



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

Time For Children

**24 Mossford Street
London
E3 4TH**

Lead Inspector
Peter Daniel

Announced Inspection
8th February 2007 10:00 am

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of service	Time For Children
Address	24 Mossford Street London E3 4TH
Telephone number	0870 241 6333
Fax number	
Email address	admin@timeforchildren.org
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Time For Children Limited
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	Mrs Janet Digby-Baker
Type of registration	Fostering Agencies

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

Date of last inspection 6th February 2006

Brief Description of the Service:

Time for Children is an independent fostering agency that was established in 1999. The agency specialises in providing short and long-term placements for sibling groups. Their motto is 'enabling brothers and sisters to stay together'.

Time for Children prides itself on being small, friendly and like an extended family. The agency has approximately 55 children in placement. The statement of purpose says 'Time for Children has a passionate belief in the welfare of the whole child, which includes personal, physical and social education'.

The agency offices are based in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, five minutes away from Mile End tube station. The offices also accommodate an accredited contact centre. The agency has foster carers all over London and some in the Essex and Kent areas. The majority of staff is employed on a 'teleworking' system that means they are based within their homes and in contact by phone and computer.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection included a visit to Time for Children's office in Mile End, attendance at the Fostering Panel, reading files and policies, interviews with staff, a meeting with a group of carers and visits to placements.

What the service does well:

Time for Children Fostering Agency offers excellent quality care to the children placed with its carers and is meeting all the standards in this report. The fostering agency has a cohesive and experienced management team. Staff are experienced and qualified. The agency has a 'family feel' about it and takes a keen interest towards all its foster carers. The foster carers receive excellent, regular support and ongoing training. The agency has an effective Fostering Panel.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Time for Children continues to consolidate its delivery of its fostering services. There has been improvement in reviews, recording and data processes. The agency has caught up on all but one of the annual carer reviews and this is in the process of being completed. The service has introduced an action plan for trans racial placements. It has improved its maintenance of staff supervision records. It has introduced a new policy on supporting young people towards independence. The agency has learnt that it needs to be more robust about renewing police checks in future

What they could do better:

The agency could improve its record keeping and should introduce a system for monitoring the quality and adequacy of records

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

inspection.

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

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Being Healthy

The intended outcome for this Standard is:

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

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

JUDGEMENT – we looked at the outcome for Standard:

Quality in this outcome area is excellent . The judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to the service, inspection of files, visits to placements, discussion with foster carers and attendance at the Fostering Panel.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 12 The inspection included meeting with a group of foster carers, visits to placements and a random check of foster carer's files including annual reviews and children's files. There was evidence that health matters are being addressed as part of the Supervising Social Worker's agenda. There was also evidence that children and young people had undergone their annual Looked After medical and had been registered with a GP, optician and dentist. Immunisations were up to date where appropriate The inspection included discussions with foster carers. One carer was working with CAMHS regarding a young person receiving therapy. Another foster carer informed the inspector that she attended regular appointments with the foster child at hospital. Another had stayed three days at the hospital with a child referred for asthma. Other carers had escorted children to attend various appointments including physiotherapy and speech and language therapy.

The agency has a healthy eating policy and expects its foster carers to promote a healthy diet. The agency also promotes physical activities and children and young people in placement are all provided with a bike and have swimming lessons paid for.

File evidence showed that foster homes had had Health and Safety checks done within the past twelve months.

Staying Safe

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

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

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

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

Quality in this outcome area is good. The judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service, meeting with managers and staff, inspection of policies and procedures, perusal of files, visits to placements, meeting foster carers including attendance at the Fostering Panel.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 3 and 15 The management and staff of the fostering service are suitable to run a service concerned with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The managers are experienced in running fostering services – see NMS 2 that refers to qualifications. Evidence from reading staff files showed there was an effective recruitment policy that included evidence of up to date CRB checks, qualifications and employment history. Further evidence was seen that staff are registered with the General Council for Social Care. Police checks are renewed every three years.

NMS 6 The fostering service has suitable foster carers on its books. Examination of foster carer files showed that CRB checks (for both carers where appropriate), medicals, references, and Form F's were on file. The inspector was aware that there had been a case where the foster parents were refusing to complete a CRB renewal. For a while the foster carers were caring for a child in spite of their CRB having expired. The inspector has discussed the issue with the manager of the agency and it is accepted that the agency should have been more robust in its dealings with the foster carers. On reflection the agency acknowledges that it should have taken a tougher line and de-registered the carers immediately but were balancing this against the wishes of the Local Authority and the child to maintain a positive placement. The inspector is satisfied that the agency will now give absolute priority to CRB checks. Although the agency has now addressed this issue and the standard has been assessed as currently being met, a requirement has been set to ensure the renewal of checks is applied in all cases. **See Requirement 1.** The inspection also included visits to three foster homes where children and young people were interviewed as direct beneficiaries of the service. The inspector was impressed by the high standard of care offered by the carers. The impression was that the carers were fully committed to their role. The children who were interviewed expressed full satisfaction that they were being suitably cared for and their needs were being met. The visits to placements confirmed that Time For Children is promoting an excellent standard of care to the children placed with its carers.

The inspection also noted that the accommodation of the foster homes visited was comfortable and suitable for the purpose of meeting the needs of foster children.

All new carers attend bespoke training that covers Safe and Healthy Caring by the end of which all participants are aware of National Standards on safe and healthy caring, have undertaken a full assessment about Health and Safety in their homes and are clear about expectations on how to support and sustain healthy living. All foster carers undertake first aid training every three years.

Information on files confirmed evidence that annual health and safety checks are being completed. All files contained a comprehensive health and safety checklist.

NMS 8 The service matches children to carers by giving consideration to the child's age, gender, disability, race, ethnic, cultural and linguistic needs. Time for Children uses an evidence based approach to assessment. Where trans racial placements are made, the agency has an action plan for supporting placements. It addresses food, self-care, social networks, leisure, positive self identity, role models and positive modelling. The fostering service provides support and information to enable the child to be provided with the best possible care and to develop a positive understanding of her/his heritage. The success of matching and the involvement of the Fostering Panel in this process is indicated by the fact that there has only been one disruption in the past year.

NMS 9 Children are protected from abuse and/or exploitation. The inspector was satisfied that systems are in place to monitor the number and outcome of all child protection allegations concerning a child in foster care. The inspection included scrutinizing information concerning child protection allegations made during the last year. There was one child protection allegation in the past year. The inspector was satisfied that Time for Children had satisfactorily dealt with all allegations in line with the London Child Protection Procedures. The allegation had been responded to appropriately and satisfactorily concluded. Time for Children reported the incident to the CSCI.

NMS 30 The fostering panel is organised efficiently and effectively. The inspector attended and observed a panel meeting. The fostering panel was well organised with a clear agenda. The panel members have expertise in child-care and adult education. The panel membership also included a former Looked After child. The chair was experienced in the knowledge of fostering and placement issues. An external adviser who does not sit on the panel offers medical advice. The panel was observed to be providing an effective and rigorous quality assurance function in relation to the assessment process. The inspector saw a sample of form F's that were of an acceptable standard and provided comprehensive information. Members had read the papers in advance. The members demonstrated robust questioning. The chair provided competent leadership and good chairing skills. The chair was clear in recommending the terms upon which the approval for each carer was given. The inspector is making a couple of recommendations to enhance the function of the panel. Firstly, the panel should consider broadening the expertise of its membership to include someone with an education and child health background. NMS 30.8 Secondly a pre-panel meeting should be held to provide an additional quality assurance function and the appropriate submission of cases NMS 30.5. **See recommendation 1.** The panel has had training in the past year and covered the topic on reviewing. Panel members have been CRB checked. The panel is nevertheless commended for the way it is promoting the welfare of children in foster care.

Enjoying and Achieving

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

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

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

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

Quality in this outcome area is excellent . The judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to the service, meeting a group of foster carers, visiting placements and discussion with young people in placement. It has also included reading a selection of Form F's.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 7 Time for Children has an Equal Opportunities Policy and values diversity. All Foster carers and staff have received training on equal opportunities. The staff and panel members' ethnicity reflects the inner city environment that the agency inhabits. The agency has produced a template to use as a guide when supporting trans-racial placements. This is an additional check to ensure that the agency promotes the identity of children in placement. Last year the agency held a Caribbean day. The inspector met a group of foster carers. It was evident that the agency has recruited and supports a range of foster carers that reflect the ethnic diversity of the community. Further evidence was seen through information held by the agency. The agency seeks to match each child to a suitable carer who can meet the child's individual needs.

NMS 13 Time for Children is committed to promoting and supporting educational achievement and gives priority to meeting the educational needs of children in placement. The agency has an education database recording the

education details of all children in placement. All the children placed by Time for Children who are of school age are in full time education. Discussions with foster carers and examination of files confirmed that foster carers are taking foster children to school (where age appropriate), attending parent-teacher, PEP and IEP meetings and helping children with homework. One foster child showed the inspector that he had a computer in his room.

Foster carers and children spoke of being involved in various social activities including visits to the cinema, swimming, gym, theatre, eating out, trips, visits to the park, shopping trips and going on holiday.

NMS 31 The standard regarding short-term breaks was not assessed as Time for Children does not offer this service.

Making a Positive Contribution

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

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

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

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

Quality in this outcome area is good. The judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service, attending a meeting with foster carers, visits to placements and discussion with foster carers and young people in placement.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 10 Time for Children promotes contact for children and young people. Foster carers understand the child's needs for family contact. Evidence on file and contact sheets and confirmation from talking to carers and children confirmed that contact is taking place between the child/young person and their birth family and extended family, as appropriate. There was also evidence that carers are helping to facilitate contact by escorting children to contact centres to see parents and siblings and also helping children with telephone contact. Discussions with foster carers confirmed that all appreciated the need for children to have contact with their birth families where appropriate. One carer was making a photo album with the child. Contact is covered as part of the training when new carers undergo the induction programme. The agency runs a special contact centre with child friendly rooms where children attend for supervised contact. The centre is inspected and accredited by NACCC. Assistant social workers are employed who transport children to and from contact and also support carers in dealing with difficult contact issues.

NMS 11 Children and young people have the opportunity to express their views and wishes and feelings through attendance at their Looked After Review and through completion of the LAC Consultation Form. Evidence was seen on file

confirming children's attendance at their statutory review. The agency has produced a child friendly Children's Guide which also contains a whistle blowing policy. Children are advised about how to complain and the guide mentions advocacy services such as VOICE.

Achieving Economic Wellbeing

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

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

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

Quality in this outcome area is good. The judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to the agency, the inspection of policies and procedures, perusal of files, meeting with a group of Foster Carers and visiting placements.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 14 Time for Children has policies relating to Leaving Care and foster carers are actively involved in the Pathway Plan and preparing young people for independence. The agency has developed a new policy on supporting young people and guidance was seen as evidence. Time for Children provides training on supporting children towards independence. The inspector heard about a case whereby the agency has put a lot of effort into supporting a young person who was not receiving adequate support from his Local Authority and put the young person in touch with advocacy services 3

NMS 29 Foster carers are paid in line with independent agency rates. Foster carers receive clear information about the allowances and expenses payable and how to access them. Foster Carers were satisfied that they were being paid a competitive rate and that receipt of payment was reliable.

Management

The intended outcomes for these Standards are:

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

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

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

Quality in this outcome area is good. The judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to the service, meeting with managers and staff, inspecting policies, procedures and files, visits to placements, meeting with foster carers and attendance at the Fostering Panel.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 1 The Statement of Purpose was updated in January 2007 and was seen as evidence. It includes the mission statement, aims and objectives and agency details, organisational structure, recruitment process, panel policies and procedures, training report for staff and foster carers, annual staff appraisal template, staff supervision template, child protection policy update action plan for supporting trans-racial placements and a statement for financial controls and procedures.

NMS 2 Time for Children is managed by staff who have appropriate skills and experience. The Managing Director has a Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) and a Diploma in Youth and Community Work; the Director of Training has a BA in English and an MSC in Training; the Director of Finance is a member of the Financial Services Institute. The Assistant Manager has a CQSW and is currently studying for an NVQ Level 4. The five Supervising Social Work staff have a social work qualification – three have a CQSW and two have a Diploma in Social Work. The three Assistant Social Workers are not qualified but two are graduates. They have however attended in-service training covering child protection, supporting and supervising contact and health and safety.

NMS 4 The agency has procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the fostering service. There is a clear organisational structure. Senior management consists of the Manager of the agency, the Director of Training and a Director of Finance. The Assistant Team Manager reports to the Manager. The Assistant Team Manager is accountable for the work of five Supervising Social Workers. There are three Assistant Social Workers who are responsible for supporting foster carers by doing the school run and facilitating contact. The Fostering Panel provides an effective quality assurance function. All first reviews of foster carers are referred to the fostering panel. Thereafter, reviews are referred whenever the fostering service considers it necessary. The inspector examined the records kept for monitoring complaints and allegations and was satisfied that this information is managed efficiently and all procedures are followed. The inspector is recommending that the agency develops a system to monitor the quality and adequacy of records so that it can take remedial action when necessary. **See recommendation 2.** The issue of records is further referred to under standards 24 and 25

NMS 5 and 16 Staff are organised and managed efficiently. There is a clear management structure and accountability. Staff informed the inspector that they are receiving regular formal supervision i.e. approximately once a month, as well as informal supervision as and when necessary. Managers are available for consultation 24 hours around the clock. One member of staff told the inspector 'I am more than satisfied with supervision and support'. Staff confirmed they had undergone an appraisal in the past year. The inspector was aware that team meetings are not being held on a regular basis. As part of the need for accountability and support, a recommendation has been included to reinstate staff/team meetings on a regular basis. **See recommendation 3.**

NMS 17 The agency has adequate numbers of trained and competent staff. Staff qualifications are covered under NMS 2. The agency employs virtually a fully qualified staff group. All staff receive regular supervision and staff training. There was evidence from records that the experience, skills and qualifications of staff working within the agency meets the National Minimum Standards. Staff receive competitive salaries, clear workloads, regular supervision and access to training. All staff had reported that they were well supported and felt valued.

NMS 18 The inspector inspected records of staff who had been recruited since the last inspection. Evidence showed that all necessary checks and paper work were in place:- CRB, GSCC, probationary period review, references and proof of qualifications. Supervision notes were also on file. One file did not have a letter of appointment and neither file had a record of the interview. It is recommended that this information is in future held on file –**see Recommendation 4.**

NMS 19 Time for Children has provided appropriate training for its staff. The Assistant Manager is currently undertaking an NVQ level 4 in Managing Care. One Supervising Social Worker has attended a Training the Trainers course run by Fostering Network and one has attended a training course at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. Other training attended, has included computer training and diversity training. One Supervising Social Worker attended training with foster carers on contact and child development. The three Assistant Social Workers had done in-house training covering a wide range of topics. One staff member said they wanted more training to do with understanding the Supervising Social Worker role, although he/she was not specific. It is recommended that the Director of Training when evaluating and reviewing the training programme considers this request. This has not been included as a formal recommendation

NMS 21, 22 and 23 Foster carers are appropriately supported. The inspector heard evidence from foster carers that they are well supported in their role by their Supervising Social Worker. Foster carers confirmed that they were receiving regular support - approximately every 4 weeks. Additionally, they were receiving regular telephone contact. Time for Children operates a duty service that offers out of hours support to foster carers. Foster carers confirmed that they are receiving formal supervision once every four weeks. One foster carer informed the inspector that *'support is excellent'. The Supervising Social Worker is there for me and visits every four weeks and telephones regularly'*.

Foster carers have the opportunity of attending a support group which doubles as a training day. These groups/training days are held four times a year.

There was evidence on file that unannounced visits are taking place once a year.

Foster carers are offered a comprehensive training programme. All new foster carers undertake a four day induction programme focusing on child protection, complaints, confidentiality, safe and healthy caring, supporting children through change, helping children move on, expectations of foster carers, valuing diversity, promoting self-esteem, identity, understanding life story work, managing challenging behaviour and contact.

Following induction training, foster carers have to attend four training days a year. Last year, the training covered managing challenging behaviour, professional fostering –legal requirements, report writing and note keeping, child protection update and supporting diversity.

Additionally, all foster carers are offered NVQ level 3 or 4 training. To date, six carers have completed NVQ level 3 training and two have done level 4. One foster carer is completing a psychotherapy course and two are doing counselling courses. All foster carers do first aid training every three years. Foster carers are also offered courses run by Fostering Network.

Some foster carers informed the inspector that they would like more opportunity to meet socially e.g. at a Xmas party, going out for meals and outings. The agency is willing to offer this. A recommendation has been included suggesting that the agency develops this area of support **See recommendation 5.**

NMS 24 and 25. The examination of foster children's and foster carer's files showed that records were kept in a secure place and were reasonably well organised and maintained. It was observed that notes on supervisory visits were mixed up with correspondence. It is recommended that a separate section is included for filing notes on visits to foster carers. It is also suggested that the format for recording visits to foster carers is more structured and

includes the headings within 'Every Child Matters'. The inspection noted that not all reports were signed and dated. It was noted that files did not always contain comprehensive information on the child. This was mainly because the Local Authority had not forwarded up to date records/reports. The agency has agreed to design a pro-forma letter to send to Local Authorities to request information. It is important that foster carers have details concerning the child/young person. These matters have all been included as a recommendation **See Recommendation 6**. A recommendation has already been included to monitor the effectiveness of record keeping – see Recommendation 2.

NMS 26, The premises of Time for Children is suitable for the purpose of delivering a fostering service. The office provides secure filing equipment and an efficient base for staff to work – the Supervising Social Workers are home based but have the option of working in the office if they choose. The premises has good facilities and also provides a contact centre for children and their families

NMS 27,28 Time for Children is financially viable and has sufficient financial resources to fulfil its obligations. The financial systems of the agency are properly operated and maintained in accordance with sound and appropriate accounting standards and practice. The Financial Director manages the day to day financial management and invoicing. Chartered accountants maintain and audit the agency's accounts. Foster carers confirmed that they receive reliable payments from the agency. The profit and loss account was seen as evidence and confirmed the above findings.

NMS 32. Time for Children does not provide kinship care and therefore this standard was not inspected.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

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

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

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

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

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

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	3
6	3
8	3
9	3
15	3
30	4

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
7	3
13	4
31	X

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

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

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

No

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection?

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

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

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
1	FS15	Regulation 20	The fostering agency must carry Police checks every three years as listed under Schedule 1 (7) in order to safeguard the welfare of children and young people.	30/06/07

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

No.	Refer to Standard	Good Practice Recommendations
1	FS30	The manager should broadening the panel membership to include someone with an education and child health background - see NMS 30.8; It should also hold a pre-panel meeting to add an additional quality assurance function regarding the submission of reports and cases – see NMS 30.5.
2.	FS25	The manager should develop a system for monitoring the quality and adequacy of records
3.	FS20	The manager should reinstate staff/team meetings on a regular basis as part of the need for accountability and support.
4.	FS15	The manager should ensure that letters of appointment and records of interviews should be held on file in all cases as part of sound employment practices in relation to both staff and carers.
5.	FS21	The manager, as part of the agency's strategy for supporting foster carers should consider providing social activities such as a Xmas party and outings. Foster carers have requested this themselves.
6.	FS24	The manager should ensure the following matters concerning record keeping are addressed: a separate section should be included for filing records of supervisory visits; supervisory records of visits to foster homes should use the headings within 'Every Child Matters'; all reports need to be signed and dated, information held on the child should be regularly updated to ensure a comprehensive record is held. See NMS Standards 23.4. 24.1 24.6 25.2

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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