



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

Fostering Services

Newham Fostering Service

16 Wordsworth Avenue

Manor Park

London

E12 6SU

24th January 2005

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Launched in April 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is the single inspectorate for social care in England.

The Commission combines the work formerly done by the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI), the SSI/Audit Commission Joint Review Team and the National Care Standards Commission.

The role of CSCI is to:

- Promote improvement in social care
- Inspect all social care - for adults and children - in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Publish annual reports to Parliament on the performance of social care and on the state of the social care market
- Inspect and assess 'Value for Money' of council social services
- Hold performance statistics on social care
- Publish the 'star ratings' for council social services
- Register and inspect services against national standards
- Host the Children's Rights Director role.

Inspection Methods & Findings

SECTION B of this report summarises key findings and evidence from this inspection. The following 4-point scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

'O' or blank in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

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

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

FOSTERING SERVICE INFORMATION

Local Authority Fostering Service?

YES

Name of Authority

Newham Fostering Service

Address

16 Wordsworth Avenue, Manor Park, London, E12 6SU

Local Authority Service Manager

Ms. Jenny Barville

Tel No:

020 8430 5117

Address

16 Wordsworth Avenue, Manor Park, London, E12 6SU

Fax No:

Email Address

ssd-fpuduty@newham.gov.uk

Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)

NO

Name of Agency

Tel No

Address

Fax No

Email Address

Registered Number of IFA

Name of Registered Provider

Name of Registered Manager (if applicable)

Date of first registration

Date of latest registration certificate

Registration Conditions Apply ?

NO

Date of last inspection

25/10/03

Date of Inspection Visit		16th December 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		10:00 am	
Name of Inspector	1	Audrey McDonnell	140065
Name of Inspector	2		
Name of Inspector	3		
Name of Inspector	4		
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection			

Introduction to Report and Inspection

Inspection visits

Description of Fostering Service

Part A: Summary of Inspection Findings

Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State

Implementation of Statutory Requirements from last Inspection

Statutory Requirements from this Inspection

Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection

Part B: Inspection Methods & Findings

(National Minimum Standards For Fostering Services)

- 1. Statement of purpose**
- 2. Fitness to carry on or manage a fostering service**
- 3. Management of the fostering service**
- 4. Securing and promoting welfare**
- 5. Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers**
- 6. Records**
- 7. Fitness of premises**
- 8. Financial requirements**
- 9. Fostering panels**
- 10. Short-term breaks**
- 11. Family and friend carers**

Part C: Lay Assessor's Summary (where applicable)

Part D: Provider's Response

D.1. Provider's comments

D.2. Action Plan

D.3. Provider's agreement

INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Independent and local authority fostering services which fall within the jurisdiction of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) are subject to inspection, to establish if the service is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and the requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000, the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and the Children Act 1989 as amended.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Newham Fostering Service. The inspection findings relate to the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services published by the Secretary of State under sections 23 and 49 of the Care Standards Act 2000, for independent and local authority fostering services respectively.

The Fostering Services Regulations 2002 are secondary legislation, with which a service provider must comply. Service providers are expected to comply fully with the National Minimum Standards. The National Minimum standards will form the basis for judgements by the CSCI in relation to independent fostering agencies regarding registration, the imposition and variation of registration conditions and any enforcement action, and in relation to local authority fostering services regarding notices to the local authority and reports to the Secretary of State under section 47 of the Care Standards Act 2000. The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

- Inspection methods used
- Key findings and evidence
- Overall ratings in relation to the standards
- Compliance with the Regulations
- Notifications to the Local Authority and Reports to the Secretary of State
- Required actions on the part of the provider
- Recommended good practice
- Summary of the findings
- Report of the Lay Assessor (where relevant)
- Providers response and proposed action plan to address findings

This report is a public document.

INSPECTION VISITS

Inspections will be undertaken in line with the agreed regulatory framework with additional visits as required. This is in accordance with the provisions of the Care Standards Act 2000. The following inspection methods have been used in the production of this report. The report represents the inspector's findings from the evidence found at the specified inspection dates.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

This is a local authority fostering agency. Services include the recruitment, assessment and preparation of foster carers. Supervision, training, and support of foster carers is provided by a team of social workers who are experienced in childcare practices.

The agency's statement of purpose states that: "The Newham Fostering Service aims to provide a high quality foster placements that can ensure the best possible outcomes for looked after children in the borough."

The Newham Fostering Service provides three distinct services:

- Recruitment, assessment and induction of foster carers,
- Supervision and support of foster carers,
- Identification and monitoring of placements with other providers.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

Inspector's Summary

(This is an overview of the inspector's findings, which includes good practice, quality issues, areas to be addressed or developed and any other concerns.)

Statement of Purpose (Standard 1)

This standard was met. Newham Fostering Agency had produced their Statement of Purpose in Feb 2004, which, since the inspection and writing of this report, has been reviewed and updated and formally approved by Newham Council. This document was also part of the foster carers' handbook.

Fitness to Provide or Manage a Fostering Service (Standards 2-3)

One of these standards was inspected; the other standard was met at the last inspection. The previous inspection took place over a seventeen-day period conducted by two inspectors. Due to time constraints the inspector was not able to meet with the board. During the inspection the inspector met with a wide range of staff and management who demonstrated a competent and professional knowledge in relation to the needs of the service.

Management of the Fostering Service (Standards 4-5)

Both of these standards were met. The inspector was satisfied through interviews with managerial staff and via observation that the fostering service was managed effectively and efficiently. All staff received regular supervision, evaluation and appraisal. This in turn identified development needs for staff and individual training and development plans were devised from this.

Securing and Promoting Welfare (Standards 6-14)

All 4 standards were met and one standard was commended. The Inspector observed that the fostering service had undertaken a good level of work to ensure that the very specific needs of children and young people were being met. The foster carers visited and were able to demonstrate their knowledge of child protection issues. . All of the Foster carers visited reported that they had positive relationships with the local authority. In all of the homes visited it was apparent that health and safety checks were being conducted appropriately. On the day of the inspection the service manager reported to the inspector that the service has been facing some difficulties in recruiting Caucasian foster carers. On records examined it was apparent that the service was committed to ensuring that the cultural background and needs of children placed with foster carers.

Recruiting, Checking, Managing, Supporting and Training Staff and Foster Carers (Standards 15-23)

7 of these 8 standards were met. Members of staff interviewed during the Inspection were aware of the management structure and individual roles and responsibilities. Training records indicated that staffs undertake on-going training and appropriate professional and skills development to enable them to carry out their jobs efficiently. The Inspector was satisfied with the level of training offered by foster carers to ensure that they possess skills required to provide high quality of care. Apart from one incident the inspector was satisfied that the agency was providing appropriate training and development opportunities to the foster carers who are part of this agency.

Records (Standards 24-25)

Both of these 2 standards were fully met.

The fostering service now uses a Care First to store information about Children. On examining records the inspector noted an incident where a child had been inappropriately placed due to the foster carers records not been fully reviewed prior to placements.

Fitness of Premises for use as Fostering Service (Standard 26)

This standard was met.

Financial requirements (Standards 27-29)

All of these 3 standards were fully met. All of the foster carers visited reported that they were aware of their level of entitlements. The service has clear guidance on foster carers entitlements and the foster carers handbook has a section specifically about finance and allowances. The service is funded by the social services through an established budget.

Fostering Panels (Standard 30)

This standard was met at the last inspection and was not inspected at this inspection.

Short-term Breaks (Standard 31)

This standard was not assessed.

Family and Friends as Carers (Standard 32)

This standard was fully met. It was noted that the fostering agency had improved kinship care arrangements since the last Inspection.

Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State

(Local Authority Fostering Services Only)

The following statutory Reports or Notifications are to be made under the Care Standards Act as a result of the findings of this inspection:

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(3) of the Care Standards Act 2000 that the Commission considers the Local Authority's fostering service satisfies the regulatory requirements:

NO

Notice to the Local Authority under section 47(5) of the Care Standards Act 2000 of failure(s) to satisfy regulatory requirements in their fostering service which are not substantial, and specifying the action the Commission considers the Authority should take to remedy the failure(s), informing the Secretary of State of that Notice:

NO

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(4)(a) of the Care Standards Act of a failure by a Local Authority fostering service to satisfy regulatory requirements which is not considered substantial:

NO

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(1) of the Care Standards Act 2000 of substantial failure to satisfy regulatory requirements by a Local Authority fostering service:

NO

The grounds for the above Report or Notice are:

Implementation of Statutory Requirements from Last Inspection

Requirements from last Inspection visit fully actioned?

NO

If No please list below

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Identified below are areas not addressed from the last inspection report which indicate a non-compliance with the Care Standards Act 2000 and Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

No.	Regulation	Standard	Required actions	
1	35	AP22	The fostering service must ensure that all placements are appropriately supervised by allocated Supervising Social Workers.	01/03/04

Action is being taken by the Commission for Social Care Inspection to monitor compliance with the above requirements.

COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION (IF APPLICABLE)**(Registered Independent Fostering Agencies only)**

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

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Locum Inspector **Audrey
McDonnell**
Second Inspector _____
Regulation **Tony Allen**
Manager _____
Date **22nd June 2005**

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS IDENTIFIED DURING THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The appropriate Officer of the Local Authority or the Registered Person (as applicable) is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how requirements are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Identified below are areas addressed in the main body of the report which indicate non-compliance with the Care Standards Act 2000, the Children Act 1989, the Fostering Services Regulations 2002, or the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services. The Authority or Registered Person(s) is/are required to comply within the given time scales in order to comply with the Regulatory Requirements for fostering services.

No.	Regulation	Standard *	Requirement	
1	33 (b)	AP7	The registered person must ensure that children's welfare is considered by ensuring that they are placed with family's that can meet all of their needs.	30/6/05
2	20 (1) (a)	AP22	The registered person must ensure that foster carers receive training based on the advice given by their board or where any are of concern has been identified.	30/6/05
1	35	AP22	The fostering service must ensure that all placements are appropriately supervised by allocated Supervising Social Workers. (This is a re-stated Requirement: previous timescale of 1/3/04 not met.)	30/6/05

GOOD PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS INSPECTION

Identified below are areas addressed in the main body of the report which relate to the National Minimum Standards and are seen as good practice issues which should be considered for implementation by the Authority or Registered Person(s).

No.	Refer to Standard *	Recommendation Action
1	AP18	The service manager should ensure that she meet's with the foster carers to address their concerns.

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

PART B	INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS
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The following inspection methods have been used in the production of this report

Number of Inspector days spent	5
Survey of placing authorities	YES
Foster carer survey	YES
Foster children survey	YES
Checks with other organisations and Individuals	YES
• Directors of Social services	YES
• Child protection officer	YES
• Specialist advisor (s)	YES
• Local Foster Care Association	YES
Tracking Individual welfare arrangements	YES
• Interview with children	YES
• Interview with foster carers	YES
• Interview with agency staff	YES
• Contact with parents	NO
• Contact with supervising social workers	YES
• Examination of files	YES
Individual interview with manager	YES
Information from provider	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group discussion with staff	YES
Interview with panel chair	NO
Observation of foster carer training	NO
Observation of foster panel	NO
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	YES
Date of Inspection	24/1/05
Time of Inspection	10AM
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	50

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

The scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

Statement of Purpose

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

Standard 1 (1.1 - 1.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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A Statement of Purpose had been produced by Newham Fostering Agency (NFA) services in Feb 2004, which, since the inspection and writing of this report, has been reviewed and updated and formally approved by Newham Council. The inspector revised this document which is provided as part of the Foster Carers Handbook and was found to be up to date and in line with the current regulations.	
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Fitness to Carry On or Manage a Fostering Service

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The fostering service is provided and managed by those with the appropriate skills and experience to do so efficiently and effectively and by those who are suitable to work with children.

Standard 2 (2.1 - 2.4)

The people involved in carrying on and managing the fostering service possess the necessary business and management skills and financial expertise to manage the work efficiently and effectively and have the necessary knowledge and experience of childcare and fostering to do so in a professional manner.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

Two inspectors conducted the 2003 inspection over a seventeen-day period. During this time the inspectors met with and interviewed NFA's board. At this time the board was described as "a range of staff employed by the fostering service". The inspectors conducting the inspection following formal interviews with some of the members described them to have "demonstrated a competent and professional knowledge in relation to the needs of the service". Prior to this inspection the inspector noted that the board met on a monthly basis and the planned meeting time was not during the time that had been planned to conduct the inspection of the service. Due to this time constraints and the fact that the service had such an extensive inspection in 2003 and the fact that the standard had scored a 3 at the last inspection it was not felt necessary to re interview the board at this inspection. This standard will be re inspected in the 2005/6 NFA inspection.

Standard 3 (3.1 - 3.4)

Any persons carrying on or managing the fostering service are suitable people to run a business concerned with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

During the course of the inspection the inspector met with the Service manager for Fostering and Adoption The newly appointed Senior Team Manager for Fostering and Adopting and the Assistant Director for Children and Family's. Both the Service manager and the Senior Team Manager possess a social work qualification, significant post- qualification training and extensive experience of relevant childcare practice and management. They had worked within and managed Fostering and Adoption teams at various levels. Over the course of the inspection both of the managers made themselves available for the inspector at all times and where able to support the inspector in addressing any issues that arose. The inspector found both of the managers competent and eager to address any issues that arose during the course of the inspection. On the last day of the inspection the inspector met with both of the manager as well as the services assistant director and fed back any issues that were raised during the course of the inspection.

Management of the Fostering Service

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The fostering service is managed ethically and efficiently, delivering a good quality foster care service and avoiding confusion and conflicts of role.

Standard 4 (4.1 – 4.5)

There are clear procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the fostering service and ensuring quality performance.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Newham Fostering and Adoption agency is part of Newham Social Services. As part of this the service has core procedures in place for the running of the service. Over the course of the inspection the inspector viewed a number of records for the service part of these records included personnel records. On personnel files examined the inspector found them to be in order and contain all of the required information for ensuring safe working practices. All staff received regular supervision, evaluation and appraisal. This in turn identified development needs of staff and individual training and development plans where devised from this.

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

0

Death of a child placed with foster parents.

0

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

0

Serious illness or accident of a child.

0

Outbreak of serious infectious disease at a foster home.

0

Actual or suspected involvement of a child in prostitution.

0

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

0

Serious complaint about a foster parent.

0

Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.

0

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

0

Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:

0

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.4)

The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Following the last inspection a new senior team manager had been appointed for fostering and adoption, which meant that the service now had a Service manager in post as well as a Senior Team Manager. The inspector was satisfied that both of these managers were competent and knew how to manage the service effectively. Both the manager had clear job descriptions in place and there were lines of accountability for both of them.

Securing and Promoting Welfare

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The fostering service promotes and safeguards the child/young person's physical, mental and emotional welfare.

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.9)

The fostering service makes available foster carers who provide a safe, healthy and nurturing environment.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Over the course of the inspection the inspector visited three foster cares in their homes and met with foster carers in the process of completing their application to become foster carers. The inspector was satisfied with the quality of accommodation provided to the children and young people in the homes visited. All of the Foster carers visited reported that they had positive relationships with the local authority. In all of the homes visited it was apparent that health and safety checks were being conducted appropriately.

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)

The fostering service ensures that children and young people, and their families, are provided with foster care services which value diversity and promote equality.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

On the day of the inspection the service manager reported to the inspector that the service has been facing some difficulties in recruiting Caucasian foster carers. On records examined it was apparent that the service was committed to ensuring the cultural background and needs of children placed with foster carers. On viewing the panel report of one foster carers it was noted that the panel had decided that due to homophobic attitude it would not be appropriate to place adolescent children into this foster carers home. Despite this on further examining the foster carers file the inspector noted that two adolescent children had been placed there despite the panel's decision. This issue was raised with the service manager who immediately addressed it. The registered person must ensure that children's welfare is considered by ensuring that they are placed with family's that can meet all of their needs.

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.7)
Local authority fostering services, and voluntary agencies placing children in their own right, ensure that each child or young person placed in foster care is carefully matched with a carer capable of meeting her/his assessed needs. For agencies providing foster carers to local authorities, those agencies ensure that they offer carers only if they represent appropriate matches for a child for whom a local authority is seeking a carer.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The inspector visited three foster carer placements, all but one of these evidenced appropriate matching. (Please see standard 7 for and summery for further information). The inspector visited one placement where the foster carers reported that they had had extensive support from the fostering service in supporting them to continue to support a foster child in there home despite on going difficulties. This was also evident from both the foster carers file and the Childs file prior to the visit.

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)
The fostering service protects each child or young person from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The inspector met with a group of foster carers as well as interviewed a potential foster carer. On summarising the information supplied by the foster carers about the support they receive from NFA it was apparent that all of the foster carers where offered a full induction which incorporated training in the identification and prevention of abuse. Over the course of the inspection the inspector was able to evidence that NA had offered foster carers training in the following areas, Safe Caring - Allegations Against Carers; Working with Sexually Abused Children.

Percentage of foster children placed who report never or hardly ever being bullied:	X	%
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Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.9)
The fostering service makes sure that each child or young person in foster care is encouraged to maintain and develop family contacts and friendships as set out in her/his care plan and/or foster placement agreement.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	0
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This standard was not inspected but scored a 3 at the last inspection.

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.5)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

0

This standard was not inspected at this inspection however scored 3 at the last inspection.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

4

During the inspection the inspector examined a number of children's files as well as visited children in Foster Carer placements. It was evident from observations and evidence in children's files that children were supported to receive appropriate medical intervention where needed. One of the children visited by the inspector was reported to be having some difficulties in school. Due to this the foster carer reported that they with their social worker had been leaning very closely with the school to establish to nature of this issue. In addition to this the child had received testing for issues like dyslexia and attention decision disorder and they were awaiting the results. The foster carer reported that the child has received a lot of support from his school with this issue so much so that his teacher had decided to stay back a year and work with him through this so he had the stability in the style of teaching he received. The inspector felt that every party involved in this Childs welfare had exceed there normal course of duty in offering him support, this included his foster carer and social worker, due to this the child had developed significantly due to there on going commitment and support. This is commended.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.8)

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

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

During the inspection the inspector met with a member of the children's educational support team. She reported that there was a range of support available to young people in foster carer homes such as homework clubs, access to computers and learning resources. In addition to this the inspector had also been informed of the ongoing support offered by social workers and foster carers and teachers in their school when a child is having difficulties at school. The inspector felt this standard was met.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.5)

The fostering service ensures that their foster care services help to develop skills, competence and knowledge necessary for adult living.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

0

This standard was not assessed at this inspection however scored a 3 at the last inspection.

Recruiting, Checking, Managing, Supporting and Training Staff and Foster Carers

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The people who work in or for the fostering service are suitable to work with children and young people and they are managed, trained and supported in such a way as to ensure the best possible outcomes for children in foster care. The number of staff and carers and their range of qualifications and experience are sufficient to achieve the purposes and functions of the organisation.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.8)

Any people working in or for the fostering service are suitable people to work with children and young people and to safeguard and promote their welfare.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

During the inspection the inspector visited the human resources department and examined staff files. All of the files examined held appropriate CRB checks and the relevant required information. On examining foster carers files the inspector was also able to establish that all of the assessments undertaken had been completed by an appropriately qualified social workers.

Total number of staff of the agency:

X

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

X

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.16)

Staff are organised and managed in a way that delivers an efficient and effective foster care service.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The inspector interviewed a number of staff during the inspection who reported that they received regular supervision, appraisals, Job descriptions training and development plans and understood their roles. This was further evidenced on their personnel files. All of the relevant team within the Fostering and Adoption teams had an appropriate level of administration support.

Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.7)

The fostering service has an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff and recruits a range of carers to meet the needs of children and young people for whom it aims to provide a service.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

During the inspection the inspector met had a group meeting with all of the staff working within NFA. During this meeting the inspector asked the staff to describe their duties from the first point of recruiting a foster carer to ensuring a child is appropriately placed. The Inspector was informed that the agency aims to recruit a diverse group of carers to reflect the needs of this multicultural borough. The agency has recently produced posters and leaflets to enhance the recruitment process. It was reported by the recruitment team at this time that they had been facing some difficulties recruiting Caucasian foster carers. Following the recruitment process potential foster carers were assessed and trained before a child is placed with them. Once they have been appropriately assessed they are then matched with potential children depending on the Childs identified and matched need.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.7)

The fostering service is a fair and competent employer, with sound employment practices and good support for its staff and carers.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?****3**

During the inspection the inspector met with a group of foster carers. During this meeting the foster carers raised a number of issues one of which was concerns about their current rates of pay. They reported that some of the other private agencies offered higher fees and due to this some of the carers had left to join them. In addition to this they also raised concerns about some of their training needs and meeting space. The inspector raised this issue with the service manager and the assistant director who agreed to arrange another meeting with all of the foster carers who had attended the meeting with the inspector and address there concerns immediately. The inspector was satisfied that this course of action would ensure that clarity could be sought from some of the issues raised by this course of action. Carers spoken to stated that they were aware of the whistle blowing procedures and would use them to ensure the welfare and safety of children. Out of hours support to foster carers is provided by a service contracted to National Children's Home. There were established employment procedures covering the recruitment of staff and carers. The service manager should ensure that she meets with the foster carers to address their concerns.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.7)		
There is a good quality training programme to enhance individual skills and to keep staff up-to-date with professional and legal developments.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>During the inspection the inspector saw evidence of an established training and developments plans for all staff. This plan was identified and agreed as part of staff individual appraisals. Foster carers and social workers reported that there was joint training between staff and carers.</p>		

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)		
All staff are properly accountable and supported.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>All of the staff in the service receive regular supervision and the agency has ensured other mechanisms such as staff meetings. None of the staff interviewed reported that their caseload was high nor did they report difficult issues relating to performance or other relevant topics discussed. Both the service manager and the senior team manager are readily available for staff to approach if there are any difficulties and it was apparent that both of the managers are held in high regard from the staff in the service.</p>		

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.6)		
The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>In the last inspection the some of the foster carers reported, "<i>there was a room for improvement in relation to support offered to foster carers</i>". During this inspection as previously mentioned the foster carers met with the inspector and raised a number of issues. These concerns mainly focused around difficulties with training, space for meeting and fees. Despite this some of the foster carers reported that they did not feel they where receiving the support they should be. This was further evidenced in the feedback questionnaires given to the commission. This information was reported back to the service manager and assistant director.</p>		

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.10)

The fostering service is a managed one that provides supervision for foster carers and helps them to develop their skills.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

2

During the inspection the inspector examined a number of foster carers files and noted that in one file supervision had not taken place as stated in the services policy. Despite this all of the foster carers visited by the inspector reported to the inspector that they received regular supervision and did not require addition support in this area. In one newly appointed foster carers file the inspector noted that due to issues identified during her assessment she should receive training in sexuality as well as frequent supervision prior to any child being placed with her. Despite this the foster carer had not received training in the area nor had received the training as specified. The registered person must ensure that foster carers receive training based on the advice given by their board or where any concerns have been identified. In addition to this foster carers must receive supervision in line with the local authorities policy. This is a repeat requirement in part.

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

The fostering service ensures that foster carers are trained in the skills required to provide high quality care and meet the needs of each child/young person placed in their care.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Apart from one incident the inspector was satisfied that the agency was providing appropriate training and development opportunities to the foster carers who are part of this agency. Courses offered were focused on individual needs of children placed with foster carers. Interpreters were available for those carers, whose first language was not English. There was evidence that some carers have commenced gaining NVQ qualifications. Training courses take place during daytime and evenings, to suit all foster carers. Some of the foster carers spoken to reported a need for additional training this information was conveyed to both the service manager and assistant director. Refer to standard 22

Records

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- All appropriate records are kept and are accessible in relation to the fostering services and the individual foster carers and foster children.

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.8)

The fostering service ensures that an up-to-date, comprehensive case record is maintained for each child or young person in foster care which details the nature and quality of care provided and contributes to an understanding of her/his life events. Relevant information from the case records is made available to the child and to anyone involved in her/his care.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The fostering service had a clear policy and procedure for record keeping. Core records are in place for all Newham's looked after children and maintained by the child's Social Worker. Supervising Social Workers support their carers in obtaining and managing information about children for whom they care for. The inspector visited three foster carers who reported that they were aware of the children's history they were looking after.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.13)

The fostering service's administrative records contain all significant information relevant to the running of the foster care service and as required by regulations.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The inspector examined a number of children's case notes. The service now uses Care First to keep all records on children. Records examined they were found to be in order.

Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:

X

Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months:

X

Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months:

X

Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months:

X

Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months:

X

Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £

89.50

Maximum £

458.07

Fitness of Premises for use as Fostering Service

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- The premises used as offices by the fostering service are suitable for the purpose.

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5)

Premises used as offices by the fostering service are appropriate for the purpose.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The premises used by the fostering service meet the National Minimum Standards. The agency is located in a self-contained building with access to a kitchen for staff to make refreshments. The ground floor was wheelchair accessible and the agency positively encouraged employment for those who were less able. The premises had appropriate security systems in place.

Financial Requirements

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

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

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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The service is funded by the social services through an established budget. During the inspection there were no concerns raised regarding the ability of the service to fund its obligations.

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.7)

The financial processes/systems of the agency are properly operated and maintained in accordance with sound and appropriate accounting standards and practice.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
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Newham Social Services finance section independently handles all payments to foster carers.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.2)

Each foster carer receives an allowance and agreed expenses, which cover the full cost of caring for each child or young person placed with him or her. Payments are made promptly and at the agreed time. Allowances and fees are reviewed annually.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

All of the foster carers visited reported that they were aware of their level of entitlements. The service has clear guidance on foster carers entitlements and the foster carers handbook has a section specifically about finance and allowances.

Fostering Panels

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

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

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.9)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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This standard was not inspected however scored a 3 at the last inspection.	
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Short-Term Breaks

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- When foster care is provided as a short-term break for a child, the arrangement recognises that the parents remain the main carers for the child.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.2)

Where a fostering service provides short-term breaks for children in foster care, they have policies and procedures, implemented in practice, to meet the particular needs of children receiving short-term breaks.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	0
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Short-term breaks are not provided by this service.

Family and Friends as Carers

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- Local authority fostering services' policies and procedures for assessing, approving, supporting and training foster carers recognise the particular contribution that can be made by and the particular needs of family and friends as carers.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.4)

These standards are all relevant to carers who are family and friends of the child, but there is recognition of the particular relationship and position of family and friend carers.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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The inspector did not case track any kinship care cases at this inspection. However understood that this service had recently been reviewed and a support system was set up.
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PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____
Date _____

D.1 Registered Person's or Responsible Local Authority Manager's comments/confirmation relating to the content and accuracy of the report for the above inspection.

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 24th January 2005 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

NO

Comments were received from the provider

YES

Factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report

YES

Provider comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate

YES

Note:

In instances where there is a major difference of view between the Inspector and the Registered Provider responsible Local Authority fostering service Manager both views will be made available on request to the Area Office.

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by 9th June 2005 , which indicates how statutory requirements and recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

Status of the Provider's Action Plan at time of publication of the final inspection report:

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion

NO

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

NO

Other: <enter details here>

NO

Public reports

It should be noted that all CSCI inspection reports are public documents. Reports on children's homes are only obtainable on personal application to CSCI offices.

D.3 PROVIDER'S AGREEMENT

Registered Person's or responsible Local Authority Manager's statement of agreement/comments: Please complete the relevant section that applies.

D.3.1 I _____ of _____ confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I agree with the statutory requirements made and will seek to comply with these.

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

Or

D.3.2 I _____ of _____ am unable to confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) for the following reasons:

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

Note: In instance where there is a profound difference of view between the Inspector and the Registered Provider both views will be reported. Please attach any extra pages, as applicable.

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