

inspection report

Fostering Services

Halton Borough Council Fostering Service

Grosvenor House

Halton Lea

Runcorn

Cheshire

WA7 2ED

10th March 2004—18 March 2004.

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

Halton Borough Council Fostering Service

Address

Grosvenor House, Halton Lea, Runcorn, Cheshire,
WA7 2ED

Local Authority Manager

Ms Ann Towey

Tel No:

01928 704393

Address

Grosvenor House, Halton Lea, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7
2ED

Fax No:

Email Address

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 ?

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Date of last inspection

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Date of Inspection Visit		11th March 2004	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		10:00 am	
Name of Inspector	1	Lynn Paterson	
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 NCSC. 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		Ms Jean Miller (Divisional Manager) – looked after children	

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Part B: Inspection Methods & Findings

(National Minimum Standards For Fostering Services)

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- 3. Management of the fostering service**
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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Independent and local authority fostering services which fall within the jurisdiction of the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) 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 NCSC in respect of Halton Borough Council 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 NCSC 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.

Halton Borough contains the towns of Widnes and Runcorn, plus the villages of Hale, Moore, Daresbury and Preston Brook and is situated between Liverpool and Manchester. Halton Borough Council fostering service forms part of the Children's services located within the Social Care, Housing and Health Directorate and the fostering and adoption team hold responsibility for the recruitment, assessment, training, support, management and motivation of all people who provide a fostering placement for children and young people who have been identified via the looked after system. Currently the service is providing for a high proportion of looked after children placed within foster homes rather than in residential establishments. Some restructuring changes have taken place within the fostering and adoption team since the previous inspection. The team is now managed by a principal manager, and a practice manager who have responsibility for the management of ten social workers and a recently appointed marketing officer plus essential administrative support. The fostering and adoption team is accountable to the Divisional Manager, Looked After children, who evidenced her support and commitment to the team throughout the inspection. The team currently have 74 foster carers looking after 121 children who are unable to live with their own family with age ranges covering 0 to 18 years and the service are in the process of setting up a Teenage Fostering Scheme which will be aimed at recruiting specialist foster carers for older children who present with some challenging behaviours and are currently in residential placements. The team are responsible for the provision of short and long term placement, short-term respite breaks and kinship carers.

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.)

This was the second inspection of Halton Borough Council Fostering Service since the commencement of the Fostering Services National Minimum Standards and The Fostering Service Regulations 2002 and the inspection covered a two-week period. The inspection methodology comprised perusal of policies, procedures, comment cards and daily records and interviews with management, staff, foster carers and young people. The inspector was also able to meet with health workers and other professionals who were associated with the service. The inspector utilised case tracking mechanisms, attended meetings and training sessions and used general observational practices to gain evidence of compliance. Through these methods the inspector noted that the service had addressed all recommendations made at the previous inspection and had developed innovative systems to enhance the fostering service. The summary of the inspection is recorded below: -

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE. The standard was met.

The statement of purpose was clear and relevant and accurately reflected the policies and procedures of the service. The inspector noted that the children's guide was in place and had been distributed appropriately throughout the service.

FITNESS TO PROVIDE OR MANAGE A SERVICE. One standard was met and one exceeded.

Records perused during the inspection identified that recruitment and selection processes were fair and equal and evidenced also that the management team held extensive experience and were suitably qualified to carry out their remit.

MANAGEMENT OF THE FOSTERING SERVICE. One standard was met and one exceeded.

The inspector utilised observation methods, held discussions with staff and perused documentation to gain evidence for this section. It was noted that supervision within the service was structured, file audits were in place and team meetings and debriefing sessions provided forums for discussing issues and developing a whole team approach. It was noted also that the service was organised and managed effectively with clear procedures in place with which to monitor and review service provision and ensure wherever possible high quality performance.

SECURING AND PROMOTING WELFARE. 8 Standards were met and one was almost met.

The inspector met with foster carers, young people management and staff of the service, health workers, perused documentation to include pre inspection questionnaire, training plans, foster carers handbook and children's guide to gain evidence for this section. It noted that foster carers received regular supervisory visits that addressed accommodation and safety issues and were provided with general and specific training in respect of promoting welfare to include child protection and bullying.

The inspector noted that a robust reviewing procedure had been implemented, an innovative

young peoples support group had been introduced and quarterly newsletters sent to update carers about new developments both local and nationally.

RECRUITING, CHECKING, MANAGING, SUPPORTING AND TRAINING STAFF AND FOSTER CARERS. 8 standards were met and one exceeded.

The inspector met with fostering staff, foster carers, perused documentation to include comment cards, policies and procedures and general records to gain evidence for this section. Staff interviews and staff records identified that all staff were well-qualified and held good knowledge and experience of working within children's services. It was noted also that the service had a good mix of staff, those who had experience in family placement and those with more recent experience of childcare work. Staff supervision appeared to be high on the agenda and included workload issues, performance management and personal development and support. The inspector observed that senior managers were most accessible to all team members and were fully committed to the work and development of all fostering staff. The recent appointment of a marketing officer had greatly assisted in the recruitment process and it was noted that existing foster carers assisted in the recruitment of new carers. Staff training appeared to be relevant and ongoing and the inspector observed a training session in which staff and carers were participants. Foster carers refresher training was taking place in respect of consistency and security of recording mechanisms at the time of the inspection and all records perused during the inspection were clear, relevant and secure.

RECORDS. One standard was met and one almost met.

A review of documentation had resulted in it being clearer and more user friendly.

FITNESS OF PREMISES. The standard was met.

The team premises appeared adequate to promote a safe and secure base for staff and information storage.

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS. Two of the standards were met and one almost met.

The service was part of Halton's Children's services and was funded accordingly. The inspector noted that the agency had a clear policy on carers' allowances to include Kinship carers' payments. Most foster carers interviewed advised that they were aware of the payment system and that they generally received prompt payments of allowances and expenses, but two needed clarification.

FOSTERING PANELS. The standard was met.

The inspector attended a fostering panel and perused relevant documentation and can advise that the panel was organised efficiently and effectively with clear decision making mechanisms in place to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in foster care.

SHORT TERM BREAKS. The standard was met.

The inspector met with foster carers who provided this service and perused documentation to gain evidence for standard 31. It was noted that clear arrangements were in place to ensure that the foster carers were fully aware of their remit which was to provide short term breaks to meet specific needs and to be mindful that birth parents remain central to the promotion of health and education needs.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS AS FOSTER CARERS. The standard was met.

The inspector met with Kinship carers and perused records, policies and procedures to gain evidence for standard 32. It was noted that carers felt supported and valued and carers interviewed stated that the introduction of a dedicated Kinship Care social worker had enhanced support networks and enabled Kinship Carers to identify their own particular need in respect of training and levels of support.

CONCLUSION.

The inspector was assisted throughout the inspection by staff of Halton Borough Council, foster carers and young people and was able to gain valuable information to evidence compliance with the required standards and regulations. Most comments made to the inspector were of a very positive nature with young people and foster carers feeling empowered by the support and encouragement of the staff of the fostering service. The inspector noted that the service had been re-designed since the last inspection and had devised and developed new innovative systems and had raised standards of practice as a consequence. The inspector noted also the shortage of placements/carers both locally and nationally, however Halton fostering service evidenced a total commitment to providing young people with choice and high quality placements wherever possible. Staff of the agency had been professional in their preparation methods prior to the inspection and the inspector was subsequently able to meet with all the necessary people and peruse all the appropriate documentation to ensure that the process was a fair and accurate reflection of the staff and service provision. A positive and most interesting 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:

YES

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:

The inspector noted that Halton Borough Council's Fostering Service had addressed at the requirements of the last inspection in order to meet the Fostering Services Regulations 2002. The inspector also noted that the service was well managed and was proactive in its pursuits of providing the best possible outcomes with regard to promoting the welfare of children and young people and meeting all the standards and requirements in respect of work with foster carers.

Implementation of Statutory Requirements from Last Inspection

Requirements from last Inspection visit fully actioned?

YES

If No please list below

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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

No.	Regulation	Standard	Required actions	

Action is being taken by the National Care Standards Commission 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		

Lead Inspector	<u>Lynn Paterson</u>	Signature	<u></u>
Second Inspector	<u></u>	Signature	<u></u>
Locality Manager	<u>Julie Hunt</u>	Signature	<u></u>
Date	<u>13 August 2004</u>		

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 and recommendations 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	
			NONE	

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	FS8	The Authority should ensure wherever possible that all relevant information is provided to the foster carer prior to placement.
2	FS24	The Authority should ensure that foster carers receive sufficient training in respect of consistent recording systems.
3	FS29	The authority should ensure that each carer receives clear information about the expenses payable and how to access them before a child is placed.

* 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**

The following inspection methods have been used in the production of this report

Number of Inspector days spent	11
Survey of placing authorities	YES
Foster carer survey	YES
Foster children survey	YES
Checks with other organisations and Individuals	YES
• Directors of Social services	NA
• Child protection officer	YES
• Specialist advisor (s)	YES
• Local Foster Care Association	NA
Tracking Individual welfare arrangements	YES
• Interview with children	YES
• Interview with foster carers	YES
• Interview with agency staff	YES
• Contact with parents	YES
• 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	YES
Observation of foster carer training	YES
Observation of foster panel	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	YES
Date of Inspection	11/3/04
Time of Inspection	9.30AM
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	77

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the NCSC 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?

3

The inspector read the statement of purpose and children's guide and held discussion with staff and young people to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that the statement of purpose had been revised since the last inspection to reflect the Fostering Standards and Regulations and staff interviewed evidenced full knowledge and understanding of this document. A Children's Guide to the statement of purpose had also been developed in recognition of the need for looked after children to have an explanation of the Fostering service in a child centred manner.

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?

4

The inspector interviewed the management team, staff, perused documentation to include pre inspection questionnaire to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that the recent service re-design had resulted in a strengthened management structure with the team being managed by a Principal Manager, supported by a Practice Manager who deputised in the Principal Managers absence. The inspector noted that the people involved in carrying out and managing the fostering service displayed in interview extensive business skills which they identified they had developed over a number of years whilst working in child care arenas. Staff advised that since the service had been reviewed and revised they had been afforded an exceptional style of leadership that enabled them to deliver the best possible child -care services. The inspector was able to identify that the fostering service had developed strongly since the last inspection and had ensured that staff roles had been amended and extra posts had been introduced to include a dedicated kinship carer worker and a marketing officer. The inspector evidenced commendable changes in this standard, which exceeded the National Minimum Standard.

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

The inspector met with staff and perused records and documentation to gain evidence in this standard. It was noted that the service area had a business plan, which outlined the aims and objectives for the service to include the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Records appeared robust with reference checks being recorded and police checks being carried out and renewed as appropriate. Training programmes also showed that training was ongoing in respect of protection issues and that training was innovative and effective. Records also indicated that the management team were proactive in their pursuits of best practice and had introduced innovative training methods to more than ensure full compliance.

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

The inspector met with staff and foster carers, looked through documentation to include supervision records, case files, minutes of meetings, and perused pre inspection questionnaire and comment cards to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that supervision mechanisms were in place for both staff and foster carers. Staff supervision at all levels was structured and regular. Foster carers records showed that supervisory visits were undertaken regularly and visits were recorded and signed. Annual reviews were also completed for each foster carer. All staff and foster carers interviewed identified that they held clear awareness of accountability and lines of communication and of their duty to declare any possible conflict of interest. Recording systems had been updated since the last inspection and the inspector was advised that records were monitored by the manager who identified a clear sound knowledge of all the workings of the team.

Number of statutory notifications made to NCSC 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.

1

Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.

1

Number of complaints made to NCSC 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?****4**

The inspector met with the management team, staff, and read documentation to include staff files, pre inspection questionnaire to gain evidence for this standard. The manager displayed high quality management skills and feedback from staff indicated that she was effective and efficient in her role. The job description was clear setting out duties and responsibilities and the recent service re-design had reinforced arrangements in respect of delegation, responsibility and accountability. Feedback from staff evidenced that they had full respect for the management team who they felt worked tirelessly and utilised innovative ideas and developed new system input into the service. Feedback also identified that staff felt that the fostering service was managed most effectively and efficiently. In interview the management team were able to identify that they had reviewed and fine tuned the fostering service since the last inspection and had noted and acted on requirements made at that time. The inspector read documentation to evidence the changes which included an implementation plan which had been drawn up in respect of recommendations made at the time of the previous inspection and indicated that the recommendations had been adopted, resources provided and named persons been given responsibility for implementation and evaluations. The inspector gained evidence to indicate that the National Minimum Standard was exceeded.

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

The inspector perused documentation to include foster carers files, policies and procedures, pre inspection questionnaire, training programme, comment cards and met with staff and foster carers to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that all assessments undertaken were thorough and completed by staff that were experienced and qualified to carry out this process. Staff and foster carers evidenced that supervisory visits were carried out to address safety issues and to ensure that the foster home could comfortably accommodate all who lived there. Records and feedback showed that the service had robust systems in place to ensure that holistic needs were assessed addressed and recorded. The training programme identified that the foster carers preparation covered health and safety issues and the foster carers handbook showed that this training was backed by relevant documentation that included written guidelines on health and safety responsibilities. Foster carers advised that they had understanding of their responsibilities in respect pf providing transport for the child to include insurance issues. The inspector visited several foster homes during the inspection and met with foster carers and their families and noted that all carers displayed full understanding of promoting and safeguarding young people and all homes visited appeared most appropriate for the placement of looked after children

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?

3

The inspector met with staff, carers and young people, perused comment cards and carers records and training programmes to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that training was provided prior to approval of foster carers in respect of race, equality and children's rights and records viewed confirmed that this was followed up by robust assessment process to include diversity and equality issues. All staff and foster carers interviewed during the inspection evidenced that they worked in partnership to enhance the young persons self esteem and the inspector observed a joint training session which further evidenced good practice.

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?****2**

The inspector met with staff, foster carers, perused documentation to include carers files, policies, procedures and comment cards to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that the duty system within the team had been reviewed since the last inspection and this had resulted in a more streamlined service in relation to matching children with carers. As a consequence of this review a spreadsheet was now in place that held up to date information relating to carers and their current situation. Staff interviewed advised that they worked with the policy and procedure in place to match children with carer's however this was not always possible due to the lack of foster carers and mechanisms had been out in place to ensure that future foster carer recruitment had high profile. Records indicated that emergency placements were made with young people being placed for a short period whilst matching considerations were discussed and utilised wherever possible. The inspector met with young people and gained information from comment cards which indicated that most young people were at ease with their placements, however one or two foster carers advised that they would like more information about the background and current needs of the young person prior to emergency placements being made. See recommendation 1.

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**

The inspector met with foster carers, staff and young people, perused comment cards pre inspection questionnaire, children's guide, policies and procedures and case records to gain evidence for this standard. Records showed that all preparation training was provided to include child protection and safe care and foster carers interviewed advised that they found this training very useful. Records also indicated that the authority had provided a considerable amount of good quality training in relation to care planning and child protection that had been available to both staff and foster carers. It was noted that the updated carers handbook also held information appertaining to child protection and safe care. The inspector was advised that foster carer training had been provided at local accessible venues and it was the intention to deliver some training during coffee mornings as an alternative to more formal training in the hope that this would attract more carers to attend. Discussion with the management team highlighted that a restraint policy was in place, however management felt that this policy should be backed by a behaviour management procedure and this discussion evidenced they had been proactive in their pursuits of a well balanced process to ensure that restraint was only utilised as a last resort.

Percentage of foster children placed who report never or hardly ever being bullied:

X

%

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?****3**

The inspector met with foster carers, young people, staff, viewed policies, procedures, case records, financial information, comment cards and pre inspection questionnaire to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that the agency had robust policies and procedures in place in respect of contact arrangements and the monitoring and reviewing of these arrangements and foster carers and young people advised that the mechanisms in place appeared to work well. The inspector noted that all carers had a personal development plan in place that identified ongoing training and support needs and one carer interviewed stated that she had identified that she would benefit from advice on how to manage a difficult contact issue. The inspector was advised that this support was quickly provided.

Assessment and training records showed that training was in place for all carers in respect of assisting a child to maintain appropriate contact. Records viewed also indicated that the agency would support carers to assist with transportation and the provision of baby-sitting arrangements where necessary.

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?****3**

The inspector met with staff, foster carers, young people, perused records, comment cards and end of placement forms to gain evidence for this standard. Record showed that the agency utilised two young peoples groups, Rant and Rave, which met together to discuss issues or undertook activities together. The groups were also used for consultation purposes in relation to looked after children. Foster carers and young people advised that these groups were a useful resource. Foster carers interviewed identified that they had been trained to develop their listening skills and evidenced that they had full understanding of the need to listen to the views of the children in their care. The inspector noted that the children's guide contained full information in respect of concerns and complaints and foster carers and young people interviewed during the inspection confirmed that this information had been provided and was understood. The end of placement monitoring process had been reinstated and had been utilised to provide feedback in respect of overviews of placements from all concerned. Reviewing officers interviewed during the inspection held full awareness of all the necessary policies and procedures in place to ensure that the opinions of children and their families and other significant persons are sought.

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?****3**

The inspector met with staff, carers, young people, looked after children's health worker, perused documentation to include case files, training programme, comment cards, policies and procedures to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that the health worker, a nurse who was in place to monitor and review all looked after children's health needs, had been proactive in her role and had developed, together with the agency, a health handbook for each looked after child, Personal Health Records. This handbook would ensure that all children's health history and relevant information was stored as an ongoing process and should be useful to the young person when moving to independence. Carers advised that they had received training in health and hygiene and health and safety and first aid and that other training was available in respect of sexual health, drug awareness and HIV and AIDS. The inspector noted that an information sheet provided in respect of Hepatitis and HIV and issues related to substitute care, foster care, residential care and adoption was clear and most informative. The inspector noted some inconsistency in the recording methods of foster carers and as a consequence it was agreed that a newsletter would be sent to all foster carers reminding them of the recording system which was highlighted on each carer's agreement.

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**

The inspector met with foster carers and young people, agency staff, perused documentation appertaining to education case files and comment cards to gain evidence for this standard. Foster carers advised that they assisted and supported young people with educational tasks and this was confirmed by young people comments via comment cards and discussions. The service had policies and procedures in place that identified the requirement of all parties to promote the education of young people in foster care.

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?****3**

The inspector met with staff, carers, read comment cards, training programmes and case files to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that the service re-design had addressed shortfalls as recorded in the last inspection report and as a consequence a designated worker held lead responsibility for the action and assessment records and pathways plans. The training programme showed that training was available in respect of the development of skills, competence and knowledge necessary for adult living.

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

The inspector met with management and staff, foster carers and young people and perused documentation to include pre inspection questionnaire, recruitment and selection policies and procedures, staff files and training records to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that the recruitment and selection policy was fair and equal and followed good practice in safeguarding children and young people. Staff files identified that staff were interviewed as a part of the selection process and all files seen held details of references and appropriate police checks. Records also evidenced that all staff that worked within the fostering service were suitably qualified and held knowledge and experience of foster care. The inspector can record that all staff interviewed during the inspection identified that they were professional in approach and were managed, trained and supported in such a way as to ensure the best possible outcomes for children in foster care.

Total number of staff of the agency:

10

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

0

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?****4**

The inspector met with management and staff, perused staff records, staff files and policies and procedures appertaining to assessments, reviews and training programmes to gain evidence for this standard. Staff advised that they were organised and managed by a robust structure with clear lines of accountability. Records showed that staff supervision took place on a regular, frequent basis and incorporated workload issues, performance management and personal development and support. Staff also advised that the senior manager, Operations Director of Children's Services, was not remote but accessible and interested in the work and development of the team. Training records evidenced that staff and carers undertook on going training and carers maintained a personal development plan that identified future training plans. Staff advised that they had all relevant information in respect of policies and working practices and the inspector was told that administrative services were appropriately provided. The inspector also met with the newly appointed marketing officer during the inspection who evidenced that she had impacted most favourably in respect of introducing procedures for dealing promptly with enquiries from prospective carers. Staff advised that they felt the systems in place had been reviewed and fine tuned and as a consequence had enhanced the service delivery which they perceived to be most commendable. The inspector noted that the management team were qualified and experienced to carry out their role and delegation and responsibilities were clearly defined. The fostering service had been part of a children's services redesign since the previous inspection and as a consequence the management team had changed and new personnel had been recruited who brought with them a great deal of experience with new and innovative ideas. The inspector noted that the team had devised systems to determine, prioritise and monitor workloads and ensured that appropriate staff undertook tasks, by looking at the team, the task and the individual skills necessary. The agency also worked with competency based practices for both the agency staff and the carers. This followed the requirements of Caring for Children and included an ability to work closely with children's families and others who are important to the children, ability to provide a good standard of care to other peoples children which promotes healthy, emotional, physical and sexual development as well as heath and educational achievement. Further competencies covered appropriate boundaries, child development, and communication, safe care, working as part of a team, equal opportunities and personal development. It was noted also that ongoing training was pivotal to achieving all competencies. The inspector evidenced that the service had introduced commendable and innovative systems and structures since the last inspection which exceeded the National Minimum Standard.

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**

The inspector met with supervising social workers, marketing officer, management team, foster carers, perused documentation to include pre inspection questionnaire, staff policies, training programme, supervision records and assessment process to gain evidence for this standard. Staff interviewed evidenced that they had full knowledge and understanding of the assessment process and that they had the necessary skills to undertake this task. Staff also advised that they felt valued by way of regular supervision, workload management systems and clear direction. The marketing officer was able to identify that the system now in place with which to increase the number of foster carers utilised her specialist skills to promote fostering and to recruit a new range of carers to meet all the needs of looked after children. Foster carers advised that they were provided with all information at all stages of the pre approval period and were provided with information packs both before and after approval. Foster carers also advised that they felt that the introductory meetings were invaluable as was the input from established foster carers that provided relevant information that enabled each person to reflect upon the way forward with their application.

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**

The inspector met with staff and foster carers and read documentation to include personnel policies and procedures, out of hours duty rota, health and safety policies and whistle blowing policy to gain evidence for this standard. Staff interviewed evidenced that they had full knowledge of personnel procedures and of Whistle Blowing policy. Out of hours management systems were in place and the inspector noted that foster carers were involved in an out of hours support. Foster carers advised that they had been encouraged and supported to complete NVQ assessors training and when completed utilised to assess staff. Records showed that the service had an informal mentoring system in place which utilised experienced carers to support newly approved carers. Records also showed that the service had a comprehensive health and safety policy for carers, children and staff to cover all legal requirements. Records indicate that as part of the service re design a Crisis Intervention Team had been created part of their remit was to prevent foster placement breakdown via the provision of support services than can be offered at short notice. The inspector was advised that other support and training systems will be introduced later in the year to look at the development of training programmes and the developmental needs of carers.

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**

The inspector met with staff and perused training records and staff files to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that staff were provided with a thorough induction process and ongoing training to include new initiatives. The inspector was advised that all training was evaluated and reviewed annually to ensure that sessions reflected the policies of the fostering service. The inspector observed a training session during the inspection period and noted that the participants were mixed between social work staff and foster carers and records indicated that the service had reviewed the training strategy for foster carers and as a consequence had been proactive in nominating foster carers to attend joint training. Foster carers advised that this system served to enhance the existing liaison between carers and social work staff.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)

All staff are properly accountable and supported.

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

The inspector met with management and staff and perused supervision and appraisal documentation, staff files and team meeting minutes to gain evidence for this standard. Staff interviewed stated they were properly accountable and supported and held full written details of the duties and responsibilities expected of them. Staff files held information to confirm that job specifications and policies and procedures of the organisation had been provided to staff. Supervision and appraisal documentation and minutes of team meetings evidenced full compliance with standards 20.2, 20.3, 20.4 and 20.5.

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**

Foster carers advised that they generally felt valued and supported by the fostering service. Carers identified that they had been actively encouraged to develop their skills and that an out of hours support system was in place as was a mentoring scheme. Documentation perused evidenced that the service held consultation evenings and had developed a fostering forum to ensure that carers were involved in the service development. All foster carers interviewed evidenced awareness of the role of the supervising social worker to include their commitment to the overall training needs of the foster carers to ensure the needs of each child were met. Records indicated that annual review reports were prepared and presented to the fostering panel and file records showed that supervising social worker visits were carried out according to policy. Foster care reviews only go to panel following the first review, to inform panel members of good practice and if the review recommended a change of the foster care approval status. Foster carers stated that they had been provided with a carer's manual and a carer's hand held handbook, which they stated, held all relevant information. Comment cards received advised that communication systems between supervising social workers and young peoples social workers were clear and effective.

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?****3**

The inspector met with management, staff, and foster carers and viewed documentation to include policy and procedure in respect of complaints, investigations and allegations, agency agreements, hand book, support rota and abuse recording systems to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that foster carer agreements contained full information in respect of what was expected from the carer and carers interviewed identified that they had full knowledge and understanding of their remit. File records showed that the supervising social worker worked according to agency policy to ensure that each carer was provided with sufficient support and supervision to provide high quality care for a young person placed within the carer's home. The inspector noted that the service had addressed concerns raised at the last inspection in relation to procedures for allegations against foster carers and had introduced revised policy and procedures and had also put in place a policy framework in respect of removal of foster carers from the register.

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**

The inspector noted from discussion and documentation that the service had reviewed the Training Strategy for Foster carers and as a consequence had provided some joint training alongside social workers. It was noted also that individualised training and development plans were being provided for all foster carers to ensure wherever possible that individuals receive training appropriate to the identified needs of the child. Foster carers interviewed advised that the pre approval training included input from existing carer's, which they felt was invaluable. Carers also advised that induction training was provided which again they felt was most appropriate to their needs. Records showed that training was ongoing and flexible, annual reviews took place to include appraisal of training and development needs and support groups had been set up for the children of foster carers.

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?	2
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The inspector looked at case records, policies and procedures and interviewed management and staff to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that case records on children were kept in the fieldwork teams within the same premises as the fostering service and they had access to these records. The re-design of the service involved the department undertaking a wholesale review of all documentation used and this had resulted in a clearer and more user-friendly documentation now being in place. Filing systems appeared to be robust and files perused during the inspection were clear and consistent. Most foster carers interviewed stated that they had prior knowledge of the reasons for the children being placed in foster care and had understanding of the reasons to encourage the child to reflect upon past history and said they had received the relevant training to carry this out. However, a small number of foster carers stated that they had not been provided with sufficient information in respect of the basis for the placement to include background history. Recording systems tested during the inspection also appeared inconsistent although the foster carers agreement and handbook provided information and advice in respect of good practice recording mechanisms. The inspector discussed these issues with the management team during the inspection and noted that information sheets had been sent to all foster carers, prior to the end of the inspection, as a consequence of the discussion as reminders of recording systems required. See recommendation 2.

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
<p>The inspector perused documentation to include case files, records, policy and procedures in respect of storing and managing information and file retention, staff files, pre assessment document and held discussions with management, panel members and staff to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that records were stored in separate areas with staff files being held within personnel, carer records held within the fostering team, quality assurance unit holding records in relation to allegations and complaints officer having responsibility for the maintenance of records in relation to the number of complaints made about the service. All records appeared to be filed as per policy and procedures and staff interviewed evidenced full understanding of the recording system and security measures utilised within the service. Files inspected were clear and concise at the time of the inspection. Panel members interviewed advised that they had been given full information in respect of the procedures appertaining to storing and managing confidential information.</p>			
Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:			125
Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months:			65
Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months:			147
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 £	108.49	Maximum £	291.06

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 inspector viewed the premises and spoke with staff to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that the premises used were located within the social work department of the Social Care, Housing and Health Directorate. The area used was an open plan area which afforded adequate space for the team to carry out their remit. The inspector was advised that the team moved to the renovated office in Autumn 2003 and that the premises are adequate with the provision of a safe and secure base for staff and information storage.

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

The inspector met with the management team and perused pre inspection questionnaire and foster carers allowance documentation to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that the service had a clear written policy on allowances for carers that included details of the professional fee, which will be provided for carers who look after older teenagers, to those who look after children with challenging behaviour, including children who have had multiple placement breakdown. Criteria are applied with regard to eligibility. Rates had been increased in April 2003 and were in line with the recommended payment rate from the fostering network. It was noted also that Kinship carers were now paid full boarding out allowances included birthday, holiday and Christmas, in line with other foster carers.

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

The inspector was advised that the service is operated by Halton Local Authority and is funded and audited via internal and external systems.

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?****2**

The inspector met with foster carers and perused payment records to gain evidence for this standard. Most carers advised that they had been provided with full details of allowances and payments and were paid on a very regular basis, however one foster carer interviewed stated that he was unsure of his entitlement and needed clarification whilst another carer stated that she was unsure if she was entitled to an enhanced amount because of the young persons severe behavioural problems. Discussions with the management team during the inspection evidenced that all foster carers were provided with written details in respect of policy, procedures and payments appertaining to fostering and the team agreed that in exceptional circumstances an emergency placement would be made with a very newly appointed foster carer who may not have yet received full details of the payment provision. As a consequence of this discussion the team made immediate arrangements to ensure that all newly approved foster carers had received and understood the payment system. See recommendation 3.

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?	3
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The inspector observed a panel meeting, perused relevant documentation and interviewed panel chair and independent members to gain evidence for this standard. The inspector noted that the panel took place monthly and made recommendations in relation to short term fostering and assessments in relation to private fostering were also presented to the panel. Documentation evidenced that policies and procedures were in place in respect of the handling of the functions of the panel and it was noted that the panel was well organised and managed throughout the observational period. Members interviewed were clear in their understanding of their remit to include quality assurance issues. Members also identified that they had received appropriate training and had the necessary checks undertaken prior to the commencement of the role. The inspector noted that the panel included a looked after young person and a long standing foster carer from another local authority and observed that they both were able to add valuable contribution to the meeting. The inspector noted also that the panel was without an educational representative, however was advised that this situation had been rectified and a representative would be at the next panel meeting. The inspector perused training programmes and noted that training was ongoing and was advised that an annual training event had been arranged to take place in April 2004 with all members being invited.

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?
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<p>The inspector perused documentation and met with agency staff and foster carers to gain evidence for this standard. It was noted that short-term breaks were the responsibility of one particular social worker within the team, however the scheme was integrated into the main body of the service to assist with access to training. Foster carers interviewed displayed excellent knowledge and understanding of their role that included birth parents remaining central to the promotion of health and educational needs. Staff of the fostering service advised that they perceived the relationships between parents and carers to be very positive and direct contact was encouraged. Staff interviews also highlighted the positive and effective joint working between social care and health in relation to children with disabilities. Records indicated that the service had a limited amount of home from home carers and the inspector noted that the management team had arranged to set up a task group with a view to developing a strategy aimed at addressing the shortfall in resources.</p>	
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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?	3
The inspector met with staff, Kinship carers, young people, read comment cards and documentation to gain evidence for this standard. The inspector noted that the agency had a good thorough assessment process in place with which to identify family and friends as potential carers and also noted that a dedicated Kinship Care Social Worker had been appointed in November 2003. Records indicated that Kinship Carers were now paid foster care allowance. Kinship carers interviewed stated that they were aware that the authority had appointed a dedicated worker and had received a letter from him to advise of his role and establish what support and training they felt was necessary. It was noted also that whilst Kinship Carers were not currently the subject of annual review it was the intention of the service to instigate reviews in the near future.		

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 11th March 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

Provider comments/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

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 17th June 2004, 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

NO

Action plan was received at the point of publication

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

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

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

Other: <enter details here>

Public reports

It should be noted that all NCSC inspection reports are public documents. Reports on children's homes are only obtainable on personal application to NCSC 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 Ms Diana Terris of Halton Borough Council (Fostering Service) 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 Ms Diana Terris of Halton Borough Council (Fostering Service) 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.