



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

London Borough of Redbridge Fostering

**Station Road
Barkingside
Ilford
Essex IG6 1NB**

Lead Inspector
Harina
Morzeria

Announced Inspection
19 September 2005 12:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

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This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this establishment are those for *Fostering Services*. They can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

Every Child Matters, outlined the government's vision for children's services and formed the basis of the Children Act 2004. It provides a framework for inspection so that children's services should be judged on their contribution to the outcomes considered essential to wellbeing in childhood and later life. Those outcomes are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a contribution; and
- Achieving economic wellbeing.

In response, the Commission for Social Care Inspection has re-ordered the national minimum standards for children's services under the five outcomes, for reporting purposes. A further section has been created under 'Management' to cover those issues that will potentially impact on all the outcomes above.

Copies of *Every Child Matters* and *The Children Act 2004* are available from The Stationery Office as above

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SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of service London Borough of Redbridge Fostering Service

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Ilford, Essex, IG6 1NB

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Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable) London Borough of Redbridge

Name of registered manager (if applicable) Ms Ruth Holmes - Principal Officer for the fostering and adoption service

Type of registration LAF Local Auth Fostering Service

No. of places registered (if applicable) N/A

Category(ies) of registration, with number of places Local Authority Fostering Service

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

None

Date of last inspection 21 October 2004

Brief Description of the Service:

The London Borough of Redbridge Fostering and Adoption Service is located at the Station Road Centre, Station Road, Barkingside, Ilford. The principal officer for the service is Ruth Holmes, and the management responsibility within the team is shared between three team managers, who provide management support across the two teams for fostering and adoption. The principal management responsibility for social workers in the fostering support team lies with Rose Roach De Cordova. The teams are split into two sections, the development team and placement support team. The development team provide recruitment, training and assessment of foster carers, with the support team providing post approval support to foster carers as well as linking children and foster carers. The fostering service provides: recruitment of foster carers, training for prospective and approved foster carers, assessment of prospective foster carers, presentation of assessment reports to the fostering panel, fostering placements - short term, shared/respice care, pre-adoptive and permanent placements and placement with friends and family, post linking support, annual foster care reviews, investigation of complaints/concerns regarding foster carers, monthly drop-in sessions of foster carers, flexi- carers scheme, training events, telephone helpline(offering support and advice to foster carers).

SUMMARY

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

This inspection was undertaken over a period of time from 19th September to 29th October 2005. This was to enable the inspector to visit foster carers and young people at home, have discussions with young people and their carers, attend a training session at a joint event organised by the London Borough of Redbridge fostering service for carers and staff, have discussions with a number of staff about the service, as well as view files and records at the fostering service & social services children and families team, and inspecting personnel records.

The inspector also attended a children's event organised by the fostering support network, observed the fostering panel, and visited the premises of the agency. Discussions took place with the children's social workers and the inspector also looked at children's files. The children's rights officer was also spoken to.

The inspector received feedback forms from children/young people, foster carers and placing authorities. The comments made about the care and support provided by the agency were positive.

The inspector found that the quality of the service provided by the agency has improved and the registered persons are committed to work in partnership with the Commission for Social Care Inspection to ensure that the agency is operating in line with the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and The Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

The inspector was pleased to note that most of the standards assessed were met in full. Only one requirement and three recommendations have been made.

What the service does well:

The training and support given to foster carers by the supervising social workers has improved with regular contact being maintained with the foster carers. The training programme for foster carers has continued to provide foster carers with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide an efficient and effective service to the young people they look after.

The service have developed a pro-forma for supervising social workers to use when they carry out monitoring visits, which provides for focussed discussions.

The staff team were complimentary about the level of support and supervision they receive from their managers.

The environment within the team is friendly and all the staff spoken to stated that it is a supportive team with approachable managers. 1 supervising social worker stated that "this is the best team I have ever worked in", another person similarly stated "the team is fantastic, it is refreshing to be in a team where everybody gets on with each other, the manager is very supportive and accessible."

What has improved since the last inspection?

The fostering service have been responsive to the demands made by the foster carers and other professionals to provide specific training for foster carers and have responded well by taking up suggestions.

There is more clarification with the foster carers about the service's expectations of them and what they can expect from the supervising social workers (SSWs), hence the clarity of roles.

The duty system within the office has improved enabling the person to carry out their role more efficiently.

The recruitment of more staff within the teams has eased pressure for the existing staff team.

All the supervising social workers stated that their roles are clearly defined. They also stated that they are now attending child care reviews enabling them to provide support and guidance to the foster carers.

What they could do better:

All supervising social workers spoken to stated that they wish to receive more targeted and specific training to assist them to carry out their work effectively. They also stated that the implementation of the Children's Trust has brought about a number of changes, however its impact has not been effectively communicated to the supervising social workers. Structural changes in the whole way the service operates requires more clarity to be given in terms of fostering and adoption teams and their functions.

Training in relation to how to meet the cultural needs of children from various backgrounds needs to be provided to both the foster carers and the supervising social workers.

The inspector was also informed that there is a lack of filing space and they have a lot of files that should be archived, however there is no space in the archiving section of the service and therefore this has an impact on the space available at the offices.

Concerted efforts need to be made to recruit to the other half of the unfilled post of a manager.

Reorganisation of personnel files held in the Human Resources section is recommended for ease of accessing information.

Please contact the provider for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office.

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Being Healthy

The intended outcomes these Standards are:

- The fostering service promotes the health and development of children.(NMS 12)

The Commission considers Standard 12 the key standard to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for standard(s) 12

The fostering service make clear to the foster carer their role in terms of helping to promote every child and young person's health by ensuring they receive appropriate care and medical attention.

EVIDENCE:

Through discussion with staff and foster carers and the inspection of policies and procedures, there was evidence to demonstrate that the fostering service provides sufficient information and training on health and hygiene issues to the foster carers, which then helps each child/young person to receive health care which meets their needs for physical/emotional and social development. Information is also made available regarding every day care of the young person including diet, personal hygiene, and health promotion issues, enabling the young person to make informed choices about their health.

The inspector spoke to foster carers who were clear about their responsibilities in registering a child/young person with a GP and dentist and taking them to any health appointments. In most cases foster carers had received information regarding a young person's health prior to them moving into their home and there was evidence of a written health record. Foster carers confirmed they had received training in health and hygiene issues, first aid and drug/alcohol awareness.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes these Standards are:

- Any persons carrying on or managing the service are suitable. (NMS 3)
- The fostering service provides suitable foster carers.(NMS 6)
- The service matches children to carers appropriately.(NMS 8)
- The fostering service protects each child or young person from abuse and neglect.(NMS 9)
- The people who work in or for the fostering service are suitable to work with children and young people.(NMS 15)
- Fostering panels are organised efficiently and effectively.(NMS 30)

The Commission considers Standards 3, 6, 8, 9, and 15 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for standard(s) 3,6,8,9,15 &30

The Principal Officer and the managers are suitably qualified and experienced to manage a fostering service.

The foster carers are carefully vetted, assessed and receive appropriate training to ensure their suitability for providing a home for young people in need.

The fostering service endeavours to ensure that children/young peoples' ethnic, race and cultural and other identified needs are met.

Children/young people are able to live in an environment which protects them from abuse and neglect.

The fostering service employ staff who are suitable to work with children/young people.

Fostering panels are organised efficiently and effectively.

EVIDENCE:

A clear management structure is in place with lines of accountability and communication. The inspector was satisfied that the people involved in managing the fostering service possess the necessary knowledge and experience of child care and the skills required to operate the service efficiently and effectively.

Ruth Holmes is the Principal Office with overall responsibility for the fostering and adoption service. The service is managed directly by team managers who

also hold appropriate qualifications and have the necessary experience in the child care field.

The service operates the London Borough of Redbridge's recruitment policies and procedures when recruiting staff. An inspection of a sample of staff files was undertaken and the inspector was able to evidence that the requirements set out in Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 were being complied with. It was clear that they are suitable people to work within the service. Each person who has direct contact with any young person undergoes CRB and POCA checks and appropriate references are also undertaken. However, the inspector was concerned that the personnel files in the personnel department were not appropriately sectioned, and information was difficult to find.

A recommendation has been made for this issue to be resolved by the London borough of Redbridge personnel department.

From discussion with the staff and foster carers and inspection of files, there was evidence to confirm that only the most suitable foster carers are accepted. The fostering service provided each foster carer with a foster carers handbook which takes each prospective candidate through the process of registering as a foster carer. The selection and assessment of foster carers is in line with the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) guidance and their competency framework is followed for the assessment of foster carers' qualities, competencies and attitudes.

The fostering service's recruitment strategy aims to recruit a range of carers to meet the needs of children/young people for whom it is required to provide a service.

Through discussion with staff, the foster carers and the inspection of files, the inspector was able to track the process of placing a young person with a foster carer. Examples of good practice were available with children being offered introductory visits to proposed foster carers in a planned and structured way.

The aim of the service is to achieve a good match between a foster carer and the young person requiring placement. However, the reality of the situation is often dictated by the need for an urgent placement, the lack of appropriate information from placing social workers and a limited supply of foster carers, from ethnic minority communities. Hence, in practice, the inspector noted, that not all young people from different ethnic backgrounds requiring placement are always ethnically matched. The fostering service aim to provide as much information as possible to the foster carers in order to obtain the best possible match between the young people and the carers. However, many placements are often made in an emergency situation in which case information is forwarded to the carers at a later stage. During case tracking the inspector noticed that it is common practice for trans-racial placements to take place as noted during previous inspections. Evidence was seen on files of trans-racial/trans-cultural placements forms being completed when such a placement

takes place. From discussions with the foster carers, they stated that they did not always receive much useful direct information, training or advice from the children's social workers or their supervising social workers regarding the care of younger children from such backgrounds. They are often advised to seek the necessary advice, guidance and information from people in the community who are from those backgrounds, or from their relevant religious institutions or they find out the information themselves via websites.

The inspector recommends that as far as possible each child /young person is carefully matched with carers capable of meeting his/her assessed needs. From feedback received from the staff as well as foster carers, the inspector recommends that the fostering service provide specific joint training to all foster carers as well as staff, regarding trans-racial placements.

There was evidence, through training programmes and foster carers training profiles that all the foster carers have received training in the recognition of abuse, including safe caring skills, managing behaviour and caring for a child who has been abused. Safe caring guidelines are provided to all foster carers, which the foster carers and the children are aware of.

Management systems are in place to collate and evaluate information of the number and outcomes of all allegations or abuse of the child/young person in foster care. The service has a clear policy for use if a foster child is missing from home, together with information on bullying and procedures are in place to recognise, record and address any instances of bullying.

The inspector examined documents, files, policies and procedures and interviewed staff. There was clear evidence to demonstrate that the people who work in or for the fostering service are suitable people to work with children/young people. All of the records examined were maintained to a good standard. There are clear written recruitment and selection procedures for appointing staff, which ensures the fostering service operates a robust recruitment procedure. All of the social work staff involved in the assessment of foster carers are qualified social workers.

However, a recommendation has been made regarding the organisation of personnel files held in the Human Resources section, for ease of accessing information.

The inspector observed the fostering panel and interviewed the panel chairperson as well as the deputy chairperson. The fostering panel has clear written policies and procedures which are implemented and this ensures the fostering panel functions appropriately. The panel chair ensured that there was the required quorum for the panel to function. From observation of the fostering panel it was clear that the fostering panel operates in accordance with the Fostering Services Regulations. The fostering panel has clear written policies and procedures, which are implemented in practice, about the handling of their functions.

The inspector is satisfied that the panel provides a quality assurance function in relation to the assessment process, in particular to monitor and review the work of the assessors with a view to ensure that there is consistency of approach to assessment across the service.

The independent members of the panel include expertise in education and in child health, and access to medical expertise is requested as required.

The inspector was informed that prospective foster carers are now invited to attend the panel to enable the panel to seek points of clarification from them and it also gives the prospective foster carers an opportunity to ask questions.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes these Standards are:

- The fostering service values diversity.(NMS 7)
- The fostering service promotes educational achievement.(NMS 13)
- When foster care is provided as a short-term break for a child, the arrangements recognise that the parents remain the main carers for the child.(NMS 31)

The Commission considers Standards 7, 13, and 31 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for standard(s) 7,13,31

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

The children/young people's educational needs are met and they are encouraged to meet their full potential.

The fostering service recognises that the parents remain the main carers when children/young people are receiving short term foster care.

EVIDENCE:

There was evidence to demonstrate that the fostering service ensures that children/young people are provided with foster carers who value diversity and promote equality. This principle is reinforced through the service's policies and procedures, the foster carers hand book, regular supervision and training. The inspector had discussions with staff and foster carers, attended the fostering panel and examined documentation including the recruitment and selection procedure for foster carers. The fostering service places great importance in ensuring the children/young people's ethnicity, religion and cultural needs are respected although, as previously stated, due to a shortage of foster carers from certain ethnic backgrounds it is not always possible to place children from particular ethnic backgrounds with carers from those same backgrounds. A number of trans-racial placements have been made and a recommendation regarding providing relevant training has been made in the previous section.

Through discussion with foster carers, and from case tracking, the inspector was satisfied with the foster carers' desire to provide an environment in which education and learning are valued.

The fostering service aims to give a high priority to meeting the educational needs of each young person in foster care. There is a mechanism whereby attendance at school is monitored.

The inspector was pleased to note that through the implementation of the Children's Trust, two educational advisors for looked after children have been appointed who will be based at Station Road and will be part of the corporate parenting team which also consists of a health advisor, education advisors, teenage pregnancy advisor, educational welfare officer and the children's rights officer. Hence, the corporate parenting team aim to ensure that a full service is available to all children and young people looked after.

From case tracking, discussion with foster carers and young people, the inspector was impressed with the dedication of foster carers spoken to, to improve and provide/promote the educational opportunities available to foster children in their care to enable each young person to attain their full potential. They will be further supported by the educational advisors to receive guidance and advice, which will enable them to further support all children and young people looked after.

The principal officer states that the Borough have an agreement with a voluntary agency (Indigo project Barnardos) to provide the majority of respite care placements for children with disabilities and that good links have been formed with the agency and co-ordinated rates of payment have been arranged to ensure the desired outcomes for children with disabilities and their families. The Indigo project is also registered with the CSCI and subject to inspection.

The arrangements recognise that the parents remain the main carers for the child.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes these Standards are:

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

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

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for standard(s) 10,11

Each child/young person is encouraged and assisted to maintain family contact and friendships as set out in their care plan.

The fostering service ensures that children/young people's opinions and those of families and significant others are sought over issues that affect their daily lives.

EVIDENCE:

Through inspection of files and discussions with staff and foster carers, it was evident that the young people in foster care were able to maintain and develop their family contacts, friendships and social activities. This was in accordance with their care plan and foster placement agreement and is actively promoted by the foster carers. There is evidence of clear procedures setting out appropriate contact arrangements to be established, maintained, monitored and reviewed.

The inspector was not able to confirm with all the foster carers visited, that they record the outcome of contact visits with the families, although they were aware that this is required. In some instances, case records required to be maintained by foster carers for children/ young people in their care do not contain sufficient details about the nature and quality of care provided.

A requirement relating to this standard has been made.

Financial and practical support is offered to foster carers to ensure that contact is maintained and there was evidence that the fostering service is sharing with foster carers access to family and social activities.

Through discussion with staff and foster carers and examining case files there was evidence to demonstrate that foster carers are encouraged to seek the young person's opinion and understand the importance of listening to their views. The fostering service's policies and procedures demonstrate that they ensure that children/young people's opinions and those of the families and significant others are sought over issues which are likely to affect their daily lives and future. There is a standing item on the supervising social workers visit form that acts as a prompt for SSW's to promote consultation with the children/young people on all matters affecting them, including day to day matters.

From discussion with young people it was evident that they know how to raise concerns or complaints. The children's guide contains information on how to complain.

The inspector was pleased to note that the SSW ensure that each young person receives the children's guide upon being placed with a foster carer.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes these Standards are:

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

The Commission considers Standards 29 the key standard to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for standard(s) 14,29

Foster carers help young people to develop skills and knowledge in preparation for adult living.

Foster carers receive an allowance and agreed expenses as specified.

EVIDENCE:

The fostering service have written policy's and procedures regarding the services expectations of foster carers to prepare young people for independent and semi-independent living. Basic path way plans are provided by the placing social workers, to the foster carers, to enable them to prepare young people for independent living. One young person spoken to stated that she works closely with her foster carer to develop the necessary skills to help her move on to semi-independent living.

From discussion with foster carers and from viewing relevant documentation, the inspector was satisfied that each foster carer receives an allowance and agreed expenses which cover the full cost of caring for each child or young person. Foster carers confirmed that payments are made promptly and at the agreed time. Allowances and fees are reviewed annually.

Management

The intended outcomes these Standards are:

- There is a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and the fostering service ensures that they meet those aims and objectives.(NMS 1)
- The fostering service is managed by those with the appropriate skills and experience. (NMS 2)
- The fostering service is monitored and controlled as specified. (NMS 4)
- The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.(NMS 5)
- Staff are organised and managed effectively.(NMS 16)
- The fostering service has an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff.(NMS 17)
- The fostering service is a fair and competent employer.(NMS 18)
- There is a good quality training programme. (NMS 19)
- All staff are properly accountable and supported.(NMS 20)
- The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers.(NMS 21)
- Foster cares are provided with supervision and support.(NMS 22)
- Foster carers are appropriately trained.(NMS 23)
- Case records for children are comprehensive.(NMS 24)
- The administrative records are maintained as required.(NMS 25)
- The premises used as offices by the fostering service are suitable for the purpose.(NMS 26)
- The fostering service is financially viable. (NMS 27)
- The fostering service has robust financial processes. (NMS 28)
- Local Authority fostering services recognise the contribution made by family and friends as carers.(NMS 32)

The Commission considers Standards 17, 21, and 24 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for standard(s) 2,5,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,26

The fostering service is managed by managers who possess the necessary qualifications and have the skills and experience to operate the service efficiently and effectively.

The fostering service employ sufficient numbers of staff with the necessary qualifications and experience.

The staff receive regular supervision and training as part of professional skills development and are clear about their roles and responsibilities regarding the provision of support to carers.

Foster carers receive appropriate training to enable them to provide good care to children and young people.

Case records for children do not contain sufficient details about the nature and quality of care provided.

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

EVIDENCE:

From the pre-inspection questionnaire, managers self-assessment form, and discussions with the manager and the staff, the inspector was satisfied that the fostering service is managed efficiently and effectively.

The principal officer has overall responsibility for the fostering and adoption service. She holds the necessary qualifications and experience to carry out her role in a professional and skilled manner.

The fostering service is managed directly by 3 team managers, one manages the service for prospective adopters to approval as well as the fostering and adoption development team. This post is a shared post and only half of the post has been recruited to and a vacancy exists for the second half of the post. This vacancy has remained unfilled since the last inspection. Feedback from staff clearly indicated that this post needs to be urgently filled due to the expansion of the team.

Another manager manages the service of placement support for approved foster carers. The third is a manager for the administrative team. The social work team managers hold a social work qualifications either to Dip.Sw/CQSW and other relevant qualifications. The 3 team managers deputise for the principal officer in her absence.

There are adequate numbers of experienced and qualified staff who offer good support to the foster carers on an ongoing basis. There are robust recruitment procedures and this was evidenced from inspecting staff files and talking to the staff. However the inspector remains concerned that the staff files held in the personnel department are not sufficiently well organised to enable ease of information gathering. The principal officer is required to take this issue up with the HR department of the London Borough of Redbridge.

The inspector was satisfied that the fostering service has a recruitment policy and strategy aimed at recruiting a range of carers to meet the needs of children and young people for whom it aims to provide a service. There is a

clearly set out assessment process for carers, which is covered in the BAAF form F competency framework to ensure that all carers are assessed as having appropriate qualities and attitude for caring. These assessments are conducted by social workers in the fostering and adoption development team. There are adequate numbers of experienced and qualified staff, with one part time vacancy for a manager still remaining unfilled, as also noted during previous inspections.

The recruitment of staff and foster carers is an on going process and regular information sessions are held for people interested in becoming foster carers.

In discussion with the staff, and staff files viewed there was evidence to show that regular supervision takes place. The London borough of Redbridge provides staff with an annual training programme from which they can identify relevant courses they wish to attend.

However staff spoken to stated that they wish to access more specific training aimed at developing their particular skills in fostering and adoption. Through discussion with the managers, they stated that this issue has been identified and a specific training officer from BAAF has been appointed to deliver this training to the staff team during the later part of this year.

From discussions with foster carers it was evident that induction and on going training for foster carers is comprehensive. Enhanced payments are made to foster carers who attend at least 3 training sessions during the course of a year, in order to encourage them to attend training sessions. This has resulted in greater attendance of foster carers at these sessions with the ultimate aim of improving their knowledge and skills, to enable them to provide good care to the children and young people in their care.

The inspector attended a training session where a number of foster carers were consulted following the training as part of the inspection process, a children's event organised by the Redbridge Foster Care Association was also attended, and from discussion with those present they stated that they found these to be valuable, informative and supportive.

The Redbridge Foster Care Association is well organised and can be a source for information, guidance and support to foster carers. However, it is not used to its full potential.

Foster carers confirmed that they receive sufficient support from their placement support workers.

All foster carers receive a hand book which covers policies, procedures, guidance, legal information and insurance details.

Foster carers confirmed that the placement support workers (SSWs) meet regularly with them and provide valuable support and guidance to them. Evidence was seen on foster carers files of supervisory formats being used to record contact with foster carers.

From case tracking and viewing case records for foster carers, it was evident, that the fostering service's administrative records contain all significant information relevant to the running of the foster care service and as required by regulations. There is a system for keeping records about all allegations and complaints and for handling these confidentially and securely, including details of the investigation, conclusion reached and action taken.

From viewing files kept by the children's social workers as part of the case tracking exercise the inspector was satisfied that from the limited sample of files checked, these were up to date and contained comprehensive case records for each child.

From viewing records kept by foster carers and diaries provided by the fostering service in which foster carers are required to keep records for each foster child and record relevant information, although foster carers were aware of the need to keep records for each child or young person in foster care, they were not all able to produce evidence of the records they keep.

Training relating to keeping comprehensive case records for each foster child, and to record significant life events for the child/young person has been provided to the foster carers by the fostering service. A number of forms to enable foster carers to keep records in an easy manner have also been provided by the fostering service.

The supervising social workers are required to continue to stress upon the foster carers, the need to keep detailed records of a child's life with them, including maintaining daily records, recording outcomes of contact visits and recording significant life events for life story books. This is requirement no. 1.

From observation, the inspector was satisfied that the premises used as offices by the fostering service are suitable for the purpose. There are sufficient administrative systems, including IT and communication systems.

Appropriate facilities are provided for secure retention of records and appropriate security system ensure adequate safety.

However from feedback received from the staff team, concern was expressed about the future expansion of the team and where additional staff will be located within the limited office space available.

Concern was also expressed about inadequate storage facilities available for storing and archiving files.

The principal officer is aware of these concerns and will take steps to reassure staff regarding this issue.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services have been met and uses the following scale.

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

"X" in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion
 "N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	3

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

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

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

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

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

no

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection?

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
1.	24	22	The registered person is required to ensure that the supervising social workers continue to stress upon the foster carers, the need to keep detailed records of a child's life with them, including maintaining daily records, recording outcomes of contact visits and recording significant life events for life story books.	31/03/06

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.	30	The inspector was concerned that the personnel files in the personnel department were not appropriately sectioned, and information was difficult to find. A recommendation has been made for this issue to be resolved by the London Borough of Redbridge personnel department.
2.	8	The inspector recommends that as far as possible each child /young person is carefully matched with carers capable of meeting his/her assessed needs.
3.	8	The inspector recommends that the fostering service provide specific joint training to all foster carers as well as

		staff, regarding trans-racial placements.
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