



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

Fostering Services

## **Child Focus Fostering Agency**

2-4 Balmoral Road

Leyton

London

E10 5ND

17th 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**

Child Focus Fostering Agency

**Tel No**

020 8518 7896

**Address**

2-4 Balmoral Road, Leyton, London, E10 5ND

**Fax No**

**Email Address**

**Registered Number of IFA**

G050000382

**Name of Registered Provider**

Child Focus Fostering Agency

**Name of Registered Manager (if applicable)**

Mr Reyaz Hasmat-Ali

**Date of first registration**

14th August 2003

**Date of latest registration certificate**

21st October 2003

**Registration Conditions Apply ?**

NO

**Date of last inspection**

25/02/04

<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		17th March 2005	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		10:00 am	
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	Zita McCarry	152426
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>	Kristen Judd	073292
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>3</b>		
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>4</b>		
<b>Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable)</b> 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.		None on this occasion	
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>		None on this occasion	
<b>Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection</b>		Mr Reyaz Hasmat-Ali	

**Introduction to Report and Inspection**

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**Description of Fostering Service**

**Part A: Summary of Inspection Findings**

**Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State**

**Implementation of Statutory Requirements from last Inspection**

**Statutory Requirements from this Inspection**

**Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection**

**Part B: Inspection Methods & Findings**

**(National Minimum Standards For Fostering Services)**

- 1. Statement of purpose**
- 2. Fitness to carry on or manage a fostering service**
- 3. Management of the fostering service**
- 4. Securing and promoting welfare**
- 5. Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers**
- 6. Records**
- 7. Fitness of premises**
- 8. Financial requirements**
- 9. Fostering panels**
- 10. Short-term breaks**
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**Part D: Provider's Response**

**D.1. Provider's comments**

**D.2. Action Plan**

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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 Child Focus Fostering Agency. 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.**

Child Focus Fostering Agency is an independent agency providing foster care for children and young people up to the age of eighteen. The placements are diverse and wide ranging from babies to young adults. The agency's offices are based in Leyton. On the ground floor there is a meeting room and on the first floor three offices from which accommodate the staff team.

## 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.)

The inspection took place over 5 days. This inspection has revealed significant shortfalls in all areas inspected; out of the 27 standards inspected none was deemed met. This report indicates that the agency is not compliant with its statutory responsibilities as a Registered Fostering Service. The organisation has been made aware of the serious concerns and shortfalls.

The inspectors have made 46 requirements and 5 recommendations.

### **Statement of Purpose. Standard 1**

#### **This standard was tested and found to be almost met.**

The staffing and management structure, including reporting responsibilities, need to be made clear in the Statement of Purpose. Whilst the Children's Guide contains all the required information its current presentation reduces the accessibility of the document for younger children.

### **Fitness to Carry on or Manage a fostering Service. Standards 2-3**

#### **These two standards were tested, one was almost met and one unmet.**

The manager is a qualified social worker however not all staff have appropriate, qualifications or knowledge. The inspectors were concerned to find gaps in employment that were neither tested at interview nor explained.

### **Management of the Fostering Service. Standards 4-5**

#### **Both standard were tested and found to be unmet.**

Throughout the inspection concerns were noted that there was a lack of evidence of monitoring and control to ensure that there is a good quality service provision. The agency's Registered Manager is clear about his responsibilities however the job description of the Fostering Team Manager contributes to confusion of roles and responsibilities within the organisation.

### **Securing and Promoting Welfare. Standards 6-14**

#### **Of these nine standards tested two were almost met and seven unmet.**

The inspectors had substantial concerns about the environment and health and safety of one foster carer's home. The relevant placing authorities were advised of their findings. Throughout the inspection placement plans were found to be inadequate in detailing the assessed needs of the children or how they were to be met. Placement plans failed to reflect how cultural or ethnic gaps were to be bridged. The agency will have to look more creatively at how to engage and consult with the children and young people who use the service. The agency must ensure that the foster carers are equipped with a sound knowledge and understanding of the assessed needs of the young persons.



**Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers. Standards 15-23.**

**Eight of these nine standards were tested. One was almost met and seven were unmet.**

Foster carers advised the inspectors that they considered the approval process to be efficient. However there was a lack of evidence to demonstrate robust recruitment of both agency staff and foster carers. The inspectors were concerned about the adequacy of supervision the foster carers received. There was little evidence that the contact the agency had with foster carers was sufficient or appropriate. The agency will have to review its re-assessment process particularly when foster carers have major life changes. Agency staff receive regular supervision and attend monthly staff meetings.

**Records Standards 24-25.**

**Both these standards were unmet.**

Although all files are held securely this report details the inspectors findings in regard to the quality of recording and record keeping. The agency was unable to demonstrate that it sought missing young persons documentation or investigated thoroughly a carer's CRB that may be considered less than satisfactory.

**Fitness of Premises for use as Fostering Service Standard 26.**

**This standard was not tested.**

**Financial Requirements Standards 27-29**

**These three standards were not tested at this inspection**

**Fostering Panel Standard 30**

**This standard was unmet.**

The agency's fostering panel did not meet the requirements of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002. The agency made immediate arrangements to postpone any further panel meeting and advised the inspectors that they would be reviewing previously approved foster carers.

**Short term Breaks. Standard 31.**

**This standard was not tested.**

**Family and Friends as Carers. Standard 32.**

**Standard not applicable to this service**

The inspectors would like to thank the Foster Carers, children/ young people and the staff team for their co-operation throughout the 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:

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:**

## Implementation of Statutory Requirements from Last Inspection

Requirements from last Inspection visit fully actioned?

NO

**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)**

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      Zita McCarry  
Second Inspector    Kristen Judd  
Regulation Manager    \_\_\_\_\_  
Date                    13<sup>th</sup> May 2005

## 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	3.1	FS1	The registered manager must ensure that the Statement of Purpose covers all aspects as stated in Standard 1 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services.	1/6/05
2	3.3	FS1	The registered manager must ensure that the children's guide is developed into a child friendly document that is age appropriate.	1/6/05
3	11	FS2	The registered manager must ensure that the welfare of the children placed with foster carers is safeguarded and promoted at all times.	1/6/05
4	20.3	FS3	The registered manager must ensure that all staff files are maintained in line with Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002. <b>(Timescale of 25/5/04 not met)</b>	1/6/05
5	20.1	FS3	The registered manager must investigate the staffing issues stated in this report and forward a report to the Commission.	1/7/05
6	8.1	FS4	The responsible individual must ensure that the fostering service is conducted in a manner that is consistent to the Statement of Purpose to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children placed by the agency.	1/6/05

7	19	FS20FS16 FS5	The responsible individual must clarify the management structure, clearly defining the lines of accountability, and provide clear arrangements to identify the person in charge when the registered manager is absent.	1/7/05
8	27.1	FS18FS6	The registered manager must ensure that all foster carers are assessed with regards to Health and Safety and Basic Hygiene prior to approval and monitored throughout placements.	15/5/05
9	29.1	FS18FS6	The registered manager must ensure that all foster carers homes are assessed as suitable and that the environment is reviewed as to suitability.	1/6/05
10	29.1	FS18FS6	The registered manager must ensure that a risk assessment with regard to the carers home as stated in this report is undertaken as a matter of urgency.	1/6/05
11	11.(a)	FS8FS7FS 6	The registered manager must ensure that foster carers are made aware of the children and young peoples needs to ensure that the welfare of the children is safeguarded and promoted at all times.	23/5/05
12	11(b)	FS8	The registered manager must evidence any changes in approval to ensure that children and young people are matched with a carer capable of meeting their assessed needs.	1/7/05
13	42.1	FS21FS20 FS16FS11 FS9	The registered manager must ensure that the organisations policies and procedures are implemented.	1/6/05
14	12.1	FS9	The registered manager must ensure that the Child Protection policy is further developed to include definitions and indicators of abuse. This information should be included in the foster carers handbook.	1/6/05
15	27	FS9	The registered manager must ensure that accurate recordings are made when a foster carer discloses or provides new information to the agency. <b>(Timescale of 29/2/04 unmet)</b>	1/6/05
16	14	FS10	The registered manager must ensure that all placement plans include details regarding supervision, financial issues and how contact should be maintained in line with the organisational policy.	1/8/05

17	17.1	FS14FS10	The registered manager must ensure that all foster carers are trained to meet the needs of the children and young people placed.	1/6/05
18	11	FS11	The registered manager must implement ways of ensuring that children/ young people's opinions and views are sought regularly.	1/6/05
19	18.2( a ) (i)	FS11	The registered manager must ensure that the complaints procedure is clear and known to the children and young people placed by the agency.	1/6/05
20	11	FS24FS12	The registered manager must ensure that all relevant records regarding children and young people are in place to ensure that their assessed needs are being met.	1/6/05
21	17.1	FS18FS12	The registered manager must ensure that foster carers are given basic training on health, hygiene and First Aid.	1/8/05
22	16.2(a)	FS13	The registered manager must ensure there is a system in place to monitor the educational attainment of all the young people placed.	1/9/05
23	16.2(c )	FS13	The registered manager must ensure that foster carers are provided the necessary equipment to meet the educational needs of the young people placed with them.	1/6/05
24	16.5	FS14	The registered manager must ensure that any young people placed with foster carers are assisted to develop independent living skills. These needs must be recorded.	1/8/05
25	20.1	FS15	The registered manager must be able to evidence that a robust recruitment procedure is followed and that no staff are employed without appropriate pre-employment checks.	1/6/05
26	20.3	FS15	The registered manager must be able to demonstrate a robust response to disclosures that may be considered unsatisfactory or warrant further investigation.	1/5/05
27	19	FS16	The registered manager must ensure that staff undertaking assessment and approval of foster carers are fully trained in assessment.	1/7/05
28	42	FS21FS20 FS18FS16	The registered manager must ensure that all staff responsible for the supervision of carers receive training in the agency's regulatory responsibilities.	1/6/05
29	27.1	FS17	The registered manager must ensure that assessments of prospective foster carers must further evaluate ability to parent and consistently include the applicant's self-reflection.	1/6/05
30	27.4	FS17	The registered manager must ensure that a system is in place for the checking of Form F's prior to being presented at panel.	1/7/05

31	29.6	FS17	The registered manager must ensure that any change of circumstances regarding foster carers is comprehensively reviewed to ensure that the terms of approval continue to be appropriate.	1/8/05
32	12.2	FS18FS22	The registered manager must ensure that the whistle blowing/complaints policy is amended to indicate that whistle blowing/complaints can be made to outside agencies directly including the Local Authority and the Commission for Social Care Inspection. The correct contact details for CSCI should be published in both documents.	1/6/05
33	21.4	FS19	The registered manager must ensure there is a clear plan for the training and development of staff. In particular the identified areas as stated in this report.	1/6/05
34	21.4	FS20	The registered manager must ensure that all staff are offered an annual appraisal in a manner that reflects their work with the fostering agency.	1/7/05
35	17.1	FS21	The registered manager must ensure that carers receive training appropriate to the needs of the young persons and provide evidence of learned outcomes.	1/6/05
36	11(a)	FS25FS21	The registered manager must ensure that all recordings are accurate to ensure the safety and welfare of the children and young people placed.	1/6/05
37	12	FS22	The registered manager must ensure that any actions/recommendations following complaints must be followed through.	1/6/05
38	42.1(a)	FS25FS25 FS24	The registered manager must ensure that any relevant information regarding the carers, supervision, allegations, accident, incidents and complaints is retained on file.	1/6/05
39	28.5 (b)	FS24	The registered manager must ensure that all information relating to a child placed is kept confidential and not disclosed to any person without the consent of the fostering service provider.	1/8/05
40	17.3	FS24	The registered manager must ensure that all foster carers maintain recordings in line with the organisations policy.	1/8/05
41	32	FS25	The registered manager must put in place a policy and guidance for the retention of case files.	1/6/05
42	30	FS25	The registered manager must ensure that case records relating to foster carers are maintained appropriately.	1/8/05



43	24	FS30	The registered manager must ensure that a panel is established in accordance with Regulation 24.	1/6/05
44	25.1	FS30	The registered manager must ensure that the fostering panel shall conduct no business unless at least five of its members are present.	1/6/05
45	29.2	FS30	The registered manager must ensure that indicated carers are reviewed as a matter of urgency, and all reviews to be approved by the newly established panel.	1/12/05
46	28.2	FS30	The registered manager must ensure that no new placements should be made to carers until cases have been presented to panel to approve suitability to foster.	1/12/05

### 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	FS6	It is recommended that there is clear guidance provided to assessing social workers with reference to quality standards regarding foster carers homes being fit for purpose.
2	FS9	It is recommended that indicators of bullying be included in the policy. This should be included in the Foster Carers Handbook.
3	FS12	It is recommended that the agency consider using a set format for recording relevant information regarding children and young people.
4	FS21	The agency should consider using development plans for carers to clearly highlight identified training needs.
5	FS24	Training courses addressing Life History work should be considered for foster carers.

\* 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	YES
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	NO
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	YES
Date of Inspection	17/3/05
Time of Inspection	10.00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	58.5

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?

2

The Statement of Purpose clearly stated the aims and objectives of the service. However the management structure is not clear and needs amendment. In addition, the document requires updating to include clear procedures for recruiting, approving, training supporting and reviewing carers. The registered manager must ensure that the Statement covers all aspects as stated in Standard 1 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services.

The children's guide has been produced. The guide includes all the information as specified in Regulation 3 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002. This includes CSCI contact number and various children advocate services/agencies. However the document is not deemed child friendly for younger children in its current format. It is required that the children's guide is developed into a child-friendly document that is age appropriate.

## 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?	2
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The registered manager has a BA DipSW and has worked within the organisation since August 2002. The managers work has included the setting up of the service. In addition the manager has experience of supporting care managers in running five of the organisations children's homes.

There was little evidence to demonstrate that the people involved in managing the fostering service had the necessary skills. As stated throughout this report, there are concerns with regards to the service currently being managed efficiently and effectively. It is the registered manager who must ensure that the welfare of the children placed with foster carers is safeguarded and promoted at all times.

### 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?	1
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All of the staff files were inspected. There was concern regarding; the quality and lack of information on references, staff who were not qualified in senior positions. Gaps were noted in employment histories. One staff member had been employed without sufficient and adequate pre-employment checks. A welfare notice was served. One member of staff was noted to have commenced employment before a CRB disclosure was received.

Through tracking organisational information concerns were raised with regard to two staff members. The documentation indicated that employment history was not accurate and there was limited information regarding the staff member leaving the previous employment. This matter must be investigated and a report forwarded to the Commission.

The registered manager must ensure that all staff files are maintained in line with Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

## 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?**

1

The inspectors through interviewing the registered manager were satisfied that he was aware of his role and responsibilities. This role included setting procedures for monitoring and controlling the fostering service. However serious concerns have been raised throughout this inspection, requirements have been made against individual standards.

Through the tracking of care there was little evidence to show that the procedures are followed to ensure that the service provision is of good quality. In particular one case was to be monitored on an unannounced basis by the registered manager, there was no evidence that this had been undertaken. However the registered manager stated that these visits did take place but were not recorded.

Additional cases tracked highlighted various training issues for carers following child protection investigations, complaints, incidents and accidents but this could not be evidenced at the time of inspection. All decisions following strategy meetings and any training needs for carers that are highlighted through investigation, complaints, incidents and accidents must be addressed to ensure that a good quality service is provided.

Throughout the inspection concerns were discussed with regards to the lack of evidence of monitoring and control to ensure that there is a good quality service provision. The fostering service must be conducted in a manner that is consistent to its statement of purpose.

The agency has proper financial procedures in place. Information regarding charges, amounts paid to foster carers and details for itemised services such as education, travel were clear and made available to purchasers of care. The carers spoken to during the inspection stated that they received clear statements.

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

12

**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.**

5

**Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.**

7

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

0

<b>Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:</b>	X
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<b>Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.4)</b>		
<b>The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.</b>		
<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	1
<p>The management structure within the statement of purpose was not clear. The fostering manager has a clear job description that sets out duties and responsibilities, which was discussed during the inspection, as the duties indicate day-to-day control of the service provision. However during the inspection it was noted that the fostering team manager had more of the day-to-day responsibility.</p> <p>Concern has been noted throughout this report with regard to the skills and competence of staff, which has affected the service provision.</p> <p>All employees have now been provided with a job description outlining their responsibilities.</p> <p>This inspection highlighted numerous concerns, relating to social work practice, which must be addressed to provide a good quality foster care service. The fostering service must be conducted in a manner that is consistent with its statement of purpose.</p>		

## 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?
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Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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The inspectors reviewed in detail 11 individual foster carer files and interviewed 4 foster carers in their homes and some young people in placement.

Some foster carers homes were generally found to be clean, comfortable, warm, adequately furnished and decorated. All the young people spoken to during the inspection appeared happy with their accommodation and felt that there was enough privacy to meet their needs.

On inspection of files it was noted serious concerns had been raised by the local authority with regard to cleanliness and redecoration issues in a carers home. Documentation stated that all the issues had been addressed.

However the inspectors raised concern with the agency and the local authority during the inspection, as it was noted that areas of the home required attention and in addition there were health and safety hazards. Furnishings within the home were in need of repair or replacement. Lampshades were missing. It was noted that electrical sockets were accessible to the two year old in placement and a stair gate (which led down to a steep set of stairs) was inoperable due to a missing wall fixing. Repairs were needed to plasterwork and two hatches accessing the loft were missing.

Doorways and walls needed cleaning and the wall in the playroom had been stripped. There was a damp smell in the area which will need to be further investigated. The sealant around the bath required attention and the area needed cleaning. The inspectors noted that the garden fence required attention; the other side provides access to a railway line. The registered manager must ensure that a risk assessment is undertaken as a matter of urgency.

It is required that all foster carers be assessed with regards to Health and Safety and Basic Hygiene prior to approval and monitored throughout placements. In addition there is clear guidance provided to assessing social workers with reference to quality standards regarding foster carers homes being fit for purpose.

18 children's records (not maintained in separate files) were inspected, all were found to have a placement plan which is an organisation model. These were found to be lacking in specific detail. Through case tracking the inspectors noted that there was no relation between the information in these plans and the LAC documentation where this had been provided by the placing authority. There was concern in particular with regards to three young people who had significant needs that were not recorded in placement plans.

In two different cases sibling pairs shared 'placement plans' thus indicating that they had the



same needs. This is inappropriate.

Given the absence of clear placement plans the inspectors could not identify the children's needs to determine whether these assessed needs were being effectively and comprehensively addressed, and that children in the home were appropriately matched.

**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?**

1

Evidence of trans-cultural placements were seen. Placement plans failed to reflect how cultural and ethnic gaps were bridged.

The agency is not able to provide specialist care and equipment to enable children with disabilities to be accommodated at this time.

**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 agency relies on accurate information being received from Local Authorities in order to match appropriately. The fostering team manager stated that the agency offers the 'nearest' match to the placing authority, who makes the decision with regard to the placement. They endeavour to make two to three offers if possible.

The inspectors were satisfied through the evidence seen that generally placements appeared suitably matched to meet the child's gender, race, ethnic origin and language. However it was noted that many of the placements were made outside the approved age category. Generally carers were then taken back to panel for the approval to be amended. One Form F indicated the carer's ability was with babies and young children. The evidence showed that the carers had no experience of young people and teenagers. The registered manager must evidence any changes in approval to ensure that children and young people are matched with a carer capable of meeting their assessed needs.

As previously stated in standard six the absence of clear placement plans made it difficult to identify the children's needs to determine whether assessed needs were being effectively and comprehensively addressed, and that children in the home were appropriately matched.

**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?**

1

The following policies and procedures were in place:

- Absconding
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Child Protection
- Safe Caring guidelines

The absconding policy highlights that the child/young persons history should be taken into account including risk assessments. There was no evidence during the inspection of any risk assessments in place. The policy states at what time the carer should make the agency aware of the situation. The agency however must take into account the individual child/young person in line with their assessed needs.

The policy with regard to bullying was seen; but it is recommended that it includes indicators of bullying. This should be included in the Foster Carers Handbook.

The Child Protection Policy was seen. It covers the procedures regarding who is to be contacted and the process including strategy meetings and police investigations.

The policy does not define physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect. The Foster carers handbook provides guidance if an allegation is made against a carer with regard to the child protection procedure. The handbook also covers disclosures and the importance of not prompting the child/young person. There is no information on indicators of abuse included into the carers' handbook. The Child Protection Policy must be further developed to include definitions and indicators of abuse. This information should be included in the foster carers handbook.

Child Protection training for foster carers is completed initially within the preparation course.

One placement was made on an emergency basis following a serious incident, the carer was informed about the incident and indicated to the inspectors that there were no concerns, however no evidence of a risk assessment was made with regards to the other child who was being looked after.

**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?**

2

There is a policy on '*contact arrangements*' for carers and this highlights the role and responsibilities of the carer. The policy states that all contact arrangements will be noted in the 'placement plan'. This should include details regarding supervision, financial issues and how contact should be maintained.

The placement plans seen during the inspection lacked such evidence.

The carers spoken to during the inspection were aware of '*contact*' arrangements for the young people in their care. The inspectors were satisfied that the carers were aware of their responsibilities with regard to supporting contact visits. One carer was trying to encourage further contact with the family with a view to the young person returning home. The young people interviewed were aware of the contact arrangements in place.

The policy also highlights the importance of 'life history work' One carer stated that no such work had been undertaken and that no training had been received in this area. The inspectors raised concern as the carer had baby placements; this is a most important area for this age of child. The carer stated that she had been asked to provide photographs in an album prior to the children moving on.

**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?**

1

On inspection of complaints evidence seen supported that the agency responds quickly to complaints however as previously stated there was little or no evidence to show that outcomes/actions were followed through. The complaints procedure refers to '*Young Persons Rights Officer*' and provides a contact number, staff spoken to at the time of inspection stated that there was no one in the post.

The complaints procedure highlights that it is the fostering team manager that makes the decision regarding complaints and not the registered manager. However the registered manager will deal with complaints received by the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

The children's questionnaires returned to the inspectors indicated that there was a lack of consultation. At the time of inspection there had been no opportunity for young people to get together and no ongoing organisational consultation with the young people with regards to issues that are likely to affect their daily living or future. The agency must investigate and implement ways of ensuring how the children/young people's opinions and views can be sought regularly.

**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?**

1

Health needs were clearly recorded in the Looked After Children (LAC) documentation in some of the children's files. The inspectors raised serious concerns regarding the lack of LAC forms at the agency and at the carer's homes. The carer's handbook notes that all carers should be provided with a written health record report, no evidence of this was seen in the carer's files inspected.

Foster carers stated that children and young people had been registered with the local GP. The Foster Carers are required to record medical appointments. This recording is not consistent, and not all carers were organised with regards to recording. It is recommended that the agency look at a set format as the recording skills of carers visited was varied.

At the time of inspection there was no evidence seen with regards to foster carers receiving basic mandatory training. As stated in standard 12.5 each foster carer must be given basic training on Health, hygiene and First aid as a matter of urgency.

**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?**

1

Evidence was seen in their day-to-day recording and supervision sessions of carers attending educational meetings (parents evenings).

However the inspectors were particularly concerned regarding one of the young persons who had special needs and attended a special needs school. The carer was aware that the young person had educational needs but was totally unaware of the specific need and how that need should be supported. There was no documentation regarding the educational issues at the time of inspection. The inspectors requested clarity from the registered manager who was also unaware of the specific need.

During one of the carers visits the inspectors noted that the toys available were not age specific for the older child placed and there was a lack of books seen. This issue had been raised by the child's social worker on previous visits.

The registered manager keeps some records in relation to educational needs however this does not provide sufficient evidence of how the service meets the needs of the young people placed.

**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?**

1

The organisation has a Transition and after care policy in place. In addition the foster carers handbook highlights the importance of carers preparing young people for independence, developing necessary skills of cooking, budgeting and managing day-to-day practicalities.

The inspectors tracked one case. However, as noted throughout this report there was no evidence of what support the young person needed within the '*Placement Plans*'.

One carer interviewed recognised the need to prompt independent living skills, however the agency must ensure that all plans/needs for young people are formalised.

There was no evidence of any training for carers on '*Leaving Care*'.

## 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?

1

All the staff personnel files were reviewed; the inspectors raised concern, as there was no evidence to indicate that there was a robust recruitment procedure in place. There was concern regarding the quality and lack of information on references, staff who were unqualified held senior positions. Gaps were noted in employment histories. One staff member had been employed without sufficient and adequate pre-employment checks. A welfare notice was served.

One member of staff was noted to have commenced employment before a CRB disclosure was received.

In addition the inspectors reviewed the personnel file of all members of the fostering panel these evidenced completed CRB checks. However as stated in standard 30 it was noted that the panel did not meet the constitutional requirements.

Through the checking of carers' files it was noted that one carer did not have a cleared CRB in place, the local authority was informed of this at the time of inspection. In addition another CRB showed evidence of convictions, the inspectors were informed that this was an error however there was no evidence to show how this was followed up. Both of these issues must be addressed as a matter of urgency – and the outcome notified to the Commission.

The inspectors were concerned about the lack of evidence to demonstrate a robust response to disclosures that may be considered unsatisfactory or warrant further investigation.

**Total number of staff of the agency:**

10

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

2

**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?**

**1**

The management structure is included in the statement of purpose however the inspectors noted that this did not indicate clear lines of accountability. During the inspection of recruitment files concerns were raised that a link worker (according to the statement of purpose) was involved in the interviews for the senior manager post. The inspectors were later informed that the link worker had been promoted as deputy manager of the agency. At the time of inspection the inspectors were not satisfied that staff were aware of the management structure and lines of accountability.

In addition concern was raised with regard to the quality of some of the assessments. In particular it was noted in one case that key issues were not addressed during the assessment. There were numerous inconsistencies and a lack of correlation of data. The registered manager must ensure that staff undertaking assessment and approval are fully trained in assessment.

Carer's spoken to felt that the assessments and approval process was managed effectively and efficiently. Reviews had been undertaken but as noted in standard 30 there is concern with regard to the panel approval.

Regular visits are undertaken by the supervising social workers to the carers and time was spent with the children in placement, although the inspectors noted that there was limited information on the recorded supervision, in some case just a few words. Through the tracking of records it was noted that following incidents and allegations there was little or no discussion in supervision sessions with carers. There was evidence that serious issues and incidents were not followed through or reviewed at the foster carers annual reviews.

No evidence of unannounced visits were seen, one link worker stated that they had not undertaken any and was unaware of the requirement under regulation. The registered manager must ensure that all staff responsible for supervision of carers are aware of the relevant regulations. The inspectors noted that these requirements are noted in the agency's supervision policy.

The inspectors were concerned about the appropriateness of tasks and responsibility delegated to staff with insufficient expertise.

**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?**

1

The recruitment process of carers is clearly identified and carers spoken to felt that the assessment process was a positive experience and stated that they were well supported.

However concerns were raised with regard to the standard Form F's. There is a need for further work, particularly in-depth discussions regarding protection, abuse and dealing with challenging behaviour. Assessments must further evaluate ability to parent and consistently include the applicant's self-reflection. The registered manager must ensure that a system is in place for the checking of Form F's prior to being presented at panel.

In respect of one Form F the inspectors were unable to evidence the agencies effective assessment and monitoring of parenting capabilities.

The agency was unable to provide evidence of appropriate re-assessment of foster carers competency during and following major life changes.

**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?**

1

There was clear guidance regarding the expectation of carers' supervision however there was no evidence of unannounced visits being undertaken. There was a 24-hour support service provided for foster carers by the staff employed at the agency. The inspectors were extremely concerned that the administrator who has no social work qualification or experience is on the rota on a regular basis. The practice must cease with immediate effect.

There are job descriptions for staff within the agency. The insurance certificate was seen which was valid until 25/9/05.

The Health and Safety policy was reviewed as part of the inspection. This lacked sufficient guidance for staff and serious concerns were raised during the inspection regarding one foster carers home where areas required attention and health and safety issues were apparent. The Health and Safety concerns were highlighted and reported to the respective placing authorities.

The service has a whistle blowing policy. The policy states the process in the event of someone reporting a concern, there is no information regarding how the individual would be protected. In addition the policy must be amended to indicate that whistle blowing can be made to outside agencies directly including the Local Authority and the Commission for Social Care Inspection. It must be in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.



**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?**

1

Staff stated that they had received an induction, which covered policies and procedures and organisational issues. From discussions with staff there was limited knowledge regarding child protection and dealing with allegations.

Given the findings of this inspection considerable learning gaps were identified in particular:

- Health and Safety awareness.
- Basic Hygiene.
- Child Protection.
- Assessment.
- Record keeping.
- Supervision skills.

The registered manager must ensure there is a clear plan for the training and development of staff. The inspectors were informed that all the training sessions are held for both staff and carers.

**Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)**

**All staff are properly accountable and supported.**

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

1

The fostering agency produced a Handbook for foster carers and staff, which provides guidance of relevant practice and procedural matters. However there is a need for policies to be amended or further developed. Requirements have been made against relevant standards throughout this report.

Individual foster carer files reviewed by inspectors evidenced case supervision and agency staff who spoke with inspectors indicated that they received monthly (and in some cases, more frequent) 1:1 supervision with the managers.

Records of team meetings were also seen as these are used to discuss general and practice issues. Evidence was seen that meetings take place monthly

Evidence of staff receiving appraisals was seen, however it was noted that following an incident in August 04 there was a recommendation with regard to a staff member requiring training and possibly being taken through the disciplinary procedure. The appraisals did not address these issues, and the staff member in question received promotion to a senior post.

**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?****2**

Supervising social workers are expected to visit foster placements monthly with at least one unannounced visit a year. This is to supervise, monitor and offer support to foster carers. Concerns have been raised as to the quality of the supervision and the lack of unannounced visits.

All foster carers spoken to during the inspection had named allocated link workers and were generally very complimentary about the staff.

Foster carers have undertaken the preparation training.

The inspectors did not observe training being delivered. However on reviewing training plans and allocation of time on individual topics the inspectors are concerned about the adequacy of training provided.

The development plans for carers were not seen and should be developed clearly highlighting training needs.

**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?****1**

All carers had a signed copy of the foster care agreement in line with Schedule 5 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2001.

Many tracked cases did not contain the referring Local authorities Looked After Children forms. There was no evidence of workers following up missing documentation.

There is a foster carers handbook, which includes various policies and procedures although amendments are needed. Each foster household has a named Link worker. Foster carers told the inspectors that their allowances and expenses were paid regularly on a weekly basis.

The inspectors noted that there was evidence of monthly supervision and telephone contact between the carers and the supervising social workers. There are two types of contact sheets the first detail discussions and concerns. These were found to be lacking. The inspectors were informed that Link workers contact foster carers by telephone weekly. A record of this is maintained by tick boxes, there is no detail or contact recorded. However concern had been raised regarding the quality of some of the supervision.

The Foster Carers' Handbook contains information regarding complaints for carers however it does not indicate timescales for responding to complaints. This is however in the agencies main policy.

The main complaints policy was seen. It must be made clear that complainants can make representation to the Commission at any time, not solely if they are dissatisfied. The policy refers to the CFFA Young Persons Rights Officer however the inspectors were informed that there was no one in post. There was a lack of evidence to show that that recommendations

/actions following complaints are followed through.

The agency must ensure that the correct details of the Commission for Social Care Inspection Office are correct.

**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?**

0

This standard was not assessed on this occasion.

## 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?	1
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The agency has produced a policy on case recording, which establishes the purpose, format and content of files and clarifies relevant information to be kept on foster carers and children's files.

The inspectors tracked case files for foster carers and children. Concern was raised throughout the inspection regarding the lack of contact sheets. The inspectors were informed that once a child/young person moves on all documentation is archived into the child/young person's file. The inspectors checked a sample of archived files and it was noted that these also had a lack of regular contact sheets in place. The agency must ensure that any relevant information regarding the carers, supervision, allegations, accident, incidents and complaint is retained on file.

There was no evidence seen of the agency following up missing documentation from the local authorities with regards to placements. In addition concern was raised with regards to the lack of evidence to show what discussion or assessment was undertaken when placements were made outside approval.

The foster carers kept their own records about the fostered children although documentation was missing, and records regarding finances, health and education were missing. Daily recordings were seen in diaries during the inspection, although not all records were up to date. One carer could not find the diary for this year.

The inspectors found supported evidence that one foster carer failed to understand and maintain information about young people in a secure manner.

Training courses for foster carers could be made available that addresses life history work

**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?**

1

The fostering service keeps separate records for staff and carers.

Confidential records are stored securely at all times and there is a policy on access to records.

Concern was raised during the inspection regarding the quality of recording; there was a lack of information on contact sheets, and of carers' supervision records.

Records are kept of checks and references were noted however it was noted that one approved foster carer had no CRB disclosure.

Foster carers files were lacking in key information, contact sheets, training, and allegations/complaints. In addition copies of relevant information pertaining to the foster child in placement were located on the foster carers files rather than separately. Recording relating to children placed is removed and archived when they move on, however as a result critical information relating to the fosters carers is also removed which makes tracking of care difficult.

The registered manager must put in place a policy and procedure for the retention of case files.

**Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:**

50

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

84

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

53

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

23

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

1

**Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £**

320.00

**Maximum £**

470.00

## 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?**

0

This standard was not assessed on this occasion.

## 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?
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	0
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This standard was not assessed on this occasion.

### 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?
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	0
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This standard was not assessed on this occasion.

**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?**

0

This standard was not assessed on this occasion.



## 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?

1

During the inspection of panel meeting minutes it was noted that the panel members did not meet with the requirements of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002. Panel membership included a cross-section of expertise regarding the independent members; however there were no social workers employed by the agency and no representation by the responsible individual or directors of the organisation. In addition the panel that sat in September 2004 was not quorate as there were only four members present including the chair.

The inspectors raised serious concerns regarding panel on the first day of inspection. As a result the panel scheduled to convene during the inspection was cancelled.

The registered manager must ensure that a panel is established in accordance with Regulation 24.

The registered manager must ensure that the fostering panel shall conduct no business unless at least five of its members are present - as stated in Regulation 25.

The inspectors were concerned regarding the approvals that had been previously made. Figures provided by the agency stated that 36 carers - 24 of which currently have placements - would be affected. The registered manager must ensure these carers are reviewed as a matter of urgency, and all reviews approved by the newly established panel.

No new placements should be made to carers until reviews have been presented to panel to assess suitability to foster.

In response to the above concerns the organisation provided an urgent action plan to address these issues.

The inspectors reviewed the personnel files of all members of the fostering panel and these evidenced completed CRB checks.

## 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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0

This standard was not assessed on this occasion.

## 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

N/A

**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 17<sup>th</sup> March 2005 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

NO

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

NO

Provider comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspectors believes the report to be factually accurate

YES

**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 4<sup>th</sup> May 2005, 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

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

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

NO

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

NO

Other: <enter details here>

NO

**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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