



Champions for
Social Care
Improvement

inspection report

Fostering Services

Five Rivers Fostering

South Park Business Centre

306A Green Lane

Ilford

Essex

IG1 1LQ

26th January & 9th February 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?

NO

Name of Authority

Address

Local Authority Manager

Tel No:

Address

Fax No:

Email Address

Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)

YES

Name of Agency

Five Rivers Fostering

Tel No

020 8599 5251

Address

South Park Business Centre, 306A Green Lane, Ilford,
Essex, IG1 1LQ

Fax No

Email Address

Registered Number of IFA

G050000386

Name of Registered Provider

Five Rivers Family Placement Limited

Name of Registered Manager (if applicable)

Mrs Usha Jobanputra

Date of first registration

19th August 2003

Date of latest registration certificate

19th August 2003

Registration Conditions Apply ?

NO

Date of last inspection

20/02/03

Date of Inspection Visit		26th January & 9th February 2004.	ID Code
Time of Inspection Visit		09:00 am	
Name of Inspector	1	Debbie Kittridge	118733
Name of Inspector	2	NA	
Name of Inspector	3	NA	
Name of Inspector	4	NA	
Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the NCSC. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process.		NA	
Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable)		NA	
Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection		Beverley Miller, Neil Loader & Usha Jobanputra.	

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 National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) are subject to inspection, to establish if the service is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and the requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000, the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and the Children Act 1989 as amended.

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

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

The report will show the following:

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

This report is a public document.

INSPECTION VISITS

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

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

Five Rivers Fostering Service is a private fostering agency that has been operational since September 2001. Five Rivers Fostering Service is located within the London Borough of Redbridge. The registered provider, Five Rivers Family Placement Limited, is a national organisation and the head office is situated in Wiltshire.

There are a total of six branches of the foster service throughout the country. Fostering services include short and long term fostering for children and young people aged between 0-18 years. The service aims to meet the identified needs of children placed and to fully support carers within that task.

The manager and staff work in partnership with children and their families and every endeavour is made to link children with foster carers who reflect their cultural and racial backgrounds.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

Inspector's Summary

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

The inspection took place over a period of two weeks from 26th January – 9th February 2004. The acting deputy manager and national fostering manager accompanied the inspector on the first day of inspection. The registered manager accompanied the inspector on the second day.

At the time of the inspection the NCSC was aware that the registered manager had been absent from her duties for approximately three months from September – December 2003. This was as a result of an internal investigation conducted by the fostering service. The inspector found that the fostering service failed to comply with Regulation 45 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002, by not providing formal notification to the NCSC of the manager's absence, reasons for this and the anticipated length of absence. This constitutes a serious breach of Regulations.

The inspector found that the fostering service did not take appropriate action to address interim management arrangements by identifying a suitably qualified, experienced member of staff to provide ongoing management support during the manager's absence. This has resulted in 7 requirements being made in this report in relation to management and staffing issues. Failure to ensure that the fostering service is appropriately staffed and managed at all times poses a serious risk to the safety of children/young people and will result in the Commission considering enforcement action.

The inspector visited the homes of three foster carers as part of the inspection process. Information received during the course of these visits indicated that carers were not provided with clear information regarding the manager's absence. One carer stated that this was a significant cause for concern as she had repeatedly attempted to make contact with the manager and was given misleading information about the reasons for her ongoing absence. The inspector also found that previous levels of direct contact and supervision with link social workers was significantly reduced compared with previous levels. However, written feedback information provided by three carers indicated that they were satisfied that link social workers maintained telephone contact. General feedback from carers regarding the quality of support provided by the fostering service was found to be positive.

The inspector received only two feedback forms from young people receiving foster care. Comments received were found to be generally positive in relation to the quality of care provided by foster carers and the fostering service.

The inspector had direct contact with three children placed with foster carers. All three children were under 5 years old and therefore not able to contribute to the inspection process. However, from observation of interactions between the children and the foster

carers the inspector was satisfied that appropriately care was provided.

Statement of Purpose (Standard 1)

This standard was tested and judged to be mostly met.

A comprehensive Statement of Purpose has been developed by the Fostering Service. A requirement has been made that the Statement of Purpose for the London (Essex) office must be further developed to include all relevant information about specific services provided by them.

There is an outstanding requirement that the Children's Guide be developed in formats suitable to meet the diverse needs of young people. The requirement has been carried forward in this report.

Fitness to Carry On or Manage a Fostering Service (Standards 2-3)

Two standards were tested; one was judged to be mostly met; one was judged to be not met.

The inspector found that staff files did not contain all relevant checks required by Regulations. A requirement has been made that the registered person must ensure that staff files include all information as listed in Schedule 1 of the Fostering Service Regulations 2002, including CRB checks.

The inspector found that the Fostering Service failed to provide formal, written notification regarding the manager's absence from duties. A requirement has been set that the responsible person must ensure all significant events are notified to the Commission without delay.

Management of the Fostering Service (Standards 4-5)

Two standards were tested; one was judged to be mostly met; one was judged to be not met.

The inspector found that lines of communication between the fostering service and foster carers were not adequately maintained. A requirement has been made that the fostering service must develop and implement an effective monitoring system ensuring that, at all times, the quality of service provided is in line with the Statement of purpose.

The fostering service did not appoint an appropriately qualified, experienced member of staff to manage the fostering service during the manager's absence. The inspector found that previous levels of direct contact between staff and foster carers were also not maintained. A requirement has been made that appropriate levels of suitably qualified, competent and experienced persons must be maintained at all times.

Securing and Promoting Welfare (Standards 6-14)

Nine standards were tested. Seven standards were judged to be fully met; two were judged to be mostly met.

The inspector was satisfied that foster carers provide a safe, nurturing environment for children/young people. The fostering service carries out annual inspections of foster carers homes.

Foster carers are recruited from a range of ethnic backgrounds representative of the local community. Children/young people are appropriately matched with foster carers from the same ethnic background wherever possible. Policies and procedures exist for countering bullying and unauthorised absence of a child in foster care. Foster carers are provided with training and clear information regarding the use of "safe caring skills".

Children/young people are supported to maintain links with families/friends in line with placement agreements.

Feedback information received from young people indicated that foster carers value their

opinions.

The inspector was satisfied that young people would be appropriately supported to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for adult living.

The inspector found that, as a result of an emergency placement, two young people were placed with an experienced foster carer from a different cultural and ethnic background. The inspector was concerned that minimal support and information was provided by the fostering service during the course of the placement. A requirement has been made that foster carers must be provided with ongoing training, support and information enabling them to provide appropriate, informed care to children/young people.

From discussions with a foster carer the inspector found that insufficient health information was provided by the fostering service following an emergency placement. There is an outstanding requirement that before a placement begins, or as soon as possible afterwards, that the foster carer is provided with a full description of the health needs of young people. The requirement has been carried forward in this report.

Recruiting, Checking, Managing, Supporting and Training Staff and Foster Carers (Standards 15-23)

Nine standards were tested. Four were judged to be fully met; five were judged to be mostly met.

The inspector was satisfied that the people who work for, or in the fostering service are suitable to work with children/young people. Evidence was seen that the fostering service ensures all prospective foster carers undertake comprehensive induction training prior to approval. Supported and funding is provided to approved foster carers to undertake NVQ training.

Fostering service staff receive appropriate, formal supervision.

The inspector found that previous levels of foster carer supervision were affected as a result of gaps in staffing levels. Requirements have been made that the frequency of supervision of foster carers must be in line with the statement of purpose. Where a short fall in staffing levels occurs, there must be a contingency plan in place to resolve the situation.

The inspector found that the fostering service did not have adequate policies and procedures in place describing action to be taken in the event that a manager is absent from duties. A requirement has been made in this respect.

The inspector found that no documented programme of ongoing training for foster carers was in place. There is an outstanding requirement in this respect; the requirement has been carried forward in this report.

Records (Standards 24-25)

Two standards were tested; one standard was judged to be fully met, one standard was judged to be mostly met.

Appropriate systems are in the process of being implemented to improve the quality of records held for each child/young person receiving foster care.

Foster carers provide support to children/young people to understand their history and maintain appropriate memorabilia.

Administrative records contain all information required by Regulations. Records are held securely and are accessible by request.

A requirement has been made that an accurate written record must be maintained of all complaints received by the fostering service.

Fitness of Premises for use as a Fostering Service (Standard 26)

This standard was tested and judged to be fully met.

The inspector was satisfied that the fostering service premises were appropriate for purpose.

Financial Requirements (Standards 27-29)

One standard was tested and judged to be fully met. Two standards were not tested; the key findings in relation to these standards are included in the report for the Salisbury/head office of the Five Rivers Fostering Service.

The inspector was satisfied that foster carers receive fees in line with the Pan London Agreement.

Fostering Panels (Standard 30)

This standard was not tested.

The key findings in relation to this standard are included in the report for the Salisbury office of the Five Rivers Fostering Service.

Short-Term Breaks (Standard 31)

This standard does not apply to the fostering service.

Family and Friends as Carers (Standard 32)

This standard does not apply to the fostering service.

Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State

(Local Authority Fostering Services Only)

The following statutory Reports or Notifications are to be made under the Care Standards Act as a result of the findings of this inspection:

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(3) of the Care Standards Act 2000 that the Commission considers the Local Authority's fostering service satisfies the regulatory requirements:

NO

Notice to the Local Authority under section 47(5) of the Care Standards Act 2000 of failure(s) to satisfy regulatory requirements in their fostering service which are not substantial, and specifying the action the Commission considers the Authority should take to remedy the failure(s), informing the Secretary of State of that Notice:

NO

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

NO

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

NO

The grounds for the above Report or Notice are:

Implementation of Statutory Requirements from Last Inspection

Requirements from last Inspection visit fully actioned?

NO

If No please list below

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS				
Identified below are areas not addressed from the last inspection report which indicate a non-compliance with the Care Standards Act 2000 and Fostering Services Regulations 2002.				
No.	Regulation	Standard	Required actions	
			Where the previous requirement was not met, or it was not possible to evidence compliance, a new target date has been set. The number in the column headed "No." refers to the requirement number in the last inspection report. In the "Timescale for action" column, the new date in bold print refers to the new timescale set. Further information about unmet requirements can be found in the relevant standard in the body of the report.	
1	3&4	FS1	The Children's Guide must be developed in suitable formats to meet the diverse needs of children/young people in foster care.	31/07/03 30/06/04
3	15, 17	FS12	The manager must ensure that before a placement begins, or as soon as possible afterwards, that the foster carer is provided with a full description of the health needs of young people.	Immediate & ongoing. 30/06/04
5	17	FS23	The manager must ensure that foster carers undertake an on-going programme of training, skills development and self-development.	30/09/03 31/05/04

Action is being taken by the National Care Standards Commission to monitor compliance with the above requirements.

COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION (IF APPLICABLE)

(Registered Independent Fostering Agencies only)

Providers and managers of registered independent fostering agencies must comply with statutory conditions of their registration. The conditions applying to this registration are listed below, with the inspector's assessment of compliance from the evidence at the time of this inspection.

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Condition	Compliance	
Comments		

Lead Inspector	Debbie Kittridge	Signature	_____
Second Inspector	_____	Signature	_____
Locality Manager	Fiona Maslin	Signature	_____
Date	11th May 2004		_____

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS IDENTIFIED DURING THIS INSPECTION

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

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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

No.	Regulation	Standard *	Requirement	
1	3	FS1	The Statement of Purpose for the London (Essex) office requires further development to include all information listed in Standard 1.4 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2002.	31/05/04
2	21, 45(1)	FS2 FS18	The registered persons are required to develop and implement robust procedures identifying action to be taken when a manager is suspended from duty. The procedure must include clear information describing specific details of how short-term and ongoing management cover will be achieved.	31/05/04
3	45(1)(3)	FS2	The registered person is required to provide written notification, without delay, to the Commission in the event that a manager is absent from the fostering service for a continuous period of 28 days, or as the result of an emergency. The notice shall specify the length, or expected length of absence; the reasons for the proposed absence; the arrangements for the interim arrangements during that absence.	30/04/04
4	20(3)	FS3	The responsible person is required to ensure that staff files contain all information listed in Schedule 1 of The Fostering Services Regulations 2002.	30/04/04

5	8(1)	FS4	The responsible person must ensure that effective monitoring systems are developed and implemented ensuring the quality of service provided by the fostering service is in line with the Statement of Purpose.	31/05/04
6	19	FS5	The responsible person is required to ensure that there are a sufficient number of suitably qualified, competent and experienced persons working for the purposes of the fostering service.	31/05/04
7	17	FS7	The registered person is required to ensure that foster carers are provided with training, advice, support and information enabling them to provide appropriate, informed care.	31/05/04
8	11	FS7	The registered person must ensure that the welfare of children is safeguarded. Consideration must be given to children/young people's religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic needs.	31/05/04
9	35	FS16	The registered person must develop and implement robust monitoring procedures ensuring that the frequency of supervision provided to foster carers is in line with the Statement of Purpose.	31/05/04
10	19	FS17	The responsible person must ensure that where a short fall in staffing levels occurs, there must be a contingency plan in place to resolve the situation.	31/05/04
11	17	FS22	The responsible person is required to ensure that information is provided to foster carers detailing arrangements for supervision where the named supervisor is absent from duty.	31/05/04
12	18(5)	FS25	The manager is required to ensure that robust systems are in place ensuring that the fostering services' complaints procedure is instigated in response to any complaint received. Accurate documented evidence must be maintained detailing the nature of the complaint, action taken in response and relevant outcomes.	31/05/04

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	FS19	It is recommended that further consultation be undertaken with foster carers identifying the reasons for poor attendance at support groups. The results of consultations should be used to develop a programme of meetings to suit the overall needs of carers.

* Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix e.g FS10 refers to Standard 10.

PART B	INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS
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The following inspection methods have been used in the production of this report

Number of Inspector days spent	4
Survey of placing authorities	YES
Foster carer survey	YES
Foster children survey	YES
Checks with other organisations and Individuals	YES
• Directors of Social services	YES
• Child protection officer	YES
• Specialist advisor (s)	NO
• Local Foster Care Association	NO
Tracking Individual welfare arrangements	YES
• Interview with children	NO
• Interview with foster carers	YES
• Interview with agency staff	YES
• Contact with parents	NO
• Contact with supervising social workers	NO
• Examination of files	YES
Individual interview with manager	YES
Information from provider	YES
Individual interviews with key staff	YES
Group discussion with staff	NO
Interview with panel chair	NO
Observation of foster carer training	NO
Observation of foster panel	NO
Inspection of policy/practice documents	YES
Inspection of records	YES
Interview with individual child	NO
Date of Inspection	26/01/04
Time of Inspection	09.00
Duration Of Inspection (hrs)	23

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

The scale ranges from:

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

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

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

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

Statement of Purpose

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

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

Standard 1 (1.1 - 1.6)

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

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

The organisation has developed a clear Statement of Purpose outlining the aims and objectives for the service. The Statement of Purpose has been developed to include all information required by Regulations.

A statement of Purpose specific to the service provided by the London (Essex) office has also been produced. The aim of this document is to provide specific information relating to the London office including staffing structure and the number of carers and placements etc. The inspector found that the document contained basic information relating to the service provided. However, the document requires further development to include information regarding the introduction of carer support groups.

The inspector was advised that The Children's Guide has been developed into two formats, providing information to children of eight years and under and children over eight.

The Guide was found to contain information on how children could access an independent advocate. However, the inspector found that the information contained in the Guide might not be accessible to all children who may be receiving the service.

The fostering service is required to develop the Guide to include a pictorial format for children under the age of 8 years of age and for children with a learning disability. The Guide must also be made available in languages other than English.

There is an outstanding requirement that the Children's Guide must be developed in suitable formats to meet the needs of children/young people in foster care. The requirement has been carried forward in this report with new timescales set for compliance.

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?	1
<p>The manager has a professional and management qualification relevant to working with children and the requirements of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services. At the time of the inspection the inspector was aware that the manager had been absent from the office for a period of approximately three months following the instigation of the fostering service's whistle blowing procedure. During this time a senior member of the staff team from the London office was given responsibility for deputising in the manager's absence. The National Fostering Manager also provided additional management support on a weekly basis.</p>		
<p>Regulation 45 of The Fostering Services Regulations 2002 requires the registered person to give notice in writing to the Commission where a manager proposes to be absent from the agency for a continuous period of more than 28 days. The inspector found that no formal notification was forwarded to the Commission in respect of the manager's absence. From discussion with the National Fostering Manager and observation of staff disciplinary policies and procedures the inspector found that no clear information was available detailing procedures to be followed in the event that a manager was suspended from duty pending the outcome of a disciplinary investigation.</p>		
<p>The registered person is required to provide written notification to the commission in the event that a manager is absent from the agency for a continuous period of 28 days. Where the absence arises as a result of an emergency, the registered person must give notice of the absence within one week of its occurrence.</p>		
<p>The registered persons are required to develop and implement robust procedures identifying action to be taken when a manager is suspended from duty. The procedure must include clear information detailing interim management arrangements.</p>		

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?****2**

From inspection of relevant staff files the inspector found that the requirements of Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulation were not met in all cases.

Evidence was seen that a CRB check had not been carried out for the most recently employed member of staff.

From discussions with the responsible person the inspector found that the fostering service routinely undertakes all checks required by Regulations prior to the appointment of a new member of staff. The responsible person was not able to provide clear information indicating the reasons for the CRB check not being in place.

The responsible person is required to ensure that staff files contain all information listed in Schedule 1 of The Fostering Services Regulations 2002. Failure to provide this information poses a risk to young people's safety and will result in the Commission considering enforcement action to secure compliance.

Management of the Fostering Service

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The fostering service is managed ethically and efficiently, delivering a good quality foster care service and avoiding confusion and conflicts of role.

Standard 4 (4.1 – 4.5)

There are clear procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the fostering service and ensuring quality performance.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

A copy of the financial contract was seen. From discussions with foster carers the inspector was satisfied that financial procedures are made clear to them.

From examination of records and discussion with foster carers the inspector found that no clear information was provided to carers indicating the manager's absence or anticipated length of absence from the office.

One foster carer spoken to indicated that she had made several attempts to contact the manager during this time and was concerned that no clear information was given for her continuing absence. See standard 22.

From discussion with the National Fostering Manager the inspector was informed that all carers were notified in writing of the changes in management arrangements during this period. However, foster carers did not confirm this and no documentary evidence was provided by the fostering agency to corroborate this information.

The responsible person is required to ensure that clear lines of communication are maintained at all times between managers, staff and carers. Effective monitoring systems must be developed and implemented ensuring the quality of service provided by the fostering service is maintained in line with the Statement of Purpose.

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

0

Death of a child placed with foster parents.

0

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

0

Serious illness or accident of a child.

0

Outbreak of serious infectious disease at a foster home.

0

Actual or suspected involvement of a child in prostitution.

0

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

0

Serious complaint about a foster parent.

0

Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.

0

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

0

Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:

0

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.4)**The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.****Key Findings and Evidence****Standard met?**

1

See standard 2 and corresponding requirement.

From viewing documentation and discussion with the National Fostering Manager and staff, the inspector found that management arrangements for the London office were inadequate during the manager's period of absence.

A senior practitioner from the London staff team was given responsibility for deputising in the manager's absence. This appointment coincided with an additional local authority placement contract being secured by the London office. However, no additional senior staff were identified to provide ongoing cover for gaps in the service.

The National Fostering Manager visited the office on a weekly basis to provide support to staff. Additional support staff were also provided to maintain links with foster carers.

From discussions with the deputy manager and foster carers the inspector found that the fostering staff were not able to continue to provide the previous levels of face-to-face contact and supervision of carers during the manager's absence.

From discussion with staff and the manager, the inspector found that management duties and responsibilities were also not addressed during the manager's absence.

The responsible person is required to ensure that there are a sufficient number of suitably qualified, competent and experienced persons working for the purposes of the fostering service. Failure to do so impacts on the safety and well-being of children and young people and will result in the Commission considering enforcement action.

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
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The inspector visited the homes of three foster carers as part of the inspection process. The homes were found to be warm, adequately furnished, decorated and maintained to a good standard of cleanliness. Within the homes all children were found to have their own beds. However, in one instance the inspector found that where a foster child had been sharing a room with the foster carers own child, a "pull-out" bed had been provided. From discussion with the foster carer the inspector found that the placing social worker and fostering agency had approved this arrangement, however no documentary evidence was seen to confirm this. Evidence was seen that all foster carers had participated in preparation training and had been given guidance and training in relation to their health and safety responsibilities. A previous requirement was made that the provider must ensure that foster carers and their homes must be reviewed annually. The inspector saw evidence to confirm that appropriate systems have been developed and implemented in this respect.

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?	2
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See standard 16 and corresponding requirement. From discussions with staff and foster carers the inspector was satisfied that the fostering service promotes equality and values diversity. From discussion with one experienced foster carer the inspector found that, as the result of an emergency placement, two foster children from a different cultural and ethnic background were placed with her. The carer stated that she formed links with community representatives from the same cultural background as the foster children, enabling her to provide culturally sensitive meals and develop an understanding of the children's religious background. However, the inspector found that the fostering agency did not provide resource information or regular support to the carer. Only three direct supervision contacts were recorded during the course of the placement. The registered person is required to ensure that foster carers are provided with training, resource information, advice and support enabling them to provide appropriate, informed care to young people. The fostering agency must ensure that the welfare of children is safeguarded. Consideration must be given to children/young people's religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic needs.

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
From observation of documentation and discussion with foster carers, the inspector found that care is taken when matching children with carers prior to the commencement of planned placements. Evidence was seen that where placements are made in an emergency, attempts are made to match children/young people appropriately wherever possible. Evidence was seen that Five Rivers Fostering Service have recognised the needs of the varied and diverse community in the London area. Information was seen confirming that the London office have successfully recruited foster carers from a range of ethnic backgrounds.		

Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8)		
The fostering service protects each child or young person from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
Documented evidence was seen that a comprehensive training programme has been developed for prospective foster carers incorporating child protection awareness training. From discussion with foster carers the inspector found that carers are given clear information in relation to anti-bullying, corporal punishment and missing from care policies. Management systems are in place to collate and evaluate information gathered as a result of allegations of neglect or abuse being made of a child in foster care. Following discussions with one foster carer it is recommended that carers be provided with a copy of the fostering services' policies and procedures for reference purposes.		
Percentage of foster children placed who report never or hardly ever being bullied:	X	%

Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.9)		
The fostering service makes sure that each child or young person in foster care is encouraged to maintain and develop family contacts and friendships as set out in her/his care plan and/or foster placement agreement.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
At the time of this report the inspector had received only two feedback forms from children placed by the fostering service. Feedback information indicated that in both cases the children were happy with their placement. Other children visited as part of the inspection process were too young to contribute verbally. From discussion with foster carers the inspector found that children and young people are encouraged and supported to maintain links with parents/relatives and friends in accordance with placement plans. The fostering service ensures that foster carers maintain a daily record of children's mood and behaviour, particularly in response to contact arrangements; this information is fed back to the child's social worker.		

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.5)

The fostering service ensures that children's opinions, and those of their families and others significant to the child, are sought over all issues that are likely to affect their daily life and their future.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The inspector did not meet with any fostered children that were of a sufficient age to contribute to the inspection process. The views of young people are based on written feedback information received.

From discussions with foster carers and inspection of feedback information provided by young people, the inspector was satisfied that the fostering service ensures the views of young people are sought. Foster carers ensure that young people's opinions are fed back to the placing social worker.

From observation of documentation the inspector was satisfied that an appropriate complaints procedure has been developed for use by young people.

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?

2

See standard 17 and corresponding requirement.

From observation of documentation and discussions with staff the inspector found that systems were being developed and implemented ensuring that young people's files are updated to include all relevant health information.

From discussions with foster carers the inspector found that young people were supported to access appropriate health care services. However, from discussions with one foster carer the inspector found that the fostering service did not provide adequate information concerning the placement agreement, specifically concerning responsibility for maintaining links with existing health care services/professionals i.e. health visitor.

There is an outstanding requirement that the fostering service must provide foster carers with a full description of young people's health care needs before the placement begins or as soon as possible afterwards. The requirement has been carried forward in this report with new timescales set for compliance. Requirements that remain unmet pose a risk to young people's well being and will result in the Commission considering enforcement action to secure compliance.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.8)		
The fostering service gives a high priority to meeting the educational needs of each child or young person in foster care and ensures that she/he is encouraged to attain her/his full potential.		
Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	3
<p>From discussions with foster carers the inspector found that young people were supported to engage in education activities. Foster carers attended parents' evenings and maintained links with schools, including participating in educational reviews.</p> <p>From observation of documentation and discussion with staff the inspector was satisfied that new systems of documentation were being implemented. This included relevant paperwork such as Personal Education Plans and, where appropriate, Statements of Special Education Needs, as well as school reports, which would help to demonstrate the child's educational attainment. Contact information was also included i.e. name of the class teacher and head teacher.</p>		

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
<p>At the time of the inspection the oldest child placed by the fostering service was 15 years old. The inspector did not meet with this young person and it was there for not possible to test this standard directly.</p> <p>However, from discussion with foster carers and examination of the fostering service's policies and procedures the inspector was satisfied that support would be provided enabling young people to develop skills, competence and knowledge necessary for adult living.</p>		

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

See standard 3 and corresponding requirement.

From observation of personnel files and discussions with staff the inspector was satisfied that people working for, or in the fostering service were suitable to work with children and young people. Evidence was seen that foster carer's were appropriately recruited and all checks required by regulations were in place.

Total number of staff of the agency:

3

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

1

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?

2

See standard 7 and corresponding requirement.

From discussions with staff the inspector found that workloads were appropriate following the manager's return to duties. Evidence was seen that this was in contrast to allocated workloads during the manager's period of absence.

From discussion with foster carers and examination of documentation the inspector found that foster carers did not receive supervision in line with the statement of purpose during the manager's absence. From discussion with one carer the inspector found that only three face-to-face contacts with staff from the fostering service were recorded during the course of a six month placement. Discussion with other foster carers indicated that telephone contact was maintained by the fostering service where home visits were not taking place.

Arrangements for supervision of foster carers, as described in The Statement of Purpose indicates, "The frequency of supervision is never less than 3 weeks.... For the first two months of any placement, however experienced the carer, supervision shall be weekly.

The registered person must develop and implement robust monitoring procedures ensuring that the frequency of supervision provided to foster carers is in line with the Statement of Purpose. Failure to provide adequate supervision poses a risk to young people's safety and will result in the Commission considering enforcement action to secure compliance.

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?

2

See standard 16 and corresponding requirement.

From discussion with staff and observation of documentation the inspector was satisfied that all foster carers previously approved by the local authority have subsequently been de-registered, reassessed and approved by the fostering service.

At the time of the inspection the inspector found that the fostering service had an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff. This was in line with the Statement of Purpose. However, from discussions with foster carers and examination of documentation the inspector found that this was not the case during the manager's period of absence.

The inspector was concerned that limited support had been provided to one foster carer who was newly approved and had no previous experience of foster caring. From discussions with the foster carer the inspector found that her first placement was arranged at short notice.

The fostering service provided only telephone information regarding the children's background, ages etc. This information subsequently proved to be inaccurate. Evidence was seen that the foster carer had only one face-to face meeting with the fostering service link social worker during a planned review meeting. A follow-up supervision visit was arranged and then subsequently cancelled by the link worker. The foster carer was not advised of a further date for supervision.

The foster carer stated that she experienced difficulties with arranging health care appointments for the fostered children and was not provided with clear information from the fostering service about whose responsibility it would be to make the arrangements.

The inspector found that these difficulties arose as a result of gaps in staffing in the fostering service.

The responsible person is required ensure that, where a short fall in staffing levels occurs, there must be a contingency plan in place to resolve the situation. Failure to provide adequate levels of qualified, competent staff poses a risk to children and young people's well-being and will result in the Commission considering enforcement action.

Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.7)

The fostering service is a fair and competent employer, with sound employment practices and good support for its staff and carers.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

2

See standard 5 and corresponding requirement.

From discussions with foster carers the inspector was satisfied that "out of hours" contact arrangements were known to them. The inspector was satisfied that these arrangements had not been affected by the change in staffing arrangements during the manager's absence.

The inspector saw evidence of a valid certificate of insurance for the fostering service.

The inspector examined documentation describing management systems and arrangements for supervision and appraisal. The inspector found that staff disciplinary procedures did not include information for specific arrangements relating to management cover in the event of a manager being suspended from duties.

The registered person is required to develop and implement robust procedures describing

management cover arrangements in the manager's absence. Documentation must provide details of how short-term and ongoing management cover will be achieved.

Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.7)

There is a good quality training programme to enhance individual skills and to keep staff up-to-date with professional and legal developments.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Evidence was seen that fostering service staff participate in an appropriate induction programme. Access to training and development is also provided.

From discussions with foster carers and examination of documentation the inspector was satisfied that all prospective carers participate in an appropriate residential training programme.

From discussion with the manager the inspector was satisfied that foster carers receive support and funding enabling them to access relevant training courses i.e. NVQ training. Evidence was seen that training portfolios were being developed for all carers as part of new documentation systems.

Evidence was seen that the manager had begun to develop a programme of in house training for carers in line with a previous requirement made.

The inspector saw evidence to confirm that a foster carer support group has also been developed in line with a previous requirement. However, from discussions with staff and foster carers the inspector found that the meetings were not well attended.

It is recommended that further consultation be undertaken with foster carers identifying the reasons for this. The results of consultations should be used to develop a programme of meetings to suit the overall needs of carers.

Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5)

All staff are properly accountable and supported.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

From discussion with staff and observation of documentation the inspector was satisfied that staff who come into contact with foster carers, prospective foster carers and children/young people receive regular supervision. Responsibility for providing supervision is delegated to the manager and a senior member of the staff team. The national fostering manager provided supervision to the deputy manager in the manager's absence.

Evidence was seen that supervision is planned in advance and recorded appropriately.

On the day of inspection the inspector observed that staff participated in a review meeting with senior managers for the fostering service. The purpose of the meeting was to determine the frequency of future staff meetings following the manager's return to duties.

The inspector was satisfied that this standard was met.

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

From discussion with staff and observation of documentation the inspector was satisfied that the fostering service has clear strategies for working with and supporting foster carers. From discussions with foster carers and feedback information provided, the inspector found that payments were received on time. Comments received from foster carers indicated that the quality of service provided by the fostering service was good.

Evidence was seen that the fostering service operates an effective out of hours support service, which is known to foster carers.

The manager stated that strategies were in place to increase staffing levels in response to increasing workloads as a result of a new local authority contract being secured.

No feedback information was received from placing social workers in response to questionnaires provided by the Commission.

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?****2**

See standard 16 and corresponding requirement.

Evidence was seen that foster carers are provided with a copy of the fostering service handbook, which covers all items identified in standard 22.5 of The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2002.

From discussions with foster carers the inspector was satisfied that all carers were allocated a named link social worker and that ongoing support and supervision were provided. However, the inspector found that foster carers receiving supervision and support from the fostering service manager had not been provided with clear information regarding the anticipated length of her absence. No evidence was seen that written information had been provided to carers indicating interim management and supervision arrangements in her absence.

From discussion with one carer the inspector found that she had repeatedly attempted to contact the manager and was concerned that the fostering service remained evasive in response to her questions. The inspector found that although there was no documented evidence to confirm this, verbal confirmation was provided by the National Fostering Service Manager that he personally responded to the carer's request for information.

The responsible person is required to ensure that support and information is provided to foster carers, including alternative arrangements for supervision where the named supervisor is absent from duty. Failure to provide foster carers with ongoing advice, information and support poses a risk to the welfare of children/young people and will result in the Commission considering enforcement action.

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?

2

The inspector did not attend training for foster carers as part of this inspection.

Documented evidence was seen confirming that a comprehensive residential training programme for prospective foster carers was in place. From discussions with foster carers and staff, the inspector was satisfied that all prospective foster carers are required to attend the residential training weekend.

From discussions with foster carers and examination of feedback information provided by foster carers, the inspector found that there was no ongoing programme of training and development in place for carers. Feedback comments indicated that an ongoing programme of training would be desirable.

There is an outstanding requirement that the manager must develop an ongoing, effective programme of training and self-development for all foster carers. The requirement has been carried forward in this report with new timescales set for compliance. Requirements that remain unmet pose a risk to children/young people's welfare and will result in the Commission considering enforcement action to secure compliance.

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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The inspector examined a sample of case records. Records were found to be up to date and included all relevant statutory information. The inspector saw evidence that work had commenced to develop and improve existing recording systems for children's records. The manager advised that case records would be developed to include life story work and improved medical and educational information. From discussions with staff the inspector found that requests had been sent to placing social workers where gaps in information were identified.

From discussions with foster carers the inspector was satisfied that carers understood the need to encourage children/young people to reflect on his/her history and keep appropriate memorabilia.

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?	2
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From inspection of case records for foster carers and children/young people the inspector was satisfied that records held contained all information required by regulations. The inspector was satisfied that confidential records were held securely. A clear policy was available describing the procedure for accessing records.

A record of complaints was maintained by the manager. Evidence was seen that two complaints were recorded since the last inspection. Both complaints received were from foster carers. The inspector found that the manager was not able to provide documented evidence confirming the nature of the complaints or a record of outcomes. The manager stated that in both cases the complainant received a written response from the fostering service. No documented evidence was available to confirm this.

The manager is required to ensure that robust systems are in place ensuring that the fostering services' complaints procedure is instigated in response to any complaint received. Accurate documented evidence must be maintained detailing the nature of the complaint, action taken in response and relevant outcomes. Failure to maintain an accurate record of all complaints received will result in the Commission considering enforcement action to secure compliance.

Number of current foster placements supported by the agency:			16
Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months:			19
Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months:			3
Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months:			5
Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months:			1
Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £	370	Maximum £	1090

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

From observation of the fostering service premises and viewing the insurance certificate, the inspector was satisfied that the premises are suitable for the purpose.

This standard was met.

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?

0

The inspector did not test this standard.

Five Rivers Fostering Service is a national organisation and inspectors from the Wiltshire area office of the NCSC tested this standard on behalf of the National Care Standards Commission. The inspectors found that this standard was not met.

The key findings in relation to this standard are included in the report for the Salisbury office of the Five Rivers Fostering Service.

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?

0

The inspector did not test this standard for the London (Essex) branch of the Five Rivers Fostering Service.

Inspectors from the Wiltshire area office of the NCSC tested this standard on behalf of the National Care Standards Commission. The inspectors found that this standard was not met.

The key findings in relation to this standard are included in the report for the Salisbury office of the Five Rivers Fostering Service.

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

From discussions with foster carers, the manager and observation of documentation the inspector was satisfied that foster carers receive fees in line with the Pan London agreement. The inspector was advised that fees are reviewed annually. The inspector was satisfied that this standard is met.

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?

0

The inspector did not attend the fostering panel as part of this inspection. Five Rivers Fostering Service currently holds one fostering panel for all of its branches. Inspectors for the Wiltshire Area Office of the NCSC undertook observation of the fostering panel on behalf of the National Care Standards Commission. The Inspectors found that this standard was mostly met. The key findings in relation to this standard are included in the report for the Salisbury office of the Five Rivers Fostering Service.

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?	9
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Five Rivers Fostering Service does not provide short-term placements within the meaning of Regulation 37 of the Fostering Service Regulations 2002.

Family and Friends as Carers

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- Local authority fostering services' policies and procedures for assessing, approving, supporting and training foster carers recognise the particular contribution that can be made by and the particular needs of family and friends as carers.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.4)

These standards are all relevant to carers who are family and friends of the child, but there is recognition of the particular relationship and position of family and friend carers.

Key Findings and Evidence	Standard met?	9
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This standard does not apply to Five Rivers Fostering Service.

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____
Date _____

D.1 Registered Person's or Responsible Local Authority Manager's comments/confirmation relating to the content and accuracy of the report for the above inspection.

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 21ST January 2001 and 9th February 2004 and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

28/04/04.

Initial responses were received from the National Fostering manager and are held on file at CSCI offices.

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

Amendments to the report were necessary

NO

Comments were received from the provider

YES

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

NO

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

YES

Note:

In instances where there is a major difference of view between the Inspector and the Registered Provider responsible Local Authority fostering service Manager both views will be made available on request to the Area Office.

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by which indicates how statutory requirements and recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

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

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

NO

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

NO

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

NO

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

YES

Other: <enter details here>

NO

Public reports

It should be noted that all NCSC inspection reports are public documents. Reports on children's homes are only obtainable on personal application to NCSC offices.

D.3 PROVIDER'S AGREEMENT

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

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

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

Or

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

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

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