



Champions for  
Social Care  
Improvement

# inspection report

Fostering Services

## **Leicester City Council Fostering Service**

Leicester City Council  
Social Care and Health  
1 Grey Friars  
Leicester  
LE1 5PH

4th May 2004

## **Commission for Social Care Inspection**

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

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

### **The role of CSCI is to:**

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

## **Inspection Methods & Findings**

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

### **The 4-point scale ranges from:**

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

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

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

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

**FOSTERING SERVICE INFORMATION**

**Local Authority Fostering Service?**

YES

**Name of Authority**

Leicester City Council Fostering

**Address**

Leicester City Council, Social Services, 1 Grey Friars,  
Leicester, LE1 5PH

**Local Authority Manager**

Mr Mark Tingley

**Tel No:**

0116 2995810

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Leicester City Council, Social Services, 11 Friar Lane  
Leicester, LE1 5RB

**Fax No:**

0116 2995887

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Tingm001@leicester.gov.uk

**Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)**

NO

**Name of Agency**

**Tel No**

**Address**

**Fax No**

**Email Address**

**Registered Number of IFA**

**Name of Registered Provider**

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

**Date of first registration**

**Date of latest registration certificate**

**Registration Conditions Apply ?**

NO

**Date of last inspection**

13/05/04

<b>Date of Inspection Visit</b>		4th May 2004	<b>ID Code</b>
<b>Time of Inspection Visit</b>		09:00 am	
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>1</b>	Trisha Gibbs	071373
<b>Name of Inspector</b>	<b>2</b>	Sharon Treadwell	
<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.			
<b>Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)</b>			
<b>Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection</b>		Mr Mark Tingley - Service Manager	

**Introduction to Report and Inspection**

**Inspection visits**

**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**
- 11. Family and friend carers**

**Part C: Lay Assessor's Summary (where applicable)**

**Part D: Provider's Response**

- D.1. Provider's comments**
- D.2. Action Plan**
- D.3. Provider's agreement**

## 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 Leicester City Council Fostering Service. The inspection findings relate to the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services published by the Secretary of State under sections 23 and 49 of the Care Standards Act 2000, for independent and local authority fostering services respectively.

The Fostering Services Regulations 2002 are secondary legislation, with which a service provider must comply. Service providers are expected to comply fully with the National Minimum Standards. The National Minimum standards will form the basis for judgements by the 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)

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.

Leicester City Council foster care service provides family placements for children and young people, from birth to eighteen years. The Service Manager of the foster care service, referred to as the Manager in this report, along with three Team Managers is responsible for the day-to-day running of the service. There are 14.5 social work staff plus other dedicated officers, including those in an administrative role.

The three Team Managers hold respective responsibilities for managing the pre-panel team, the post panel team and the kinship care, longer-term care and (disabled) children's family link scheme team. A range of placements is provided by the service, including emergency, short term, long term, kinship/family care, respite, contract and remand. Three senior practitioners have recently been recruited. The fostering service maintains close links with staff responsible for coordinating the remand placement scheme.

The service operates from a central location in Leicester City, easily accessible to members of the public. The 'shop style' frontage and welcoming modern reception area of the office is designed to generate the public interest in fostering and adoption.

All new carers commence their role as level 1 for their first year and subsequently progress to level 4. The criteria for progression focussing on experience, training and placement evaluation and feedback. Currently the fostering service is piloting accreditation at level 5.

At the time of the Inspection the foster care service was supporting 412 placements.

## **PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **Inspector's Summary**

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

This was a positive second inspection of Leicester City Council Fostering Service. Notwithstanding the constraints and pressures experienced in the provision of a busy fostering service for Leicester City Looked After Children the fostering managers and their team have again evidenced during the Inspection process a real commitment to meeting the National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations.

All the Standards have been assessed as being met and five good practice recommendations have been made.

### **Statement of Purpose (Standard 1)**

The Fostering Service Statement of Purpose fully meets the requirements of Regulation 3 and has been recently reviewed. The service has been highly commended on the colourful Children's Guides, with special recognition given to the storybooks for younger children.

### **Fitness to provide or manage a Fostering Service (Standards 2 & 3)**

#### **Management of the Fostering Service (Standards 4 & 5)**

A fully qualified and experienced management team head up the fostering service. The Fostering Services Manager and Team Managers have been commended on establishing three teams with dedicated functions and for the effective leadership of the service. Good procedures and systems were seen to be in place for the regular monitoring and accounting of the service.

### **Securing and promoting welfare (Standards 6-14)**

(Two recommendations)

- 1) The fostering service has been recommended to undertake risk assessments on the occasion of children and young people sharing bedrooms. (Standard 6.5)
- 2) The fostering service has been recommended to ensure that carers maintain an individual health record for children that can move with them if they leave their placement.

Although demands on the fostering service have increased, the staff team and managers demonstrated through various systems a commitment to matching children to placement.

The fostering service has been commended under several of the above Standards for ensuring that carers and staff are provided with good training and support to underpin their work with Looked After Children in the field of Child Protection, Diversity, Health and Safety, Health and Education. The range of multi agency events and initiatives were recognised.

### **Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers (Standards 15-23)**

The fostering service adheres to the required recruitment procedures for appropriately



qualified staff and carers. The three staff teams are efficiently organised to meet the needs of a busy and growing service.

Support provided to carers appeared to be very good and commendations have been made especially in recognition of the excellent training and development opportunities available for carers, in addition to the attractively presented and informative and at Carer's Handbook. Carers confirmed in questionnaires and to Inspectors that they felt well supported by their supervising social workers and the fostering managers, however it is recognised that these only represented a very small sample of carers. Nevertheless there were generally solid support mechanisms in place.

### **Records (Standards 24&25)**

(One recommendation)

The fostering service has been recommended to consider how it will facilitate a separate record to be maintained on each child placed in the service in order to enable information to move with the child. The positive use of the Carer's Handbook for discussing recording with carers has also been noted.

Carer and children files (10 looked at) were well-organised, accessible and contained key records and documents. Carer recording however was variable and maintained in one diary for all children placed throughout the year.

### **Fitness of premises for use as a Fostering Service (Standard 26)**

The Looked After Children services for all of Leicester City Council operates from one central location. Premises are appropriate and secure and all fostering staff provided with well-equipped workstations.

### **Financial requirements (Standards 27-28)**

The fostering service fully complies with the above Standards. Good information is provided to carers about allowances and additional payments.

### **Fostering Panels (Standard 30)**

(One recommendation)

The Fostering Panel chair has been recommended to liaise with the Agency Decision Maker at agreed intervals.

The fostering service has been commended for the ongoing work and development of the Fostering Panel function.

### **Short term breaks (Standard 31) and Family and friends as carers (Standard 32)**

The fostering service provides a good respite/family link scheme and there were good examples of grants and payments being utilised for adaptations and conversions to property in order to improve capacity for placements.

### **Remand Fostering Scheme**

During the Inspection the Accommodation Officer for the Remand Fostering Scheme was interviewed. The Officer is placed within the Leicester City Youth Offending Team but works in the same building as the fostering service team. This facilitates easy communication with the fostering management team. Eight carers provide remand placements and are

supervised independently to the fostering service, however there is a commitment to improving consistency in training and support offered to the carers. It is anticipated that the work of this scheme will be followed up more closely in a future Inspection.

## **Questionnaires**

**Leicester City Council fostering service sent out Commission for Social Care Inspection questionnaires to all carers, children placed and placing social workers, with prepaid envelopes for returning them to the Commission.**

### **CARERS**

36 carers returned questionnaires. These are summarised as follows.

**Best things about the service;** Support from supervising social worker and managers of the service (14) Training and development support (10) Good match of children, helping children, rewarding work (8) Others made no comment (6)

**Worst things;** Lack of support, no one available when you need them, out of hours support, no information (12) Placing social worker unavailability, contacting child's social worker relationship with child's social worker (10) Payments (2) Allegation experience (2) Nothing good, disillusioned (2) Others (8) made no comment.

**How well service supports carers;**

**Very satisfied=7 Quite well supported=12 OK=16 Not enough support=3**

All carers confirmed that they attended reviews and knew how to complain on a child's behalf.

Other carer comments included; 'There is a consistent management team that provides some stability in the service' 'The link worker gives us a lot of moral support and guidance' 'I feel that once a child is placed, on the whole social services don't seem to bother' 'Most of the time I feel valued by the fostering service. This brings out the best in people' 'If I phone my link worker, support is very good, if I phone the child's social worker then it is poor-a bit hit and miss'

### **PLACING SOCIAL WORKERS**

180 placing social workers returned questionnaires and most expressed very positive comments! 10 questionnaires were returned too late for inclusion in this report.

**Positive comments about the placement;** Culturally appropriate placements i.e. Community, family, place of worship. (23) Child with own family/kinship (15) Numerous positive references to 'supportive/meets all needs/nurturing/child centred/committed experienced carers/positive role models/stable/one of the family/works well with child's family/secure/warm/approachable/integration

Approximately 64 **negative comments;** 'Needs help with behaviours and setting boundaries' (8) 'Limited space/busy carer or households/overcrowding/bedrooms/other children' (20) 'Distance from school or family' (6) 'Carer overprotective/inexperienced/disorganised/lacking understanding' (7) 'Cigarette smokers' (1) 'Contact/parent issues' (7) 'Siblings not placed together' (6) 'Culturally inappropriate placement' (2)

**How well Carer looks after child**

Of the 180 returns, **Very Well** = 138 **Quite Well** = 34 **O.K.**=8

### **How well service works with placing authority**

Of the 180 returns, **Very Well** = 83 **Fairly Well** = 71 **Average** = 20 **Not answered** 6

Most social workers indicated an awareness of the service's Complaints Procedure and Statement of Purpose. Almost every questionnaire confirmed that a Foster Placement Agreement and Care Plan were provided for the child placed, although some social workers with children in kinship care placements did not think there was a Placement Agreement in place. Only about half had seen the last Fostering Inspection Report.

### **CHILDREN**

33 questionnaires were returned from children.

All said that they were consulted to some degree by carers. 18 said this happened often. Most (29) said that they were consulted by the service.

All said their 'punishments' were fair.

Most (26) said they knew how to complain.

Only half said they had received a Children's Guide and the fostering managers said that the new guides are currently being circulated.

### **Best Things;**

Children said that they liked; Their carers, meeting new people, meals, clean clothes, baths and showers, the house they were placed in, family life, being safe, being loved. One child said 'everything' Other comments included 'My carer loves me for me' 'My carer is the best in Leicester' 'I go to the mosque to learn Islam' 'I think foster children with mobile phones should have regular credit so they can contact their carer wherever they are'

### **Worst Things;**

Children almost always either wrote 'nothing' or made reference to missing family or friends.

## **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:

YES

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:**

NONE

## Implementation of Statutory Requirements from Last Inspection

Requirements from last Inspection visit fully actioned?

YES

**If No please list below**

### STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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

No.	Regulation	Standard	Required actions	
			NONE	

**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	
<b>Comments</b>		

Condition	Compliance	
<b>Comments</b>		

Condition	Compliance	
<b>Comments</b>		

Condition	Compliance	
<b>Comments</b>		

**Lead Inspector**      Trisha Gibbs      **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Second Inspector**      Sharon Treadwell      **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Regulation Manager**      Sue Shaw      **Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**      \_\_\_\_\_

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS IDENTIFIED DURING THIS INSPECTION

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

### STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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

No.	Regulation	Standard *	Requirement
			NONE

### GOOD PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS INSPECTION

Identified below are areas addressed in the main body of the report which relate to the National Minimum Standards and are seen as good practice issues which should be considered for implementation by the Authority or Registered Person(s).

No.	Refer to Standard *	Recommendation Action
1	FS6	<b>The fostering service is recommended to develop and implement a risk assessment format specifically for bedroom sharing.</b>
2	FS12	<b>The fostering service is recommended to consider how it will implement and maintain a Health record for each child placed.</b>
3	FS21	<b>The fostering service is recommended to now utilise the Carer's Handbook for both supervision and training purposes. It is recommended that supervising social workers work through key areas of the Handbook to update carers and record this. This will also present an opportunity to receive feedback about the service from carers.</b>
4	FS24	<b>The fostering service is recommended to consider how it will facilitate a separate record to be maintained on each child placed in the service in order to enable the information to move with the child.</b>

5	FS30	<b>It is recommended that the Panel Chair meet with the Agency Decision Maker on occasions to feedback and discuss Panel functioning and related issues.</b>
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\* 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	10
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)	YES
• 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	YES
Interview with panel chair	YES
Observation of foster carer training	YES
Observation of foster panel	YES
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	NO
Date of Inspection	4/05/04
Time of Inspection	09.00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	92

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?

4

The service provided by Leicester City Council is fully outlined in its Statement of Purpose. The Statement of Purpose gives appropriate recognition of, and makes good reference to, the National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations.

The fostering Statement of Purpose has been emailed to all relevant staff, and is also available to staff on the City Council Intranet. The Statement of Purpose was reviewed and updated March 2004.

The service also makes available for children placed an excellent selection of coloured booklets; illustrated with drawings, pictures and photographs and targeted at children and young people of different ages. These include attractive and appealing storybooks for younger children. The information guides cover the more immediate areas of foster care such as rights, house rules and sanctions and also, in recognition that children might want to stay in touch with carers after they leave placement, gives advice on this. The books available for younger children are stories about a bear called Lester and explore feelings that children might experience when leaving their family to be looked after in another home. There is also a small-illustrated booklet available for young people being placed in remand foster homes.

All carers receive the Statement of Purpose and Children's Guides with their Carer's Handbook

**The fostering service is highly commended for providing colourful, relevant child centred guidelines and information for children and young people being placed in foster care.**

## 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?
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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 named Manager of the fostering service is a qualified social worker (CQSW) and has thirteen years management experience in child care operations and service provision. He has a B.A. degree in the Social Sciences. He is the Service Manager for the Foster Care Service and is referred to for the purpose of this report as the Manager. The Manager currently has an application pending for the ILM Level 5 Diploma in Management course later this year, having already attended a number of other management specific training courses with the Leicester City Council.

All fostering service staff spoken to during the Inspection were positive about the leadership and management of the service provided by the current Manager. Several indicated that he works in a visible and approachable manner.

The team managers who are responsible for the day-to-day running of the service all have both social work and management qualifications. Two have recently undertaken management National Vocational Qualification.

The leadership and commitment of the management team was noted during throughout the Inspection process and staff, colleagues and carers, said that the management team worked in a 'hands on' manner and were always accessible.

### 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?
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Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?
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Two references are routinely called for at time of recruitment and Criminal Records Bureau checks have replaced police checks. Personnel files containing records of these are held centrally by the City Council. Human Resources staff confirmed with Inspectors that two references are now routinely called for in respect of all applicants, including internal. An excellent checklist is utilised to confirm receipt of all required references and checks.

One (internally appointed) team manager file did not contain a second reference, however the appointment was made prior to the above recruitment procedure being implemented.

## 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?**

4

It was evident to Inspectors that the work of fostering service is monitored efficiently through a range of systems on a day-to-day basis and that various activities of the service are summarised and reported back to senior management.

There are clear lines of accountability and delineation of roles and responsibilities within the management team, and staff and carers had a good understanding of these. Three new senior practitioner posts have been recently recruited to assist the capacity of the managers to develop the service, and to continually drive up standards in line with the National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations.

The Manager of the fostering service organises various management team meetings, to enable both service specific sharing of information between fostering managers, in addition to meetings that include managers from other areas of children's services. The fostering service works very closely with the staff team from residential placements service and this was seen to promote consistency and innovation across Looked After Children's service.

The fostering managers and staff were seen to have excellent and visible systems for monitoring and maintaining daily information about children and young people within the Looked After Children's service. There were also commendable and comprehensive systems in place for the appropriate purchasing and negotiating of independent agency placements and for the ongoing monitoring of these.

The fostering service appropriately submits notifications to Commission for Social Care Inspection.

<b>Number of statutory notifications made to CSCI in last 12 months:</b>	30
<b>Death of a child placed with foster parents.</b>	0
<b>Referral to Secretary of State of a person working for the service as unsuitable to work with children.</b>	0
<b>Serious illness or accident of a child.</b>	10
<b>Outbreak of serious infectious disease at a foster home.</b>	0
<b>Actual or suspected involvement of a child in prostitution.</b>	0
<b>Serious incident relating to a foster child involving calling the police to a foster home.</b>	5
<b>Serious complaint about a foster parent.</b>	3
<b>Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.</b>	12
<b>Number of complaints made to CSCI about the agency in the past 12 months:</b>	0
<b>Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:</b>	0

<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>	4
<p>Inspectors have looked at both the Service Manager's and team managers' job descriptions and these are clear and appropriate.</p> <p>In the named Manager's absence the Service Manager who has prime responsibility for Residential Services of the Looked After Children's service deputises. This Residential Service Manager and his team share the same base as the foster care service team and these Service Managers jointly share the overall management of the Looked After Children Service. They work closely together on a day-to-day basis and have a good working knowledge of each other's field of work and of children placed within the system. The Residential Services Manager also has significant experience working within childcare operations and services. He has successfully completed his 'fit person' interview with the National Care Standards Commission as responsible individual for residential services.</p> <p>The foster care staff team said that this arrangement was a good one and that the bringing together of the residential and fostering functions for Looked After Children had positively impacted on the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of both teams.</p> <p>Carer files looked at showed good evidence of accountability and leadership from managers, and detailed regular consultation between staff and managers.</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?

3

There was again, very good evidence available during the Inspection to confirm that the foster care service took their responsibility to promote and safeguard children's health and well being seriously. This responsibility commencing at the time of assessment and approval, through signed agreements, excellent training provision, regular supervisory visits and the review process.

Foster care files include an 'at a glance' front information sheet that confirms date of completion of the family safe caring policy and fire policy.

Although there is a very good risk assessment element in the fostering service referral form for new placement, there is currently no standard process in place for ensuring that a risk assessment routinely takes place whenever children share a bedroom. **The fostering service is recommended to develop and implement a risk assessment format specifically for bedroom sharing.**

Health and Safety packs are given to all carers in addition to Health and Safety road show presentations and Health and Safety training. All carers receive First Aid (and refresher) training. The fostering service team managers have developed an excellent comprehensive Health and Safety monitoring checklist for pre placement and review purposes. This includes the full range of checks for the home and immediate environment. Inspectors attended a session provided for the fostering supervising social workers and managers, led by a City Council Health and Safety Officer. He guided staff through the list and made himself available for queries about specific Health and Safety issues. He also indicated to supervising social workers that he, or a colleague, would be willing to visit carer homes to provide guidance or support if necessary. The Health and Safety officer emphasised the need for any Health and Safety risk assessment to take account of all placements, and the fostering service is accordingly reminded to refer to carer's Safe Care policies on the occasion of each new placement.

Regular twenty-minute training sessions are provided to carers on Car Seat Safety.

The Carer's Handbook gives extensive detail and attention to health care in a simple and straightforward manner. This includes car safety and use of seat belts. Carer's responsibility for maintaining health and medical records is made clear. See Standard 12 for further comment.

Inspectors visited carers, and for the most part homes were seen to be appropriately free from obvious hazard and risk. One set of carers however were working closely with their supervising social worker to improve their standards in safe care, and there was evidence on

their file, and through discussion, that they were committed to achieving a plan of action. In all other aspects these carers provided a warm appropriate placement. The fostering service however is reminded to ensure continued and vigorous monitoring of the action plan with the carers, through to completion.



**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?**

**4**

The foster care service provides placements for Leicester City's Looked After Children, a city that is positively recognised for the religious and cultural diversity of its population.

Included in the Fostering Service Procedure and Guidance Manual, the service details Good Practice Guidelines on Equality for Children and Families. The guidelines provide a commendable source of information and advice as to how staff can appropriately work towards ensuring that they are meeting the principles and requirements of the Children Act and Equal Opportunities Policies.

A commendable range of training and development opportunities are provided for both social work staff and carers to improve and enhance their understanding of the needs of children who have different cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds and of children who have physical and learning disabilities. Evidence of a range of courses available was seen during Inspection. Social work staff recently attended training on the Assessment of Black and White Partnerships (funded through Choice Protects monies) and also Working with Dual Heritage Children. White kinship carers who care for dual heritage children have also received training in working with them. **The service is commended for recognising the need for this specific training.**

There were very good examples of financial assistance being made available to adapt homes for the placement of children with a disability. The service has been successful in bidding for Neighbourhood Regeneration Funding to continue to adapt foster placements in this way. A pilot level 5 Foster Carer Accreditation scheme is being implemented for the provision of specialist care for seriously disabled children, some who will have life threatening conditions.

The Carer's Handbook provides excellent guidance for carers on promoting cultural diversity and for working with children who have special needs or disabilities. The Health section of the Manual includes a section on Cultural Food.

In addition, all black Looked After Children, including those in foster care, can be referred to the Departmental Black Looked After Children's Panel. One case tracked by Inspectors demonstrated that the fostering service was working with carers, to follow the recommendation from this Panel, to promote a child's Muslim heritage as requested by the child's mother.

There are also arrangements in place for the provision of interpreters and language support for asylum seeking children and young people.

While managers of the service acknowledged that despite endeavours, in some cases it was not always possible to match children with culturally appropriate carers, there was good evidence that in these cases the fostering service was working with carers to promote individual cultural and religious needs. There were also positive statements made by placing social workers in some questionnaires about culturally appropriate placements.

**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?**

3

The foster care service receives referrals through a rigorous and efficiently organised duty system. The Inspectors observed the referral process and spoke to duty staff. The service utilise a comprehensive referral format that includes a robust risk assessment element. This completed at time of referral to assist with the 'matching' of children to placements. In the duty room, and a team manager's room, there are large boards that detail up to date essential placement information that might assist in the efficient matching of placements. There is also a book in the duty room that contains essential carer details and key information for matching purposes. Both social work staff and an administrative member of staff detailed how the fostering service applied the same rigorous matching principles when purchasing agency placements.

It was evident within the foster care services written documentation that recognition is consistently given to the need for children to be matched with carers at the time of placement in the best interests of the child and placement stability, however foster care staff again indicated that due to the nature of, and demand for placements the matching process was often compromised especially in short term placements when a swift return home was hoped for. Longer-term placements appeared to have better matching prospects and managers confirmed that the matching of children to placement is regularly discussed in family link matching meetings and other forums.

Documents providing information on new carers going through the approval process include indicators for matching purposes. The matching process is closely linked to carer accreditation i.e. the needs of the children are linked to the experience and training of the carer.

The foster care service team acknowledged the need for introductions of children to placements and said that this happened wherever possible. Even in emergency placements some sort of contact or introduction would be attempted. Carers indicated that emergency placements sometimes happened, with no introduction possible, and little supporting information provided on the child.

**The service is commended for demonstrating through visible systems attempts to carefully match children and young people with appropriate carers even though this might not always be achieved.**

**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?**

**4**

Leicester City Council has in place comprehensive Multi Agency Child Protection Procedures and an Area Child Protection Committee. All employees who work within the Local Authority receive training relevant to their own role and responsibilities. New staff members who work for the Social Services Department receive Child Protection training as part of their induction and additional training if they work in Child Care services.

The foster care service was seen, from the first stage of recruitment of carers, through to the ongoing support of approved carers to ensure that Child Protection is given priority in training and supervision. Inspectors were impressed with the range of Child Protection related courses and material available to carers. This year a three-day course on Working with Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse has been provided.

Carers are subject to rigorous assessment processes and given clear messages about Child Protection and their own role in the protection of children. They receive pre and post panel training and are issued with various Child Protection documents, policies and procedures.

Carers visited were aware of reporting procedures and confirmed Child Protection training.

The recently issued Carer's Handbook provides very good guidance on Child Protection issues and definitions of abuse and symptoms, in addition to providing commendable procedures and information about responding to bullying.

Foster carers sign agreements that confirm they will not smack or slap children and are given written guidelines in the Carer's Handbook about acceptable methods of managing behaviour. At various stages of a carer's experience, training is provided on behaviour management. These include basic Managing Behaviour course, through to a two-day course on Managing Aggression that will include some reference to restraint.

All carer files contain a chronology of incidents sheet at the front of their files for the monitoring of any potential Child Protection event, incident or allegation. These details are immediately accessible.

**The service is commended for utilising this simple system for the purpose of monitoring and identifying potential risk of abuse.**

Records of concerns and allegations are also maintained by the foster care service and a very clear protocol is in place for monitoring this process. There is a commendable, simple summary sheet at the front of the file that contains records of allegations and this tracks the progress and outcomes of investigations. The fostering service has in place excellent systems for monitoring restraints, punishments, absconding behaviour and incidents requiring notification. Out of County placements are also routinely tracked and monitored.

The fostering service last year experienced a significant incident of abuse of a fostered young person by a carer's child. This has been thoroughly and systematically responded to by the service and the Commission for Social Care Inspection kept informed throughout.

There are procedures for Children Missing from Home in the Fostering Service Procedure and Guidance Manual and the Carer's Handbook, also a protocol for safeguarding children involved in prostitution.

**The fostering service is commended on the provision of ongoing training and development opportunities to staff and carers in relation to Child Protection and for maintaining good systems to monitor and account for children and young people in placement.**

Children are no longer consulted within the questionnaire sent out to them by the Commission about the incidence of bullying. See below.

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

0%

**Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.9)**

**The fostering service makes sure that each child or young person in foster care is encouraged to maintain and develop family contacts and friendships as set out in her/his care plan and/or foster placement agreement.**

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

3

The foster care service, in the Statement of Purpose states a commitment, in line with that of all Looked After Children service providers, to the preparation of children for reunification with their parents and families as a first option, and in doing so to positively supports placing social workers in promoting contact.

Carers receive written information and training identifying their personal role and responsibility in supporting children's contact with their parents and families. The National Vocational Qualification Assessor who is responsible for carers training programme, plays an active role in observing and working with carers as they learn to develop the appropriate skills to do this. Working Together is a core skill area within the carer Accreditation Framework.

The Children's Guide explains to children how they will be supported to keep in touch with their parents and families. The Carer's Handbook explains to carers the legislation underpinning the Departments duty to promote contact.

Carers visited talked to Inspectors about facilitating contact and recognised the importance and impact of this. Inspectors represented some concerns to fostering managers about the potential inappropriate use of carers to initiate family contact as evidenced on one carer's file, and the fostering managers confirmed that this would be followed up.

**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?**

4

There was good evidence on carer and children's files that children and were being spoken to and consulted, both through the Looked After Children documentation and contact records. Nearly all of the children who returned questionnaires said they were consulted by the fostering service and most said that their carers consulted them often, (18) or sometimes. (14)

All Looked After Children are provided with good details by the fostering service as to how they can complain and how they can contact the Children's Rights Officer. They receive

Children's Rights newsletters and Who Cares magazines.

Carers and children visited demonstrated an awareness of how they can register a complaint. Carers also see themselves as responsible for representing the children's needs to their placing social worker and gave examples of this in questionnaires.

All foster care service documentation including the Carer's Handbook emphasises the importance of listening to children. The Handbook gives a good resume of Children's Rights and expectations.

The fostering service review form and end of placement forms have been amended to include parent and children's feedback about their placement. The fostering managers said that a form has been especially designed to assist a child with a disability to provide feedback. One complaint from a child has been received this year at the end of a placement.

**Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.8)**

The fostering service ensures that it provides foster care services which help each child or young person in foster care to receive health care which meets her/his needs for physical, emotional and social development, together with information and training appropriate to her/his age and understanding to enable informed participation in decisions about her/his health needs.

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

Information about the health care needs of Looked After Children is routinely provided within the Looked After Children forms and documentation. On the files inspected this was available.

It has not been possible to implement the pilot scheme that Leicester City Council was embarking on last year, where it was planned that each Looked After Child would be provided with a Health Passport containing an up to date record of their essential Health and Education information. The Department for Social Care and Health are now appointing a strategic Looked After Children nurse and operational Looked After Children nurse.

Currently a written updated health record that moves with the child through placement (see Standard 12.4) is not available. Carers visited generally keep records about children's health needs and appointments, to varying degrees, but these are currently maintained in a common diary for all children who are in that placement and therefore are not transferable to another placement.

The Carer's Handbook contains an excellent comprehensive section on 'Health and your Foster Child' and this provides full details about carer's responsibilities in relation to health care as well as specific information about e.g. smoking, and drug and alcohol misuse. In addition to this carers receive the National Health Service Direct book.

Inspectors observed excellent Health and Safety checks on files of carer homes, including personal Fire Action Plans. A range of Health Training and special events/road shows are made available including First Aid, Health Needs of Looked After Children, Fostering Medicals, Hepatitis, Healthy Eating, plus specific delegated health care training for children with disabilities. Carers are also provided with training on Children's Emotional Development and Wellbeing through the courses run by Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services. The Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services team are also available for support and consultation services.

Evidence of carers fulfilling their health care responsibilities to children placed with them was seen on their files, through supervision records and annual reviews.

There is a General Practitioner on the fostering Panel who is a Staff Grade Paediatrician and is also the Fostering Medical Advisor.

**The fostering service is recommended to consider how it will implement and maintain a Health record for each child placed.**

**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?**

4

Leicester City Council Public Service Agreement 'The Education of Children in Care' lays out aims and objectives for a corporate approach to responding to the particular difficulties faced by children and young people in the care system, accessing education.

Leicester City Council has a clear protocol for improving life chances through education for Looked After Children. Educational achievement is monitored through the Quality Protects initiative. As a result of this policies and procedures that relate to all Looked After Children dictate that they must have a Personal Education Plan.

Children selected for tracking purposes (4 sets of carers) had either a Personal Education Plans in place or evidence of action taking place to facilitate a Plan. There is a foster carer representative on the Personal Education Plan working party.

Inspectors interviewed the team leader of the Raising Achievement of Looked After Children Team, who detailed the work of the multidisciplinary team, now in it's third year of operation.

The team is jointly funded through the Social Care and Health, and Education Departments working to a variety of tasks and targets to improve the educational attainment of children in public care working with local schools, social workers and carers to achieve this. It was evident that the team worked closely with the fostering service, providing support to carers and workers. Good lines of communication have been established with the management team. Looked After Children's individual achievements are recognised on an annual basis through Celebrating Success events. A special event for primary aged children also takes place and carer's own children are now included in these.

Carers receive Educational Awareness training in addition to an impressive range of other sessions, road shows and training events, all available to provide education information and support.

Foster Care Agreements make clear carer responsibility to support and encourage children in their plans for education.

Other initiatives e.g. 'The Letter Box Club' are aimed at encouraging younger children to read.

All foster homes have been provided with personal computers. Individual computers have been provided to children in particular circumstances e.g. in connection with exam project work.

There is a large section of the Carer's Handbook dedicated to Education, Employment and Leisure. This includes information about the education of children who have special needs.

**Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.5)**

The fostering service ensures that their foster care services help to develop skills, competence and knowledge necessary for adult living.

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

Every year a special information and networking event called 'The Way Ahead' is held to provide information to carers and staff supporting young people aged 14 plus. The event is organised by Raising Achievement of Looked After Children team and held at a local college and looks at how carers can raise the aspirations of young people.

The Raising Achievement of Looked After Children team are also pioneering, with a small group of five young people at year ten/eleven a range of short course GCSE projects utilising a previous children's home building for this. The young people concerned have been very enthusiastic in participating and the project has already met with small successes.

The Managers said that carers are prepared by the foster care service for leaving care through training, supervision and written information, for the preparation of young people towards independent living. The Carer's Handbook gives guidelines on several aspects of this process covering both the emotional and practical aspects of leaving care.

All Looked After Children over the age of fifteen are referred to the specialist Leaving Care team and should have a Pathway Plan. The Leaving Care team now carries full case responsibility for some young people.

Inspectors were made aware that for young people who have a disability or other special needs, or who may be defined as too vulnerable to move through the usual leaving care channels, there appears to be less clarity within the Department as to who is responsible for that young person. There have been instances where there has been disagreement as to whether these young people meet the criteria (i.e. a 'medical model') to access adult service provision and resources. The fostering managers noted that this situation was particularly problematic for young people placed in foster care, because although a carer will prepare a young person for independence, a gap then exists where alternative care provision should start and where more able young people would normally move on to independent living. It was of some concern to Inspectors that these young people were not receiving equality of service and that this could be to their disadvantage.



## Recruiting, Checking, Managing, Supporting and Training Staff and Foster Carers

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The people who work in or for the fostering service are suitable to work with children and young people and they are managed, trained and supported in such a way as to ensure the best possible outcomes for children in foster care. The number of staff and carers and their range of qualifications and experience are sufficient to achieve the purposes and functions of the organisation.

### Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.8)

Any people working in or for the fostering service are suitable people to work with children and young people and to safeguard and promote their welfare.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Employees of the foster care service are recruited in line with the Leicester City Council clearly documented and stringent Human Resources recruitment policies and procedures. Personnel within the Children and Family Services, who are responsible for the recruitment and selection of staff are qualified and trained to do this.

All social work staff working in the three fostering service team hold formal social work qualifications and these are checked at interview. Social work staff receive in house and external training in assessment. Many have previous experience of assessment processes through childcare operation and child protection work.

All staff are expected to make themselves conversant with the Department of Social Care and Health, Policies and Procedures. Other staff members who work within the fostering service are recruited on the basis of essential criteria appropriate to their role and are supervised by appropriately qualified workers.

Inspectors looked at four staff personnel files and noted a very good and comprehensive Starters Checklist on the front of the files of recent recruited staff. This included the need for verification of references.

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

31

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

0

**Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.16)**

**Staff are organised and managed in a way that delivers an efficient and effective foster care service.**

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**4**

The Statement of Purpose includes a flow chart that delineates the structure of the foster care service and indicates the team manager's respective supervisory responsibilities to each team. The function of each team is also described. Supervisory staff members were seen to have appropriate knowledge and experience and training to enable them to effectively manage the staff team.

Managers and supervising social workers were interviewed during the Inspection process and during formal and informal interviews demonstrated an impressive and commendable level of knowledge and expertise in the management and support of a large and busy foster care service. Inspectors were impressed that the pre panel team, depleted last year, was now fully staffed and operating cohesively and that the team manager had streamlined a number of operational and monitoring systems for the whole service. The role of the kinship care/family link team had also developed significantly and three senior practitioners have recently been appointed to assist the capacity of the management team to develop the service and improve standards further.

The three foster care service teams meet together once a month in addition to attending individual team meetings. The three teams enjoy good communication with each other.

An excellent range of training is provided to staff and carers and carer training is referred to in more detail in Standard 23. The fostering service now has in place formats for staff and carers that audit their training for the last year. This provides an up to date record of training 'at a glance' and can be utilised for evaluation purposes. **The fostering service is commended on developing this simple training and development tool.**

The Local Authority on occasions has needed to utilise other agency placements and a protocol is in place for how placements are agreed, monitored and reviewed. Inspectors saw this information.

3.5 administrative workers, 1 Development Officer, 1 Publicity Coordinator and 1 Enquiry Officer, support the foster care service. Some of these members of staff were interviewed. All demonstrated a good working knowledge of the fostering task and of issues that challenged the service. Again there was an impression of genuine commitment to the team and to the service.

**The fostering team is commended for working together to improve and develop systems that contribute to the efficient operation of the service for the benefit of children and young people placed with carers.**

**Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.7)**

**The fostering service has an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff and recruits a range of carers to meet the needs of children and young people for whom it aims to provide a service.**

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

The service has in place a dedicated Recruitment Officer and Publicity Officer who work together to meet the fostering service recruitment targets. The recruitment officer who follows up initial expressions of interest with monthly information evenings, also looks at innovative ways of reaching potential carers in the community where there are particular shortages identified within the service. The Publicity Officer, who is responsible for the production of the excellent children's information material, also utilises a variety of local media opportunities throughout the year. Both workers liaise closely with the supervising social workers, training officer and managers. When interviewed they were able to detail an impressive strategy for the coming year and a range of functions that they were attending, participating in or coordinating! They recognised that their work was about retention as well as recruitment and indicated that during the coming 'Foster Care Fortnight' recognition would be given to carers who had achieved over 15 years of fostering.

The officers produce regular statistics that track outcomes from different recruitment initiatives and log numbers of enquiries and applicants who attend pre assessment meetings. For the year March 2003 /April 2004, 326 enquiries were registered for Fostering (plus a small number for specialist Fostering) A Panel summary document indicates that 20 new mainstream carers were approved last year.

The service recruitment target for this year is that of 25 carers. With this target there are others for categories of carers including Black and Asian. **The work and initiative of these officers is commended.**

Currently the fostering team is fully staffed and enjoying some stability following a period of shortages last year. The team will be boosted by the appointment of the three new senior practitioners, funded through the Choice Protects budget. The Manager indicated that these workers would remain practitioners and also be involved in working groups and development initiatives. Staff spoken to felt supported, and were satisfied with the supervision, training and development opportunities provided to them.

The assessment process for carers is clearly set out in documents given to carers, in training material and in the Fostering Service Procedure and Guidance Manual. The assessment follows the format of Form F and is competency based. Examples of this process were seen on carer files. More recent samples were also looked at with regard to carers who are currently being assessed or approved. These fully complied with this Standard.

Managers confirmed that there had been a rise in the numbers of Looked After Children by Leicester City Council and that the overall number of children fostered had increased from 365 last year to 370 this year.

There are approximately 185 mainstream carers and 58 kinship/family carers. Generally staff from the service felt that there were 'just about' enough carers to meet the needs of children requiring placements, however they also said that more carers were needed for specific types of placement e.g. teenage boys, older children with sexualised behaviour.

Currently 24 mainstream carers provide contract care scheme placements, looking after over 30 children and young people. The managers said that this scheme is to be reviewed over the next year.

Social workers in questionnaires said that they had experience of the service struggling to place family groups of three or more siblings.

Carers are placed on 4 accreditation levels (soon to be 5) according to length of experience, knowledge and assessed competencies. The fostering service has in place good contingency plans for occasions when there might be a shortfall in carers to meet specific needs and maintain good and up to date information about Independent Fostering Agencies. Currently 15 of the Leicester City Looked After Children are fostered within Agency placements. Managers said that the service applies the same matching principles when placing children with Agencies, and will always aim to place children locally.

Carers in questionnaires all said that they felt there were not enough social workers in the service or the organisation, although most felt supported by their supervising social worker.

#### **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.**

<b>Key Findings and Evidence</b>	<b>Standard met?</b>	<b>3</b>
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All fostering service staff members are supported through regular supervisory (individual and group) systems. Employment conditions are supported through a robust Human Resources Department and detailed in Human Resource documents and Manuals.

New social work staff confirmed induction, supervision and probationary processes took place.

Newly approved carers receive promptly, a good detailed letter of introduction from a team manager, including an outline of their approval status, standard allowances, supervision and review processes, and support available from the Fostering Network and Leicester City Foster Carers Partnership. These were seen on files. They will also sign the required Leicester City Council Foster Care Agreement, in addition to Looked After Children placement agreements.

Carers refer to an Emergency Duty Team system also utilised by two other Local Authorities for out of hours support. Service Managers are contacted by the Emergency Duty Team system in emergencies.

Training profiles are drawn up in respect of all carers at their annual reviews and maintained on their files.

The Carer's Handbook outlines the Whistle Blowing procedure.

**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?**

4

Leicester City Council has received the Investors in People Award. Each member of staff receives an annual appraisal recorded in their Employment Review and Development record. The central Staff Development section produces an Annual Training document that details training opportunities available to staff at all levels in the various areas of social care work. All staff spoken to confirmed that they receive annual appraisal and training need is identified at this time. Supervising social workers also said that there had been good specialist fostering training made available to them this year. (Referred to in previous Standard) including a recent 2-day course on the 'Supervision and Support of Carers' provided by the Fostering Network. **The fostering service is commended for making it possible for the staff team to attend relevant new training provided by nationally recognised fostering organisations.**

The member of staff responsible for training and development (Fostering Development Worker) within the team works on a part time basis with the team and part time with the staff development section. She has an overview of staff development opportunities and maintains a central record of carer training. Her involvement with both staff and carer training gives her an excellent insight into the training needs of the service and maximises opportunities for joint training.

As already noted there was good evidence to show that carer and staff training is evaluated each year. Carer training is referred to in more detail in Standard 23. Health and Safety training is referred to in Standard 6.

**Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)**

All staff are properly accountable and supported.

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

4

All staff recruited to the Leicester City Council foster care service team are routinely provided with contracts, job descriptions and the policies and procedures of the organisation. As already noted, all staff interviewed confirmed that they receive monthly supervision and attend regular team meetings. Managers meet on a monthly basis with other Looked After Children Managers, as well as with their own teams.

Supervising social workers and other staff members without exception told Inspectors that the management team were all approachable and helpful each happy to provide help in the others absence. The Service Manager was noted to operate an 'Open door' policy and had a visible presence, in his absence the Service Manager for Looked After Children Residential Services was equally supportive.

This scoring recognises the nature of support offered to the staff team by the managers as evidenced through the Inspection process and activity. This support is subsequently reflected in the commitment of the staff team to the service.

**Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.6)****The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?****3**

The fostering service is systematically circulating the new Carer's Handbook. Reference has already been made to this in previous Standards, and Inspectors again commend the whole fostering service for the production of such a comprehensive, readable and accessible document. The Handbook is illustrated in colour and formatted in a manner that facilitates and encourages the reading of very important information. This will be an indispensable tool for reference and learning to both the carers and supervising social workers. **The fostering service is highly commended on this professionally presented and informative Carer's Handbook.** The Carer's Handbook provides for carers details of the range of support mechanisms available to them.

Along with the Carer's Handbook, carers are receiving copies of the updated Statement of Purpose, children's books and leaflets and a copy of the National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations.

The foster care service summarises its strategy for supporting and working with carers in the Statement of Purpose, and also details this in different sections of the Fostering Service Procedure and Guidance Manual.

Central to the support of carers is the role of the supervising social worker and nearly all carers acknowledged in questionnaires the good level of support they received from their supervising social worker. Only 3 out of the 37 forms returned said they were not supported enough by the fostering service. Some noted that this support was the best thing about the agency. There was a mixture of negative and positive comments regarding placing social worker support for children placed.

There was good record on files of annual reviews, supervision sessions, and regular contact taking place. In addition evidence of general support from managers and supervising social workers with regard to specific issues. Review formats are comprehensive and meet requirements. Annual review outcomes and ongoing recommended approval status are received at Panel.

The Service Manager noted the value of peer group support and gave positive recognition to the support provided to some carer's by the Leicester City Foster Care Partnership. He described the role of the Partnership in supporting some carers during out of hour's time, in addition to Emergency Duty Team.

Although there are a number of social events occurring during the year that carers (and children) attend, in addition to the many training and development events, there are no formal carer support groups as such. The managers said that there are some carers who live locally to each other and meet each other informally and that this would be the model that the service would wish to build on.

Carers consulted during the Inspection had a clear understanding of the role of their supervising social worker, and understood how this differed to that of the placing social worker. One set of Kinship carers said that the support and training offered to them by the fostering service over the last year had proved invaluable. Other carers visited noted support received from managers as well as supervising social workers.

At least 5 carers in questionnaires expressed dissatisfaction with out of hours Emergency Duty Team Support, noting that Fostering is a '24/7 job'.

**The fostering service is recommended to now utilise the Carer's Handbook for both supervision and training purposes. It is recommended that supervising social workers work through key areas of the Handbook to update carers and record this. This will also present an opportunity to receive feedback about the service from carers.**

**Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.10)**

**The fostering service is a managed one that provides supervision for foster carers and helps them to develop their skills.**

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

The fostering service provides carers with a six monthly supervising visit, in addition to a minimum six weekly visit. Some placements require more visits than this and file records and discussions with carers again confirmed this.

Copies of carer supervision notes are maintained on file and were seen by Inspectors to be undertaken in an appropriately formal manner, well recorded and covering all aspects of current placements. Unannounced visits undertaken against a Health and Safety checklist also take place and are formally recorded. Managers indicated that this format is to be reviewed and updated. The Health and Safety officer who presented training for supervising social workers has offered to assist with this task.

Foster care agreements were looked at on files tracked. Specimen agreements for different placements were also seen e.g. kinship care, contract care. All of the detail specified in Schedule 5 of the Fostering Regulations is included in the agreements

Nearly all carers spoken to or returning questionnaires acknowledged that payments are usually prompt and that information and advice is given and available to them about insurance responsibilities. A very few carers said that they felt that they were not paid enough or that some payments took a long time to access. One carer felt confused that she received only a mainstream allowance for overnight placements for a young person she knew received a contract placement.

As referred to in the previous Standard, Leicester City Council has in place a Service Level Agreement with the Leicester City Foster Care Partnership, an independent registered charity providing information, newsletters, meetings, counselling and a valuable help line support. The Manager of the service maintains good working relationship with the Partnership and discussions about role, of and financial support for, the Partnership are ongoing. One carer commented in the questionnaire, 'The Local Authority needs to be serious in their support of the local association if they want them to continue to run a 24 hour help line and provide support, representation and mediation.

The fostering service complaints and allegations procedures are clearly detailed in the Carer's Handbook and in other key documents. Records of Complaints and Allegations are maintained and were seen during the Inspection.

**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?**

**4**

Comprehensive training and development information was provided to Inspectors in respect of staff and carer training. All carers receive a commendable selection of pre and post approval training. The Pre Panel team provides preparation training for new carers. The Foster Care Development Officer, who has completed National Vocational Qualification 4 in Training and Development, has responsibility for drawing up and coordinating all approved carer training and also maintains an overview of staff training.

The foster care service has in place a detailed formal annual Training Plan for Carers. Newsletters are also forwarded to carers on a quarterly basis along with a clear summary list of training opportunities and events for the coming months. Inspectors were impressed with the full range of 'fun' and social events, road shows, workshops, festivals and activities all outlined in the newsletters for carers and their families, providing information in a variety of forums. All of these opportunities, along with more formal training courses link in with the key fostering tasks and National Minimum Standards. Many are commissioned, funded and provided from various sources and grants, and coordinated by the Development Officer.

Three carers have achieved National Vocational Qualification level 3 and the Development Officer is currently supervising seven candidates, including one male carer in National Vocational Qualification level 3. It was again noted that achieving this automatically raises a carer to level 4-accreditation status. The Development Officer said she would like to develop a learning pathway, where initial training would commence the National Vocational Qualification ladder and continue through to the National Vocational Qualification level 3. It has already been noted that the service is introducing a level 5-accreditation level and the Development Officer will be a key contributor to this process, along with the new Senior Practitioners.

The Development Officer presented to the inspectors excellent examples of future courses and learning events. It was clear to Inspectors that this was the result of initiative, networking and a real understanding of how people learn.

Carers gave good feedback in questionnaires about training opportunities and those visited also spoke positively about training and newsletters.

**The range of training provision for carers fully meets this Standard and the fostering service and Development Officer are again commended on their achievements.**



## 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?	3
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Foster carers are provided with Looked After Children Placement Agreement forms and are made aware through training and documentation of the confidential nature of this information. A minority of carers continue to say in questionnaires that they do not always receive enough information about children at the time of placement.

Carers visited were very clear about their responsibility to maintain a record of children's placements through photographs and other documentation and that they were provided with the necessary training support guidelines and equipment to do this. The Development Officer also told Inspectors that eight Life Story C.D. ROMs were being purchased for carer use.

The Carer's Handbook includes good information about Life Story Work, Written Information, Confidentiality, and Record Keeping. It has already been noted under Standard 12 that carers are maintaining one common diary record for all children placed, and the fostering service is therefore recommended to consider how it will facilitate a separate recording log for each child. The fostering service is reminded that the Carer's Handbook will provide a good reference point for refreshing carers on maintaining and storing records. One set of carers visited by Inspectors were not locking away records, although they were 'keeping them out of reach'. There was evidence on file to confirm that their supervising social worker had discussed confidentiality and security of records with these carers.

Carer files tracked during the Inspection all contained good information about children placed, usually through Looked After Children documentation and review processes. There was evidence of carers and children being actively involved in discussions at reviews. A very small sample of children's files were looked at and found to be well recorded and organised.

The foster care service has a written policy in the Fostering Service Procedure and Guidance Manual 'Case Recording Principles and Good Practice'.

**The fostering service is recommended to consider how it will facilitate a separate record to be maintained on each child placed in the service in order to enable the information to move with the child.**

**Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.13)**

The fostering service's administrative records contain all significant information relevant to the running of the foster care service and as required by regulations.

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

Separate files are maintained by the Department for employees, carers, and children and situated at various office bases. (E.g. staff records in central Human Resources office, children's files within placing social workers office base.) Employees, carers and children are made aware of their rights to gain access to their records through various leaflets and procedures and the Carer's Handbook.

Electronic records are also maintained on carers and children and accessible via security systems and password to essential front line staff only.

The fostering service is fully supported by an experienced and informed administration team. A member of the administrative team confirmed the systems for filing, and locking up at the end of the day on the occasion of the previous Inspection.

While there appear to be good systems for the exchange and passing on of information between the fostering service and child care operations, the recording made by carers about children placed is not currently transferable and as already noted the fostering service must consider how a separate record for each child can be maintained in the foster home. This information could then be passed, when/if the child moves, to the placing social worker who will subsequently decide what should happen to it.

Team managers are responsible for monitoring carer records, also referring to them informally on a regular basis for operational purposes.

Inspectors noted when tracking carer files that it was not easy to ascertain from consulting the front information sheet (that already provides comprehensive information) exactly how many children were currently in placement and who the children were. **The fostering service is recommended to consider how this information can be easily represented at front of file.**

The foster care service is operated from a central substantial office base, shared with a range of other Looked After Children services teams.

The fostering service has implemented very good systems already commended for the recording and monitoring of complaints and allegations. The service also maintains good summary records of kinship placement endings/carers deregistered/carers termination.

The maximum payment figure below represents a contract care placement plus weekly allowance.

<b>Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:</b>			450
<b>Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months:</b>			1131
<b>Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months:</b>			1164
<b>Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months:</b>			41
<b>Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months:</b>			31
<b>Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £</b>	72.94	<b>Maximum £</b>	562.02

## Fitness of Premises for use as Fostering Service

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5)

Premises used as offices by the fostering service are appropriate for the purpose.

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

3

The foster care service is run from a substantial office complex from which other Looked After Children services also operate. Teams have identified offices and each Team Manager is provided with single office accommodation. There have been some recent changes in how the accommodation is organised and this has positively resulted in the acquisition of a training room for the Looked After Children services teams.

There is an attractive and comfortable reception area especially designed for members of the public and visitors who may be interested in fostering or adoption. Posters, and leaflets are displayed and the dedicated information officer manages this 'first stop' reception area.

The team are provided with standard office equipment and work stations.

There are good security systems in place to ensure maximum security at the office base, including signing in system, keypads and door locking systems. A few rooms are available for meetings and interviews on the premises, but these are limited sometimes meetings have to be carried out in other buildings.

## Financial Requirements

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The agency fostering services are financially viable and appropriate and timely payments are made to foster carers.

### Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3)

The agency ensures it is financially viable at all times and has sufficient financial resources to fulfil its obligations.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The foster care service is one of a range of the Children and Family services provided by Leicester City Council. As a Local Authority function, financial viability is accepted.

### Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.7)

The financial processes/systems of the agency are properly operated and maintained in accordance with sound and appropriate accounting standards and practice.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The above budget is subject to the statutory accounting and auditing processes of the central finance section, within Leicester City Council. The foster care service is supplied with a budget allocation on an annual basis and managers receive a monthly breakdown of financial expenditure from the finance section.

The fostering team managers confirmed that they were delegated specific responsibilities within the services budget to enable them to respond promptly to additional financial needs of carers. They are allocated budgets for e.g. training and equipment and more recently the responsibility for administering the supplementary clothing allowance. Having direct access to the clothing allowance enables the service to ensure prompt, consistent and appropriate payments to carers.

The fostering service maintains good financial information and accounts with regard to Independent Agency placements. These are continually tracked, updated and reviewed.

**Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.2)**

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

**Key Findings and Evidence**

**Standard met?**

**3**

Carers are made aware of fostering rates immediately on approval and then through annual information documents. There is also an excellent section in the Carer's Handbook entitled Money Matters that gives comprehensive coverage of fostering payment rates and reward schemes operated by the service, in addition to full explanation of carer tax and National Insurance responsibilities and benefit entitlement. The section also details appropriate pocket money and clothing allowance scales for children in placement.

The fostering service accreditation scheme gives positive recognition of carer's skills and experience and the service is now piloting progression to level 5 accreditation.

Carer allowances are increased annually by inflation plus one percent. The Manager indicated that growth budget bids were being sought for areas currently under funded i.e. contract care.

Most carers said that they received payments promptly and in most instances were well supported with the provision of equipment.

The service utilises Choice Protects monies in an innovative manner for e.g. improvements to foster homes to facilitate good quality placements.

## 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?

4

The foster care service has produced a booklet called 'Fostering Information for Panel Members'. The book details the roles of the foster care service teams and clearly defines the accreditation scheme and types of placements provided by the service. It fully explains the role of the panel within the assessment and approval process and draws the Panel member's attention to the Fostering Service Regulations.

**The foster care service is again highly commended on the presentation of good clear and relevant information contained in this book for Panel members.**

Leicester City Council fostering service actively encourages applicants to attend for Panel approval and facilitate this whenever possible.

Previous Panel minutes looked at for Inspection purposes were recorded in a very good comprehensive and consistent manner. The whole Panel process is overseen and efficiently managed by a dedicated administrative officer.

Following a recommendation made at the time of the last Inspection, an independent Chair who has significant experience in the field of childcare now chairs the Panel. The Chair was seen to fully discuss with Panel members, issues arising out of assessments, prior to candidates coming to join the Panel. It was evident that the Chair and Panel were prepared and had previously read the paperwork. The Chair was seen to relate to prospective carers in a congruent, open manner, and to facilitate appropriate and searching questions from the Panel. The Panel undertook a range of tasks on the day that the Panel meeting was observed Carers including Kinship Carers were approved, annual reviews noted, and de registrations formalised. The Inspector noted that on each occasion of candidates being approved, the Chair read out, for the benefit of prospective carers and Panel, the reasons why (supporting evidence) the application had been accepted and approved.

The Panel Chair forwards the written Panel recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker (Assistant Director Children's Services) for signing; however the Chair and Agency Decision Maker do not routinely meet and there is no agreed forum during the year for verbal discussion or feedback. **It is recommended that the Panel Chair meet with the Agency Decision Maker on occasions to feedback and discuss Panel functioning and related issues.**

The Panel meets the Regulations in the composition of Panel Members, although the Chair acknowledged that a Panel member representing an educational background is still actively

being sought. The Panel includes a carer and a young person who had been in foster care for some years as a child. This Panel member was new last year and her contribution was recognised as being of value. Unfortunately because of illness and maternity leave the Chair confirmed that the service has recently experienced some difficulty in organising a Panel that is viable. All Panel Members are Criminal Records Bureau checked.

The Inspector was again impressed with the overall standard of Chairing and management of the Panel observed, and with the quality of assessments presented from within the agency to the Panel.

The Panel Chair confirmed that training sessions would be held for the Fostering Panel, the first of these being in May, when the Panel would receive training and information on Attachment, this linking in with the Panel's responsibilities in approving an increasing number of Kinship Carers. The Panel have also been issued with the new Carers Handbook and have been told by the Chair that they must read this in preparation for discussion at the same training session.

The fostering managers made available to Inspectors a very good Annual Report summarising the activity of the service over the last year, which will be presented and provided to the Fostering Panel.

Agreement to exemptions to above the usual fostering limit is sought through a clear written procedure and signed by the Service Manager and Panel Chair.

**Despite constraints on the busy fostering service and Fostering Panel, the Panel was seen to operate fully within the spirit of the National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations and is commended for this.**

## Short-Term Breaks

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- When foster care is provided as a short-term break for a child, the arrangement recognises that the parents remain the main carers for the child.

### Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.2)

Where a fostering service provides short-term breaks for children in foster care, they have policies and procedures, implemented in practice, to meet the particular needs of children receiving short-term breaks.

#### Key Findings and Evidence

#### Standard met?

3

The foster care service provides short-term flexible breaks and respite placements aimed at children who have a disability in most, but not all, cases. The Manager confirmed that the service links in closely with the Disabled Children's Team, Residential Services and other professionals when setting up these placements.

One of the three fostering teams has responsibility for matching and coordinating respite/short stay placements. The respite care/family link scheme is particularly designed to give flexible breaks to parents/carers of children either as a regular arrangement or 'one off'. The managers reported that the scheme currently provides 31 respite packages for children with a disability.

The fostering service also offers limited provision for short breaks for non-disabled children that include day care.

There were good examples of grants and payments being agreed to adapt or convert carer accommodation to enable appropriate respite provision. The fostering service has been awarded another substantial sum over two years to continue this work.

Two carers who provide respite care were visited during the Inspection. They commented that they receive excellent support from their supervising social worker.



## 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?

4

The foster care service has a dedicated team who specialise in undertaking kinship care assessments. The small team (1 manager and 2 w.t.e. supervising social workers) has full responsibility for assessing, training and supporting kinship carers. Managers noted to Inspectors that kinship/family care placements continue to represent a growing area of work. At the time of the Inspection the fostering service supervised 51 carers looking after 65 children.

Kinship carers receive equal payment to other foster carers and access to all corporate benefits available to other foster carers.

Training opportunities are being increasingly designed especially for kinship carers. Recently the fostering service provided a Kinship Care Day event with specialist speakers including a representative from the Grandparents Federation. Inspectors received very positive feedback about this day from social workers and some carers who had attended the event. Kinship carers are included in all training and development opportunities available to other carers.

The managers said that although a good number of carers move on to apply for Residence Orders on their children, leaving fostering, there are significant numbers of ongoing assessments (20) and others awaiting assessments. In recognition of this, one of the new senior practitioner posts will be dedicated to the kinship care team and an additional supervising social worker post recruited.

An Inspector visited carers who were providing a home for children under the kinship arrangement. The carers said that they embarked on this over two years ago, when kinship care support was less developed, the experience was like 'going into a long dark tunnel' however they were now extremely positive about the support guidance and training they have received from the fostering service, especially with regard to issues around punishment and managing difficult and complex behaviour.

**The above score reflects the achievements of the fostering service in relation to the kinship care service over the last year expansion of kinship support.**

**PART C**

**LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY**

**(where applicable)**

**Not applicable**

**Lay Assessor**      Not applicable      **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 week beginning May 4<sup>th</sup> 2004 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	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments were received from the provider	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provider comments/factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provider comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate	<input type="checkbox"/>

**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 Wednesday, 30 June 2004, which indicates how statutory requirements and recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.**

**Status of the Provider's Action Plan at time of publication of the final inspection report:**

Action plan was required	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action plan was received at the point of publication	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provider has declined to provide an action plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: <enter details here>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**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 Mark Tingely of Leicester City Council Fostering Service confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I agree with the statutory requirements made and will seek to comply with these.**

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Designation** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Or**

**D.3.2 I Mark Tingley of Leicester City Council Fostering Service am unable to confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) for the following reasons:**

**Print Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Designation** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

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