very much a part of the agency"

"The manager will always find time to speak with us, even when we know she is very busy, she always finds time to talk".

Discussions with foster carers and feedback received from questionnaires identified that foster carers felt very well supported by the agency. Foster carers said staff, were responsive, carer's opinions were valued and they felt very much a part of the service.

File records show that foster carers have an allocated social worker who provides information, supervision, support and advice to foster carers to enable them to provide positive outcomes for the looked after children and young people living in their homes. All comments received from foster carers about their social worker were very positive indeed. Comments included:-

"My social worker is reliable, easy to discuss things with, never makes me feel stupid and encourages me to develop my skills",

"Our social worker has been coming here for years now, s/he is very good at what s/he does and always gives us the right advice and full information. It is good for us that the team stay the same as we can talk to any of them, they are `all good".

Discussion with staff revealed the case records for children/young people are held within the Children's Social Work Teams. However it was possible to examine several files and they appeared to be well maintained, comprehensive and well organised.

Staff said that in line with the development of the electric social care record, the children's files are now accessible within the division's computer records, to all people who have appropriate clearance.

All records examined were maintained to a very high standard and this enabled the process of tracking events and outcomes to be an easy exercise.

It was noted that the premises had benefited greatly since the previous inspection and staff appeared to have more working space and facilities. It is recommended however that the entrance to the crèche facility be reviewed to ensure minimum disruption to administrative staff.

Examination of files and discussions with staff revealed that the service operate an effective system for monitoring the quality and adequacy of records. All records are typed and countersigned by the manager or her deputy. The team use a reliable method of diarising to ensure all records are maintained and up to date to include references and checks.

Staff advised that family and friend carers are fully approved at panel and are subject to all the procedures associated with the approval process to include health and safety checks carried out in their homes and Criminal Records Bureaux (CRB) checks and references being provided. Staff advised that family and friend carers are offered all the training provided by the agency however records show, take up of training is low.

Documentation viewed and discussions held with management and staff revealed the Division has commenced a scheme, which supports assessing ongoing financial support to friends and family carers, through Residence Orders and Special Guardianship allowances. This process will be instigated and assessed by the children's/young persons social worker and approved at Panel to ensure children/young peoples needs could be met into the future.

The overall management and organisation of the service was seen to be of a high standard.

# 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

<b>BEING HEALTHY</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>12</b>	4

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

<b>ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>7</b>	4
<b>13</b>	4
<b>31</b>	3

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

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

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

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	FS26	Whilst it is noted that the premises have benefited from expansion and refurbishment it would be recommended that the entrance to the crèche is reviewed to ensure that administrative staff are able to carry out their work without constant interruption.

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

Knowsley Local Office  
2nd Floor, South Wing  
Burlington House  
Crosby Road North  
Liverpool  
L22 0LG

### National Enquiry Line

Telephone: 0845 015 0120 or 0191 233 3323

Textphone: 0845 015 2255 or 0191 233 3588

Email: [enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk)

Web: [www.csci.org.uk](http://www.csci.org.uk)

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