



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

ADOPTION SUPPORT AGENCIES

Leslie Ironside

**35 Clermont Terrace
Brighton
East Sussex
BN1 6SJ**

Lead Inspector
Sue Spencer-Newth

Announced Inspection
22nd March 2007 09:00 am

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 service are those for *Adoption Support Agencies*. 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

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SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of service	Leslie Ironside
Address	35 Clermont Terrace Brighton East Sussex BN1 6SJ
Telephone number	01273 709660
Fax number	
Email address	
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Leslie Ironside
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	
Type of registration	Adoption Support Agency

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

1. To provide services to adults and children

Date of last inspection This is the first inspection of this agency since registration.

Brief Description of the Service:

This is a single person practice. Dr Ironside is a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist. The agency was registered in 2006 by Mr Ironside as a 'user-focused service. The agency provides services in relation to the therapeutic needs of an adoptive child, assistance for the purposes of ensuring the relationship between an adoptive child and his or her adoptive parent continues, assistance where an adoption disruption has occurred or is in danger of occurring including mediation services. The agency also provides a service to adoption agencies in preparing and training adoptive parents. The agency is an individual and does not employ staff or contract services.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection was carried out over one half day by one inspector.

During the course of the inspection the following was undertaken:

Interview with Mr Ironside.

Inspection of case records sample.

An inspection of policies and procedures.

Surveys completed by service users (8).

Inspection of premises and security.

Telephone interviews of service users(2)

What the service does well:

This is an agency that takes its responsibilities seriously and provides individual services to a wide range of people with complex needs. Mr Ironside is a highly respected practitioner in the field of psychotherapy. He demonstrated significant knowledge, skill and understanding of the needs of children and young people who are adopted and adults who require assistance and support with a range of adoption issues.

He has a professional and sensitive approach to his work that was clearly appreciated by the people who responded to a survey questionnaire. Some respondents were particularly happy about the quality of service they received and the way in which they were provided. All survey questionnaires and interviews were positive. One adult commented " he is extremely sensitive and never makes me feel like I am being silly which other people have done".

Mr Ironside's workload is carefully managed and monitored. He has external support and consultation, which is provided regularly.

Overall, this inspection found the agency to be of a very good standard which provides services that were tailored to meet the individual needs of service users. The services offered by Mr Ironside are grounded in a wealth of experience and expertise and delivered in a professional, considered way.

What has improved since the last inspection?

This was the first inspection of this service since it was registered.

What they could do better:

The agency has two children's guides, which are suitable for older children and young people. The agency should consider adapting the existing children's guide or designing one suitable for younger children.

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. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

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Statement Of Purpose

The intended outcome for Standard 1 is:

There is a clear written statement of the aims and objectives of the adoption support agency and the agency ensures that it meets those aims and objectives

- 1 Statement of purpose

JUDGEMENT

Quality in this outcome area is good.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The statement is presented in a clear and unequivocal manner, thereby allowing the reader an understanding of what the agency provides.

EVIDENCE:

The statement of purpose is a well-presented document, which meets the regulations and standards. It is easy to read and gives a clear overview of what services are provided by the agency.

The agency has developed two children's guides, which are made available to all children and young people. The guides were presented well and meet the regulations. Consideration to making or adapting the children's guide for younger children would further enhance the documentation.

Safeguarding And Promoting Welfare

The intended outcome for Standard 2 is:

The adoption support agency safeguards and promotes the physical, mental and emotional welfare of people affected by adoption who wish to use its services.

2 Safeguarding and promoting welfare

JUDGEMENT

Quality in this outcome area is good.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Service users' welfare is a predominant factor in the agency's motivation, which results in a very caring approach that safeguards people's emotional wellbeing.

EVIDENCE:

Throughout the visit Mr Ironside demonstrated a thorough understanding of the life long implications of adoption and was able to show that he is sensitive to and knowledgeable about the issues involved.

Mr Ironsides service users are from a range of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Mr Ironside demonstrated a sound understanding of diversity, equality and anti-discrimination issues.

Respondents to questionnaires were very complementary about the way they were treated and included comments such as, "Professional, helpful and extremely sensitive", and " provides a very caring service".

User Focused Services

The intended outcome for Standard 3 is:

People affected by adoption receive a service from the adoption support agency that is appropriate and tailored to their particular need. They are treated fairly, openly and with respect throughout their contact with the agency.

3 User-focused services

JUDGEMENT

Quality in this outcome area is excellent.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Mr Ironside's understanding of people needs makes for clear assessments and, thereby, individual tailor-made services.

EVIDENCE:

Mr Ironside is a highly respected figure in his field. This complimentary information has come from a range of sources including questionnaires and telephone interviews and was reflected in the outcomes of the work that he has undertaken. Service users from a range of backgrounds, many with complex needs have received a successful outcome from Mr Ironside's work. He is careful to assess the needs of the service user before any work is undertaken and then proceeds with the appropriate sensitivity and caution required.

Service user survey comments demonstrated their satisfaction with the agency's understanding of their issues and needs with comments such as, "excellent help and support", being typical. Telephone interviews with service users described the service that Mr Ironside offers as "brilliant, very professional, extremely sensitive and always helpful".

Service Delivery

The intended outcome for Standard 4 is:

The adoption support agency's service users receive a good-quality, professional service, based on their needs identified by an assessment.

4 Service delivery

JUDGEMENT

Quality in this outcome area is excellent.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

All evidence showed that the service was of a high quality and professionally undertaken resulting in positive outcomes.

EVIDENCE:

Mr Ironside demonstrated a clear and thoughtful approach to providing services. He understands the needs of children who have been adopted and the needs of families who are experiencing difficulties. Mr Ironside also provides a supportive service to prospective adoptive parents and consultation to professionals working in the field of adoption.

Survey respondents were exceptionally complimentary about the services they received, saying, for instance, "he is brilliant", "I would highly recommend him".

Fitness To Provide Or Manage An Adoption Support Agency

The intended outcomes for Standards 5 and 6 are:

The adoption support agency is provided and managed by those who are suitable and have the appropriate skills and experience to do so effectively and efficiently to provide the services specified in the Statement of purpose

- 5 Skills to provide or manage
- 6 Suitability to carry on or manage

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

Quality in this outcome area is excellent.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Extensive experience, a skilled approach and strong knowledge base provides for a well-managed service.

EVIDENCE:

Mr Ironside was registered as an Adoption Support Agency (ASA) in 2006. During the registration process it was clear that he was appropriately qualified, experienced and skilled to run such an agency.

Mr Ironside has been involved in fostering and adoption work for about eighteen years. He demonstrated exceptional understanding of the processes involved in this area of work and the potential impact it has on the people who use his services. He is a qualified Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychotherapist with considerable experience in children and families work.

Management Of The Adoption Support Agency

The intended outcomes for Standards 7 and 8 are:

The adoption support agency safeguards and promotes the physical, mental and emotional welfare of people affected by adoption who wish to use its services.

- 7 Managing effectively and efficiently
- 8 Monitoring and controlling

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

Quality in this outcome area is excellent.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Careful monitoring of the service and progress demonstrates a sound and appropriate service being provided.

EVIDENCE:

As an individual provider Mr Ironside ensures that all appropriate systems are in place to ensure that the management of the service is appropriately monitored and controlled. Financial systems are appropriately managed and service users are clear about charges and methods of payment.

Mr Ironside has excellent policies and procedures that safeguard and promote the physical, mental and emotional welfare of people affected by adoption. These are backed up by an excellent understanding of legal and regulatory requirements.

Employment And Management Of Staff And Volunteers

The intended outcomes for Standards 9 to 14 are:

The staff and volunteers who work in the adoption support agency are suitable to work with the agency's service users and they are managed, trained and supported in such a way as to ensure the best possible outcomes for service users. The number of staff and volunteers and their range of qualifications and experience are sufficient to achieve the purposes and functions of the adoptions support agency.

- 9 Suitability to work with service users
- 10 Organisation and management of staff
- 11 Sufficient staff with the right skills and experience
- 12 Fair and competent employer
- 13 Training
- 14 Accountability and support

(These standards 9-14 do not apply where the registered provider is an individual and does not have staff or volunteers)

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

Quality in this outcome area is Quality in this outcome area is – **not applicable**

EVIDENCE:

This section is not applicable.

Individual Practitioners

The intended outcome for Standard 15 is:

The registered provider manages the agency effectively and efficiently and is suitable to work with the agency's service users. He or she is trained and supported in such a way as to ensure the best possible outcomes for service users.

15 Managing effectively and efficiently

(This standard only applies where the registered provider is an individual and does not have staff or volunteers)

JUDGEMENT

Quality in this outcome area is excellent.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The agency is well managed and supported ensuring a seamless service being provided.

EVIDENCE:

Mr Ironside demonstrated a clear understanding of how the agency should be, and is, managed. The processes he uses are transparent, easily understood and clearly aimed at providing the best possible service.

Mr Ironside has appropriate supervision and consultation in line with the professional arrangements laid down by the code of practice for psychotherapists.

Complaints And Representations

The intended outcome for Standard 16 is:

Complaints and representations are resolved quickly and handled in a sensitive, thorough and non-biased manner.

16 Complaints and representations

JUDGEMENT

Quality in this outcome area is good.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

A clear and available complaints procedure ensures service users are aware of their rights.

EVIDENCE:

There is a written complaints policy backed up by an explicit procedure which are made available to all service users through the statement of purpose and children's guides. There have been no complaints since registration.

Records

The intended outcomes for Standards 17 to 21 are:

All appropriate records are securely maintained, retained and are accessible when required.

- 17 Records with respect to services
- 18 Adoption case records
- 19 Access to adoption case records
- 20 Administrative records
- 21 Personnel files for members of staff and volunteers

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

Quality in this outcome area is good.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Well-maintained records ensure confidentiality and security of information.

EVIDENCE:

Case records are maintained in respect of all service users in receipt of a service from the agency. They are comprehensive and include all contact records. It was evident that Mr Ironside is fully aware of confidentiality issues and maintains all records securely. Much of the work done is on computers, these are backed-up off the premises weekly and are password protected. All hard copy files are kept in locked filing cabinets.

Fitness Of Premises

The intended outcome for Standard 22 is:

The premises used by the adoption support agency are suitable for the purpose of providing the services as set out in the agency's statement of purpose.

22 Fitness of premises

JUDGEMENT

Quality in this outcome area is good.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The comfortable and secure surroundings provide a very good facility for service users.

EVIDENCE:

The premises were visited and were deemed suitable for the purpose of providing the services as set out in the statement of purpose. The consulting room consist of the main room, a hall, waiting room and toilet. There is a separate entrance to the rest of the building. The premises are locked and adequately insured.

Financial Requirements

The intended outcomes for Standards 23 and 24 are:

The adoption support agency is financially viable

- 23 Financial viability
- 24 Financial processes

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

Quality in this outcome area is good.

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Sound financial resources provides for service users to be confident that the service will continue.

EVIDENCE:

The agency is financially viable. Registration was dependent upon satisfactory bank references.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Adoption 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

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3

SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING WELFARE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	3

USER FOCUSED SERVICES	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	4

SERVICE DELIVERY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
4	4

FITNESS TO PROVIDE OR MANAGE AN ADOPTION SUPPORT AGENCY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
5	4
6	4

MANAGEMENT OF THE ADOPTION SUPPORT AGENCY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
7	4
8	4

EMPLOYMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
9	N/A
10	N/A
11	N/A
12	N/A
13	N/A
14	N/A

INDIVIDUAL PRACTITIONERS	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
15	4

COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
16	3

RECORDS	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
17	3
18	3
19	3
20	3
21	N/A

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

Continued

FITNESS OF PREMISES	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
22	3

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
23	3
24	3

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, Adoption support regulations 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	ADS1	The agency should consider adapting the existing children's guide or designing one suitable for younger children.

