



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

Camden Fostering Service - Children and Families

**115 Wellesley Road
London
NW5 4PA**

Lead Inspector
Ms Jill Marriott

Announced Inspection
16th January 2007 10:00 am

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of service	Camden Fostering Service - Children and Families
Address	115 Wellesley Road London NW5 4PA
Telephone number	020 7474 1215
Fax number	020 7974 6799
Email address	catherine.doran@camden.gov.uk
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Camden Social Services
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	
Type of registration	Local Auth Fostering Service

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

Date of last inspection 16th February 2006

Brief Description of the Service:

Camden Fostering Service is a local authority service providing care for Camden children who are looked after. The fostering service is committed to providing quality placements for children and young people who are not able to remain with their birth families. A range of placements, are available including short-term foster care, permanent placements, kinship care and respite care.

Initially when a child is referred a kinship placement within the wider family network will be sought. Where this is not possible a placement with an approved Camden Foster Carer will be used. In some circumstances children are placed with carers from independent fostering agencies.

It is the aim of the Local Authority to ensure all children are matched with appropriate carers who can meet their identified needs.

Camden Fostering Service aims to work in partnership with children and their families, foster carers, and relevant professionals to ensure that all young people looked after have care plans, which are reviewed regularly and clearly set out the future plans for each child.

Fees paid to Foster Carer's range from £100-£450 plus allowances. Fee scales change for different age groups and for specialist foster carer's.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection of Camden Fostering Service commenced on 16/01/07 and concluded on the 30/01/07.

The inspection included the following activity detailed as follows:

16/01/07 - Observation of the Foster Panel.

17/01/07 – Planning meeting with team manager.

17/01/07 – File reading – discussion with Social Workers.

18/01/07 – AM - File reading – discussion with Social Workers.

18/01/07 – PM - Meeting with – Assistant Director - Safe Guarding and Social Care. (Children, Schools and Family Directorate)

19/01/07 – Meeting with -MALT Service. (Multi Agency Liaison Service)

19/01/07 – Meeting with – Principle Officer – Children's Quality Assurance Service.

22/01/07 – File reading – discussion with Social Workers.

23/01/07 – Meeting with young people leaving care.

25/01/07 – AM - Reading files – discussion with Social Workers.

25/01/07 – PM - Home visit - carer and child.

25/01/07 – PM – Foster Carers Group.

26/01/07 – PM - Home visit - carer and child.

26/01/07 – PM - Home visit - carer and child.

29/01/07 – Meeting with LAC Team Managers.

30/01/07 – Feed Back meeting – Fostering Team Manager.

31/01/07 – Home visit with - carer and child.

The inspector would like to thank everyone who participated in the inspection process for their useful contributions.

What the service does well:

Camden Fostering Service is committed to providing quality services for Looked after Children their carers and their families. The support offered to foster carers by the fostering team is of a high quality.

A range of health and education services are available to offer advice, help and support to social workers, carers and young people. The Multi Agency Liaison Team (MALT) is available to support difficult placements and prevent breakdown.

Foster families visited by the inspector were positive about the services they receive.

All of the nine children who spoke to the inspector talked about a positive experience of care. One younger child said they couldn't imagine living anywhere else (carer's and children visited by the inspector were picked at random).

Carers and children said they are involved in the review process and are clearly aware of the plans made at childcare reviews.

Childcare reviews consistently take place within the given timescales.

Indicators seen by the inspector show that the health of looked after children is taken seriously and there are systems in place for promoting children's health and development.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Camden has an established integrated Children's service having amalgamated Social Services and Education. This enables a single, strategic plan, which encompasses all services for children and young people.

More recently Camden has developed a Looked after Children's Service, which includes two looked after children's teams supported by a resource service plus fostering, adoption and leaving care services.

The resource service consists of a multi agency resource team providing direct services, advice and packages of support to children.

Although very recently implemented it is clear that the new Looked after Children's Service incorporates the health, education and social care needs of young people.

It is envisaged that the new service will improve joint working between teams and will ensure a more inclusive service that effectively meets the needs of Looked after Children.

What they could do better:

Two requirements and three recommendation have been made at this inspection.

These include the need for:

*Children's files to contain current and relevant information, as identified in each file index.

* Social workers to have a training plan on file, which is developed through the supervision and appraisal system.

It is recommended that

- working together arrangements between the LAC Social Work Teams and the Fostering Team be reviewed to ensure that the system used meets the needs of carers and looked after children effectively.
- the fostering service recruits permanently to the vacant posts in the team.
- that each child's file contains a copy of the fostering placement agreement.

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

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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Enjoying and Achieving

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Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Management

Scoring of Outcomes

Statutory Requirements Identified During the Inspection

Being Healthy

The intended outcome for this Standard is:

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

The Commission considers Standard 12 the key standard to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at the outcome for Standard:

Standard 12 was assessed at this inspection.
Quality in this outcome area is **excellent**.

Camden Fostering service has excellent systems in place to promote the health and development of Looked after Children.

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

EVIDENCE:

The health needs of Looked after Children are considered high priority by the Camden Fostering Service.

Foster carers are made aware of their responsibility regarding the health of children placed with them throughout the recruitment, preparation, and assessment process and through training and information provided in the carer's handbook.

Camden has a proactive health team who support carers and provide training to ensure they understand the health and development needs of young people. Training includes first aid minor ailments, mental health, healthy eating and discussion topics regarding specific identified health problems, which are more serious.

Each child has a care plan, which includes the child's needs in relation to physical and emotional health development.

All children placed with Camden carers are registered with a local GP. Carers who spoke with the inspector said that they keep a health record, for each child placed with them they also demonstrated that they were aware of the procedures to follow should emergency medical treatment be needed.

Files tracked by the inspector, contained evidence to show that the health needs of children are discussed at childcare reviews and at monthly supervision meetings with carers.

Camden has a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and access to the Tavistock Clinic. There is also an active Multi Agency Liaison Team (MALT) who work with children 0-18 years their carers and families where a mental health problem has been identified.

The MALT team is jointly managed by Health and Social Services via the Camden Primary Care Trust. Services offered by this team include:

- *support for foster carers including a support group for carers dealing with challenging behaviour.
- *one-to-one sessions with young people referred.
- *mental health assessments.
- *referrals to other professionals.
- *professionals from the MALT team are actively involved with the fostering induction groups.

Being Healthy indicators for Camden's Looked After Children show that at December 2006, 86% of children looked after had received an annual health assessment in the previous year.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

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

The Commission considers Standards 3, 6, 8, 9, 15 and 30 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Standards 3, 6, 8, 9, 15 and 30 were assessed at this inspection.
Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

Camden Fostering Service provides nurturing foster placements. Child Protection enquiries are responded to appropriately. The organisation of the fostering panel has been reviewed and a plan to ensure its effectiveness has been developed with dates for action.

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

EVIDENCE:

The manager of the Camden Fostering Service and all social work staff are qualified social workers registered with the General Social Care Council. The manager and the responsible individual are also registered with the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

Camden's recruitment policy ensures that the manager and the social work team are employed subject to an interview, the receipt of authentic references and a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure (CRB) prior to taking up post. Personnel files seen by the inspector showed that references had been confirmed by phone and where applicable CRB checks had been reviewed within the three-year timescale.

The records on foster carers files show that appropriate assessments have been carried out and all necessary checks have been undertaken.

The recruitment, preparation, assessment and review process of foster carers is scrutinised at the foster panel prior to a recommendation being made to the agency decision maker regarding approval and re approval to foster.

File evidence shows that carers are visited at least monthly by the fostering link worker.

At least one visit each year is unannounced.

Of the four homes visited by the inspector all appeared warm and comfortable. Foster children told the inspector that they have their own space and enough shared space to meet their needs.

Evidence available showed that children are matched as closely as possible with carers. Where it is not possible to get an appropriate match a placement is sought that can best meet the child's needs. The placement, planning meeting is used to ensure support is put in to address issues, which may arise from specific ethnicity, religious, cultural and health needs. It was clear that carer's and social workers who spoke with the inspector were aware of the plans for the children placed. However, of the fostering files tracked (both electronic and paper files) none included a fostering placement agreement. A recommendation has been made that a copy of the agreement be kept in the children's section of the fostering file.

All children who are placed with foster carers have a review meeting every six months, review minutes were seen on children's files and these included decisions about how the needs of the child would be met in placement. Children told the inspector that they are consulted by their social workers prior to the review and are given the opportunity to discuss issues and concerns with the chairperson on a one-to-one basis.

Key indicators for December 2006 show that 92% of Looked after Children reviews were carried out within the given timescales for the month.

All foster carers receive Child Protection training as part of the preparation and assessment process. Camden also provides ongoing training, which carers are encouraged to attend.

The carer's handbook contains a range of information on safe caring and safe care is monitored at monthly supervision visits and at childcare reviews.

There is a child protection policy and procedure in place and systems to deal with allegations of neglect and abuse. The fostering team works closely with the Quality Assurance Service, which incorporates the Child Protection Team. There is a specific child protection officer linked with them to offer advice and support and to chair strategy planning meetings regarding protection issues, which arise.

Records of concerns, complaints and allegations are kept with actions taken and outcomes of investigations. This information is shared with the relevant professionals including the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

The role of the foster panel is clear the main task is to make recommendations to the agency decision maker following:

- * consideration of approval and re approval of foster carers
- * consideration of deregistration of carers
- * consideration of concerns, complaints and allegations made about foster carers

The work of the foster panel has recently been reviewed and following the end of term for the present chair and some panel members the panel is being developed to ensure it remains efficient and continues to improve.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

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

The Commission considers Standards 7, 13 and 31 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Standards 7, 13 and 31 were assessed at this inspection.
Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

Children and young people are placed with carers who are able to meet their assessed needs related to gender, language, ethnicity, religion, culture, race and disability.

Camden places high importance on the education of children looked after. Short-term breaks are provided for children in a planned way. Carers providing short-term breaks are recruited and assessed in the same way as for kinship carers following the receipt of all relevant checks being carried out.

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

EVIDENCE:

It was evident from discussion with the manager, social workers and carer's that the fostering service values diversity and offers services, which promote equality for children and young people.

The handbook for carers has a detailed account of how children's, needs will be met in placement to ensure they are given the same opportunities as all children and needs specific to them are identified and met.

Equal opportunities and diversity issues are raised throughout the assessment process for carer's and are identified in the total respect training available.

Children's needs are identified in placement planning meetings and are reviewed regularly in monthly monitoring visits and at six monthly childcare reviews.

A high importance is placed on the education of children and young people in Camden. The carer's handbook and issues raised during the fostering preparation and assessment process ensures that carers are in no doubt about their responsibility in regard to the education of children placed with them. Personal Education Plans were seen on the files tracked by the inspector.

Children who spoke with the inspector said that they went to school regularly and most agreed that they enjoyed the experience. They all reported that they had access to a computer and were able to ask for extra help if needed. Carers reported that they regularly attend open evenings and school events. Carers who spoke with the inspector emphasised how proud they were of the education achievements of the young people placed with them.

A group of young people 16+ who met with the inspector said that their experience of further education had been "difficult" they did not think this was the fault of their carer's or social workers they said that consideration should be given to simplifying the process of gaining college places and issues around funding.

They felt that looking at these issues would be particularly useful for young people going through the further education process in the future.

This group of young people were very positive about their experiences of the care system they told the inspector they felt that education for children in the care system had improved over the last three to four years. They specifically said that they felt that the views of young people are now listened to.

Camden is at present implementing a new model of supporting young people who are looked after. This reconfiguration of services offers a complete service for looked after children, which includes two Looked after Children Social Work Teams (LAC) who will be supported by the Fostering, Adoption, Leaving Care and Resource Services, resource services include significant education support for young people and carer's.

The new LAC service is being implemented at the time of this inspection.

The importance of short break carers is recognised in Camden. Short break carers are recruited in the same way as kinship carer's.

All relevant checks are carried out and carers undergo a preparation and assessment procedure. At the initial stages of recruitment carer's are advised of the rights and responsibilities of the main carer/parent for each child.

The fostering service has a clear policy for recruiting short break and kinship carers.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

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

The Commission considers Standards 10 and 11 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Standards 10 and 11 were assessed at this inspection.
Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

The contact of children with their families is promoted where appropriate. Camden is aware of the importance of consultation with children and young people.

All children who are fostered in Camden are given the opportunity to give their views about the services provided.

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

EVIDENCE:

Evidence on children's files shows that contact is arranged at the planning stage of the placement. Records show the venue for contact the timescales and whether it is to be supervised.

Carers who spoke with the inspector felt that the contact arranged for the children placed with them was about right. They were aware of their own responsibilities with regard to contact and were prepared to discuss any difficulties with either the child's social worker or with their link worker.

All contact arrangements are reviewed at monthly monitoring meetings and at child care reviews.

Camden has an excellent Young Peoples Consultation Forum, which enables young people to "get involved". The group helps young people to learn new skills, meet new people and try new things. For example young people are involved in the recruitment process of social work posts and senior positions in

the Children, Schools and Family Division. The group also identify topics for a project group, which runs throughout the summer holidays, the project group reports on their findings to the relevant professionals.

The inspector met with a group of young people who have left the care system they told the inspector that they had been consulted about their care at childcare reviews and at meetings with their social workers, which took place about every four weeks. Young people also said that on occasion they were consulted for the foster carers review of approval.

Children and young people who are still looked after by Camden confirmed that their views were sought by their social workers. They said they attended and contributed to their reviews.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

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

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

Standards 14 and 29 were assessed at this inspection.
Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

The fostering service supports young people to prepare for adulthood.
Foster carer's receive allowances and agreed expenses, which cover the cost of caring for children placed with them.

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

EVIDENCE:

All children and young people have a care plan which is devised as part of the Looked after Children planning and review.

All young people are encouraged to learn independent living skills, which are appropriate for their age and ability.

For example one younger child told the inspector about learning to make cakes. An older child told of the support offered to bid for flats.

Supervising social workers said it is part of their role to ensure age appropriate learning experiences are made available in placement.

The Leaving Care Service become involved with young people at the age of sixteen, preparation for this process begins after the child's fifteenth birthday. It is at this stage with the Leaving Care Service that pathway plans are developed with young people and their carers. Young people said they are fully involved with this process.

Evidence was available on file and in the fostering handbook of the allowances and expenses paid to foster carers. Carer's confirmed that they were given

information about allowances and expenses and were clear about the amounts they receive and how these were broken down. Evidence from discussion with carers and from the files seen showed that fostering allowances are paid on time.

Management

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

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

The Commission considers Standards 1, 16, 17, 21, 24, 25 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.

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

Standards 1, 16, 17, 21, 24, 25, 26 and 32 were assessed at this inspection. Quality in this outcome area is **good**.

Overall the Camden Fostering Service is managed effectively.

All staff and carers are recruited appropriately.

Supervision and support for carers is of a high standard.

The fostering service needs to recruit permanently to the identified vacant posts.

The fostering records regarding children placed by Camden need to be reviewed and improved.

Staff supervision files must include a training profile and plan for each member of staff. The plan will include dates training was undertaken and will monitor the outcomes.

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

EVIDENCE:

Camden Fostering Service has a statement of purpose and an appropriate children's guide, which clearly describe the services available. The statement of purpose is reviewed and up dated each year. All of the information required under standard 1.4 regulations 3 of the National minimum standards is included.

Carers told the inspector that they were aware of this document, which is included in the carers handbook and young people who spoke to the inspector said they had been given a children's guide and other information about the fostering service.

The Managers of the service and all members of the Camden Fostering Team have the relevant qualifications and experience to carry out their duties within the team. Evidence on personnel files seen showed that the team are all registered with the General Social Care Council.

The service operates effectively there are clear lines of accountability, which are included in the statement of purpose. Team meetings and regular supervision ensure that the team are fully aware of their responsibilities.

The inspector spoke with five members of the fostering team two of whom, were employed through an agency. All were aware of the line management structure and each felt well supported to carry out their duties.

The team told the inspector that as well as support during supervision there was always a senior person around who could offer day-to-day help and advice.

Social Workers have case supervision on a monthly basis and evidence on files seen supported this. All social workers have access to professional advice with

regard to health, education, childcare and legal issues related to the needs of children and foster carers.

Supervising social workers told the inspector that they had received induction training at the beginning of their employment. Training profiles were not included on the staff files seen, but were made available following the inspection. Training profiles were not clear. They did not show the actual dates of training and at least two appraisals included a recommendation for child protection training with target dates of September and December 2006. No evidence was seen on the training profiles to suggest this training took place.

The premises, which house the fostering team is really not appropriate. From discussion with senior managers it was evident that the team are to move to more appropriate premises within the next six to eight weeks.

The team has an effective and efficient admin team and good access to computers and equipment.

From discussion with children and carers and from information recorded on files it was evident that a closer working relationship between the fostering service and the LAC teams is necessary. Evidence on files showed little or no contact recorded between the teams and children said it was difficult to get to know their social workers because they changed a lot. One child said four different social workers had been allocated in the past year, another child commented that social worker never attended any of the arranged outings, which could be helpful in getting to know them better.

Carers felt that their relationship with fostering link workers was the better one of the two.

There is a clear strategy in place for working together with other professional and the reconfiguration of children's services in Camden aims to ensure all agencies work closely together in the best interest of the child. It is envisaged that the relationship between the teams will improve within the new LAC service.

During discussion with managers in the new LAC service it was confirmed that the LAC teams are now fully staffed with permanent workers and this will go some way towards improving relationships within the teams.

All staff confirmed that they were aware of the service policies and procedures with regard to equal opportunities, health and safety, grievance and disciplinary procedures staff are able to access these from the computer as required.

Staff personnel files, were seen by the, inspector records of relevant documentation including references, CRB disclosures, contracts and conditions of service were on file.

The fostering team at present comprises of seventeen qualified social workers including the manager and two deputy manager seven members of this team are employed through an agency. It is clear that the agency workers have been employed for some time they are closely supervised and provide appropriate services, however the manager is aware of the need to recruitment to these posts permanently.

The service has a strategy in place for recruiting carers and particularly welcomes applications from underrepresented groups. Camden has a Marketing and Publicity Consultant in post to produce and implement the Fostering and Adoption Recruitment Strategy for Camden.

The strategy has been designed to attract prospective carers who are able to meet the identified needs of Looked after Children.

The strategy has identified a need for an increase in specialist professional carers who can offer placements for children with complex needs.

The fostering recruitment, preparation and assessment process in Camden is thorough.

The aim is to ensure children are matched as far as possible with safe carers who can meet their identified needs.

The fostering service has a strategy in place for working with and supporting carers. Relevant information is included in the carer's handbook. The service offers at least monthly supervision and a wide range of training, which includes Child Protection, Safe Caring, Working with Difficult Behaviours and Total Respect training. Carers confirmed that the training offered to them is relevant and is arranged at times they can attend.

Where necessary foster carers are offered support with childcare to attend training sessions and monthly support groups. Support groups are well attended and include a range of topics for discussion on a monthly basis.

Children's records are included in a separate section of the carer's file. At present the records for children placed are in need of improvement. The fostering files show evidence of a separate child's section. The child's section has an index showing what is recorded within, for example copies of the looked after children information, essential information records and fostering placement agreements. The files seen included only a copy of the last review minutes. There was no further information recorded as to where the records which were not on file could be found. This was the case when examining both paper and electronic files.

It was not always possible to tell from the information available what the plan for the child was, however social workers were able to describe cases and explain the plans for children.

The inspector visited four foster families who all confirmed they understood why the child was looked after and the plans for their future.

Foster carers are aware of their responsibilities to keep records and a diary of the child's placement and said they also kept photographs for the children to take with them when they leave.

Carers who spoke with the inspector said they stored private information appropriately in locked facilities.

The fostering service keeps separate records for staff, foster carers, children, complaints and allegations. Files are appropriately stored in lockable cabinets to ensure confidentiality. The records seen are held on paper files and some information is recorded electronically on "Framework 1". There is more work needed to be clear about what information is stored where, at present it can be confusing and difficult to gain access. The inspector was told that all social workers are being trained to use "Framework 1" and eventually all records will be stored electronically.

The fostering service places high importance on placing children with extended families if at all possible. Carers identified to look after children within the family network are assessed under the same safe care procedures used for all carers. One carer told the inspector that the process had been lengthy and thorough.

All Camden carers are offered the same level of support and training.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

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

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

"X" in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion

"N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

BEING HEALTHY	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
12	4

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

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

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
10	3
11	4

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
14	4
29	3

MANAGEMENT	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3
2	3
4	X
5	X
16	3
17	3
18	X
19	2
20	X
21	3
22	3
23	3
24	2
25	3
26	3
27	X
28	X
32	3

No

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection?

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
1	FS19	21 4(a)	The Responsible Person must ensure that each member of staff in the fostering service has a training plan and profile on file which is linked to the supervision and appraisal system and defines the training undertaken and monitors the outcomes.	30/04/07
2	FS24	30 (3) (a)	The Responsible Person must ensure that each child placed has a separate section on the fostering file. All relevant information identified in the file index must be available on file. Where information is stored elsewhere this must be clearly recorded to ensure easy access.	30/04/07

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations relate to National Minimum Standards and are seen as good practice for the Registered Provider/s to consider carrying out.

No.	Refer to Standard	Good Practice Recommendations
1	FS8	The inspector recommends that the child's section of the fostering file contains a copy of the fostering placement agreement (looked after children placement plan part 1 and 2)
2	FS16	The inspector recommends that Fostering Social Workers and Looked after Children's Social Workers consider ways of working more effectively together to support children looked after and their carers.
3	FS17	The inspector recommends that the fostering service continue to actively recruit to the vacant posts in the fostering team

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