

inspection report

Fostering Services

Cornerways Fostering Services Ltd

Lyttel Hall

Coopers Hill Road

Nutfield

Redhill

Surrey

RH1 4HY

4th February - 8th March 2005

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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

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

The role of CSCI is to:

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

Inspection Methods & Findings

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

The 4-point scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

FOSTERING SERVICE INFORMATION

Local Authority Fostering Service?

NO

Name of Authority

Address

Local Authority Manager

Tel No:

Address

Fax No:

Email Address

Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)

YES

Name of Agency

Cornerways Fostering Services Ltd

Tel No

01737 824296

Address

Lyttel Hall, Coopers Hill Road, Nutfield, Redhill, Surrey,
RH1 4HY

Fax No

01737 824291

Email Address

Registered Number of IFA

H090000818

Name of Registered Provider

Cornerways Fostering Services Ltd

Name of Registered Manager (if applicable)

Ms Fiona Gail Black

Date of first registration

29th March 2004

Date of latest registration certificate

29th March 2004

Registration Conditions Apply ?

NO

Date of last inspection

N/A

Date of Inspection Visit		4 th February 2005	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:30 am	
Name of Inspector	1	Ms R Coler	123223
Name of Inspector	2	Mrs K Fell	
Name of Inspector	3	Mrs S Floyd	
Name of Inspector	4	Mr P Benthom	
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.			
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)			
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Ms F Black - Manager	

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INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

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

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

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

The report will show the following:

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

This report is a public document.

INSPECTION VISITS

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

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.
<p>Cornerways is a newly registered fostering service providing care to looked after children with seven placement foster carers. Cornerways Fostering Services is an independent Fostering Agency run by Cornerways Fostering Services Ltd.</p> <p>This is the first inspection to be undertaken in the Commission for Social Care Inspection year April 2004 to March 2005 and as such all 30 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services have been assessed.</p> <p>It will be necessary to review the full inspection report for 2004-05 to obtain a full understanding of the extent to which the home meets the 30 standards of The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services.</p>

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

Inspector's Summary

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

Statement of Purpose

The statement of purpose and the children's guide were accessible to carers and placement authorities. Both of these documents contain all the required information as set out in Regulation 3 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

Fitness to provide or manage a fostering service

The fostering service is managed by a qualified social worker with extensive experience in fostering services.

The manager has the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work and B. Phil in Social Work. She also has Level 5 Executive Diploma in Management and a Practice Teachers Award in Social Work.

Management of the fostering service

Cornerways Fostering Service is managed and staffed by qualified social workers.

The manager is supported by a fostering worker and one of the company directors, also a qualified social worker deputises for her in her absence.

Securing and promoting welfare

There are clear lines of accountability for both managers and staff. There were proper financial procedures in place.

There is a developing quality assurance programme, which the Commission would recommend is implemented in full.

Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers

The inspectors felt that the service was managed effectively and efficiently and there is clear delegation of management and operational responsibilities.

Operational systems were explicit and understood by all operational staff.

The inspectors felt that the foster care environments that were inspected provided a safe and healthy home for the children that were being cared for.

Records

Records that were sampled related to one child living with foster carers and the foster carers that were caring for him.

There is a detailed record of monthly social worker contact as well as a written and signed record of supervision sessions that were undertaken by the fostering agency manager.

Foster carers reported that all sanctions were not recorded.
Please see requirements.

Fitness of premises for use as a fostering service

The premises are located in a large suite of offices owned by a commercial company in South Nutfield.

There is up to date IT equipment in place and all premises are secure with lockable facilities within each area.

However there is no form of signing in procedure or visitors book and this must be put into place with immediate effect on account of security and fire regulations being adequately complied with.

Please see requirements.

Financial requirements

The company trades as Cornerways Fostering Services Ltd and employs a Director of Finance who is responsible for all aspects of financial management of the service.

The balance sheet for the profit and loss operation of the service was viewed and found to be viable.

Fostering panels

The Agency Decision Maker on the panel is currently the registered manager of the fostering service.

The service needs to review the appropriateness of this appointment in relation to the possible conflict of interests and responsibilities of each role. It is strongly recommended that an Independent Decision Maker be appointed.

At the approval stage the panel review whether a sibling group of more than three children would be able to be catered for by that family if necessary and record of this is placed on the terms and conditions. The service is reminded that in any case the individual needs of the sibling group of four children be needed to be met in any case.

Please see recommendations.

Short term breaks

Short-term breaks are accommodated within the service and the same procedures for long term fostering apply.

This was seen to be appropriate.

Family and friends as carers

This service is not provided by the company

(Local Authority Fostering Services Only)

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

NO

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

NO

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

NO

The grounds for the above Report or Notice are:

[illegible]

Implementation of Statutory Requirements from Last Inspection

Requirements from last Inspection visit fully actioned?

NA

If No please list below

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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

No.	Regulation	Standard	Required actions	

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

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

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Lead Inspector	Ms R Coler	Signature	
Second Inspector	Mr P Benthom	Signature	
Regulation Manager	Mrs S A Floyd	Signature	
Date			

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS IDENTIFIED DURING THIS INSPECTION

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

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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

No.	Regulation	Standard *	Requirement	
1	22 (1) Schedule 2	FS24	Any sanctions placed upon children in the foster care setting must be recorded and made available to the supervising social worker and manager of the fostering service	With immediate effect
2	23 (1) (2) (a)	FS26	A signing in procedure or visitors book and this must be put into place with immediate effect on account of security and fire regulations being adequately complied with.	With immediate effect
3	17 (1) (3) (b)	FS19	Training in relation to adequate medication procedures is required to be developed.	30/4/05
4	5(2)	FS4	The foster care handbook refers to conflicts of interest, however there was no information to be found in the foster care agreement to this effect. The agreement must be reviewed to include this information.	30/4/05
5	14	FS11	The complaint procedure needs to plainly identify that complainants have the right to make a complaint to the Commission at any time; not only following making a complaint to Cornerways Fostering Service.	30/4/05
6	11	FS8	Specific matching criteria must be fully considered before the presentation of the prospective carers to panel.	

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	FS4	There is a developing quality assurance programme, which the Commission would recommend is implemented in full.
2	FS6	Detail of foster carers car insurance should be obtained in all cases to ensure that adequate insurance is in place.
3	FS30	The Commission strongly recommends that the fostering agency appoint an independent agency decision maker in place of the manager of the service who fulfils this role.

* 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	5
Survey of placing authorities	NO
Foster carer survey	YES
Foster children survey	YES
Checks with other organisations and Individuals	YES
• Directors of Social services	NO
• Child protection officer	NO
• Specialist advisor (s)	NO
• Local Foster Care Association	NO
Tracking Individual welfare arrangements	YES
• Interview with children	YES
• Interview with foster carers	YES
• Interview with agency staff	YES
• Contact with parents	NO
• Contact with supervising social workers	YES
• Examination of files	YES
Individual interview with manager	YES
Information from provider	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group discussion with staff	NO
Interview with panel chair	NO
Observation of foster carer training	NO
Observation of foster panel	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	YES
Date of Inspection	1/2/05
Time of Inspection	0900
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	40

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

The scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

Statement of Purpose

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

Standard 1 (1.1 - 1.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
The statement of purpose and the children's guide were accessible to carers and placement authorities. Both of these documents contain all the required information as set out in Regulation 3 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002. The statement of purpose gives detail of Cornerways Fostering Services Values and the commitment to providing appropriate care services for looked after children.		

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?

3

The fostering service is managed by a qualified social worker with extensive experience in fostering services.

The manager has the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work and B. Phil in Social Work. She also has Level 5 Executive Diploma in Management and a Practice Teachers Award in Social Work.

Prior to working for Cornerways the manager was responsible for a fostering and adoption team in a large local authority.

Cornerways Ltd is a financially viable limited company that has provided care to children in Surrey since 2003.

The Director and the Financial manager are involved daily in the management and operation of the service to ensure its compliance with regulations and minimum standards and its financial viability.

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

Cornerways Fostering Service is managed and staffed by qualified social workers.

The manager is supported by a fostering worker and one of the company directors, also a qualified social worker deputises for her in her absence.

The director has over 25 years experience of work with children as a residential social worker, residential manager and senior manager for children's services with both local authority and independent childcare organisations.

He is currently Operations Manager for Cornerways Children's Services and Director of Cornerways Fostering Services.

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?

2

There are clear lines of accountability for both managers and staff. There were proper financial procedures in place.

There is a developing quality assurance programme, which the Commission would recommend is implemented in full.

Evidence of this process was provided throughout the inspection.

For example, questionnaires for young people and for foster carers were available.

The inspectors were unable to find evidence that carers were informed of their responsibility to declare any possible conflicts of interest.

The foster care handbook refers to conflicts of interest, however there was no information to be found in the foster care agreement to this effect.

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

X

Death of a child placed with foster parents.

0

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

0

Serious illness or accident of a child.

0

Outbreak of serious infectious disease at a foster home.

0

Actual or suspected involvement of a child in prostitution.

0

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

0

Serious complaint about a foster parent.

0

Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.

0

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

0

Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:

0

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.4)

The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met? 3

The inspectors felt that the service was managed effectively and efficiently and there is clear delegation of management and operational responsibilities.

Operational systems were explicit and understood by all operational staff.

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?

2

The inspectors felt that the foster care environments that were inspected provided a safe and healthy home for the children that were being cared for.

The assessments of potential foster carers were generally felt to be thorough and detailed and were carried out by an independent social worker with over 25 years of fostering and adoption experience.

Risk assessments of the foster carers homes were seen to be undertaken and copies were kept on the service files.

Detail of foster carers car insurance was not always available on file. This should be obtained to ensure that adequate insurance is in place.

However foster carers did not have copies of these crucial pieces of information.

The fostering service is also advised their medication policies need to be updated.

Please see requirements.

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

This element of good practice has been taken seriously by this relatively small service.

For example, there was a varied group of foster carers coming from different ethnic backgrounds.

Training around diversity formed a major part of Cornerways foster care training.

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

This standard was seen to be partly met.

However in one instance there were some concerns that specific matching criteria had not necessarily been fully considered before the presentation of the prospective carers to panel. Other assessments viewed on file were found to be complete in terms of the matching process.

Please see requirements.

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?**

2

A Child Protection policy is in place. This must clearly state how training of all Cornerways fostering staff will be implemented, and how the efficacy of the policy is being maintained. All administration staff must be trained in Child Protection procedures and given a basic understanding of Child Protection issues.

However both foster carers and staff were clear about Child Protection and gave a commitment to ensure that all concerns were investigated appropriately.

Please see requirements.

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

0

%

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

Contact arrangements with family and friends were found to be satisfactory and well monitored.

Foster carers spoken with emphasised the need to maintain these relationships and were given support and guidance.

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?** 2

Young people confirmed that their views and opinions formed a central part of their care plan and they reported to be involved in the preparation of the care planning process as well as being an integral part of the foster carers family.

Young people reported that they felt able to complain and to whom they should do so.

They were aware of the written complaint procedure but had not necessarily scrutinised it.

The complaint procedure gives potential complainants different stages for making an informal and formal complaint. Whilst information regarding how to contact the Commission is clearly provided within the complaint procedure the procedure needs to plainly identify that complainants have the right to make a complaint to the Commission at any time; not only following making a complaint to Cornerways Fostering Service.

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

Health care needs were seen to be met.

The agency manager is diligent in obtaining all relevant health care information before, during and after the placement is made.

It was found that some local authorities did not provide this information freely.

The manager confirmed that the agency was in the process of developing a health record for each young person, which would provide an historical record of how young people's health care needs are identified and met whilst in the care of Cornerways fostering service.

CSCI supports such development, as this will meet Standard 12.4 fully.

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**

There was clear evidence that educational needs of young people placed within the service were given the opportunity and incentive to attend school on a regular and planned basis. Foster carers were supportive of young people's educational attainments and young people stated that they felt their education had improved since living with foster carers.

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?****9**

This standard was not felt to be appropriate at this time. However it was noted that young people were developing independent living skills within foster placements.

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 recruitment of staff was found to meet Regulation 21 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and Standard 15 of the National Minimum Standards.
Please refer to other relevant sections of this report.

Total number of staff of the agency:

6

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?

3

The manager personally supervises all staff on a monthly basis and uses the session as an ongoing method of appraisal.
The Directors of the company are also involved in the supervision and monitoring of all staff performance.

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**

This standard was seen to be met.

Whilst the service was not fully staffed on account of its initial development, there were adequate arrangements in place to employ sessional, qualified and experienced staff.

There are plans in place to increase the number of staff as the service develops.

The independent social worker interviewed is skilled in the assessment and appraisal of prospective foster carers.

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 service is a limited company and as such operates within stringent employment law guidelines.

Staff are afforded sound contracts of employment and training opportunities.

Foster carers reported that out of hours management and support services were available when necessary and that staff always responded appropriately.

There is a whistle blowing policy in place.

Please see relevant sections of this report.

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?****2**

There was seen to be policy in relation to staff development and training in place.

Foster carers were clear of relevant up to date Child Protection training; however training in relation adequate medication procedures is required.

Please see requirements.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5) All staff are properly accountable and supported.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
This standard was seen to be met.		

Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.6) The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>Evidence of this standard being met was found in the statement of purpose and foster carers reported that satisfactory support networks were in place.</p> <p>The annual review system of foster carers had not taken place, as the service is less than a year old.</p> <p>However paperwork was seen to be in place in preparation for the review in April 2005.</p> <p>Foster care agreements were seen to be in place for all foster carers and provided a good level of information. As already stated the service should include a statement regarding conflicts of interest within this agreement.</p> <p>All foster carers had a Cornerways Handbook covering guidance and procedures. At regular foster carers meetings these policies are reviewed and discussed.</p> <p>For example foster carers were clear of how to deal with potential allegations being made against them.</p>		

Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.10) The fostering service is a managed one that provides supervision for foster carers and helps them to develop their skills.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>The agency's manager carries out regular monthly supervision sessions. They are recorded and foster carers receive a signed copy of the record.</p> <p>The agency was aware of the need to carry out one unannounced visit within the year and had planned these visits.</p>		

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**

A comprehensive training programme is in place covering all aspects of Child Protection. Foster carers have an introduction to Child Protection shortly after they have been approved. The manager of the service and one of the social workers are awaiting places on Surrey County Council Child Protection for Agencies. As the service develops there are also plans to include a greater variety of support group meetings such as male foster carer meetings and meetings for foster carers' own children.

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

Records that were sampled related to one child living with foster carers and the foster carers that were caring for him.

Risk assessments had been completed on all aspects of the environment and details of any potential hazard were highlighted. For example the foster carers have a dog that is wary of strangers, so this has been carefully integrated in to the care plan and appropriate strategies put into place that ensure that any potential placements will not be at risk.

Records of up to date events and reviews were seen to be in place and details of and daily action that has been taken whilst the child has been in care of the carers.

There is a detailed record of monthly social worker contact as well as a written and signed record of supervision sessions that were undertaken by the fostering agency manager.

The last foster carers supervision session took place on 16/2/05 and the agency is awaiting the signed form to be returned from the foster carers.

Foster carers reported that all sanctions were not recorded.

Please see requirements.

The service must ensure that this occurs in the future.

The application form, questionnaire for references, training programme and BAAF Form F was found to be on the foster carers file.

Records were felt overall to meet the National Minimum Standards.

It was recommended that supervision sessions be used to formulate clear actions to be undertaken by foster carers in relation to the everyday care of the child placed with them.

This would constitute an internal placement plan.

There were good detailed records of significant life events in the foster carers homes.

The service should ensure that correction fluid is not used in and records maintained.

Records were seen to be secured appropriately in locked areas.

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**

Records examined related to

- staff employed
- carers used
- children placed with carers
- complaints procedure
- child protection

All were found to be in order with the exception of up to date child protection training for administration staff.

Please see requirements.

Number of current foster placements supported by the agency: 5

Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months: 6

Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months: 1

Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months: 8

Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months: 0

Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £ X Maximum £ X

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?

2

The premises are located in a large suite of offices owned by a commercial company in South Nutfield.

There is up to date IT equipment in place and all premises are secure with lockable facilities within each area.

There is employers liability insurance in place and security precautions are adequate in that the communal reception area forms the first part of the entry to the Cornerways premises. However there is no form of signing in procedure or visitors book and this must be put into place with immediate effect on account of security and fire regulations being adequately complied with.

Please see requirements.

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 company trades as Cornerways Fostering Services Ltd and employs a Director of Finance who is responsible for all aspects of financial management of the service. A major High Street bank has secured a 'funding route' for the service and the majority of the company's financial resources are to be found in secure property investment. The company's two directors are the sole shareholders. The balance sheet for the profit and loss operation of the service was viewed and found to be viable. The company is exempt from VAT.

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 company's accounts were seen to be sound and viable and all expenditure and income accounts were viewed. Local authorities are invoiced monthly for purchasing the service and any additional funding is detailed and countersigned by the finance director and the agency manager. The accounts will be audited in March 2005 by Langley Associates, the company's qualified accountant. The financial accounts form part of the agenda for the monthly directors meetings. Purchasers of the service are made aware of the costing prior to their commitment to a contract of purchasing.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.2)

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

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

Foster carers are paid weekly and receive allowances and agreed expenses which cover the cost of caring for each child.

The method of payment is in line with the National Minimum Standard 29.1.

Allowances and fees are reviewed annually.

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?	2
<p>The Agency Decision Maker on the panel is currently the registered manager of the fostering service.</p> <p>The service needs to review the appropriateness of this appointment in relation to the possible conflict of interests and responsibilities of each role. It is strongly recommended that an Independent Decision Maker be appointed.</p> <p>The observed panel was found to deal in a measured way with the assessment of potential foster carers and dealt appropriately with one case where insufficient information was presented.</p> <p>The panel was user friendly and there was a healthy level of debate. A written record of foster panel meetings is made and includes the reasons for its recommendations.</p> <p>As one of the functions of the panel is to provide quality assurance in relation to the assessment process, the panel will need to provide feedback to the assessor regarding their concerns about one assessment.</p> <p>The independent social worker interviewed during the course of the inspection gave evidence of clear concise assessment of potential foster carers.</p> <p>Prospective foster carers were informed on the day whether or not they would be recommended for approval as foster carers.</p> <p>The panel then welcomed successful applicants to Cornerways Fostering Services.</p> <p>This may have suggested to applicants that the independent decision maker's role was one of 'rubber stamping'.</p> <p>At the approval stage the panel review whether a sibling group of more than three children would be able to be catered for by that family if necessary and record of this is placed on the terms and conditions. The service is reminded that in any case the individual needs of the sibling group of four children be needed to be met in any case.</p> <p>Please see recommendations.</p>		

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?	3
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Short-term breaks are accommodated within the service and the same procedures for long term fostering apply.

This was seen to be appropriate.

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?	9
This service is not provided by the service.		

PART C**LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY****(where applicable)**

Regulation Manager	Sally-Anne Floyd	Signature	
Date			
Regulatory Inspector	Ruth Coler	Signature	

PART D

PROVIDER'S RESPONSE

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 1/2/05 – 8/3/05 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

☐

Comments were received from the provider

☐

Provider comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report

☐

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 29/4/05, 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

☐

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 CSCI inspection reports are public documents. Reports on children's homes are only obtainable on personal application to CSCI offices.

D.3 PROVIDER'S AGREEMENT

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

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

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Designation _____

Date _____

Or

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

--

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Designation _____

Date _____

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

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