Making Social Care Better for People



inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

Chrysalis Care Ltd

Kings House 7 Princes Street Bexleyheath DA7 4BQ

Lead Inspector Peter Daniel

Key Announced Inspection6th October 200609:30

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

Reader Information			
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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 <u>www.dh.gov.uk</u> or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: <u>www.tso.co.uk/bookshop</u>

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	Chrysalis Care Ltd
Address	Kings House 7 Princes Street Bexleyheath DA7 4BQ
Telephone number	0845 230 6656
Fax number	020 8304 3042
Email address	
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Chrysalis Care Ltd
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	
Type of registration	Fostering Agencies

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

Date of last inspection 27th February 2006

Brief Description of the Service:

Chrysalis Care is an independent fostering agency that recruits and trains foster carers in Kent, Essex, Luton and the London area. Chrysalis Care aims to transform the lives of children and young people through providing them with trained, supported and committed foster carers. The agency places children for a large number of London boroughs. It has a Children's Service that supports carers and offers individual packages of work with children to help them reach their potential.

SUMMARY

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

The inspection covered examination of all the functions dealt by Chrysalis Care Fostering Agency. It included inspection of the assessment, approval and support given to its carers. The inspection also included sending questionnaires to foster carers and children in placement.

What the service does well:

Chrysalis Care has a coherent team approach involving experienced and committed staff and carers. Its operational systems are robust. The foster carers are extremely well supported and are offered appropriate training. The agency has a Children's Services section that provides valuable support to foster carers and children through the offer of services such as therapy, tuition and recreational activities. The inspector was impressed with the monthly agenda sheet that covers details of supervising social workers discussions with carers. The reports are structured under 'Every Child Matters' outcomes.

What has improved since the last inspection?

The agency has consolidated its operation and is functioning on a sound, professional basis.

What they could do better:

The agency needs to formalise arrangements for the supervision of the senior managers. It needs to ensure that the supervision and appraisal of staff is regular and consistent.

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

The report of this inspection is available from <u>enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk</u> or by contacting your local CSCI office.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

CONTENTS

Being Healthy
Staying Safe
Enjoying and Achieving
Making a Positive Contribution
Achieving Economic Wellbeing
Management
Scoring of Outcomes
Statutory Requirements Identified During the Inspection

Being Healthy

The intended outcome for this Standard is:

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

The Commission considers Standard 12 the key standard to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

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 this service, inspection of files, a meeting with foster carers, visits to placements and the sending out of questionnaires to carers and children.

Chrysalis Care provides services that promote the health and development of children who are in placement.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 12 Chrysalis Care promotes the health development of children/young people in placement. The inspection included a random check of children's files. Files contained health information sheets. Evidence showed that children had medical checks including dental and eye checks. All children in placement have received an annual health check in the past twelve months. Thirteen children had been referred to CAMHS for treatment. There was evidence that foster carers had been taking the young people to appointments. Medical consent is now being obtained from parents. Notes from Looked After Review minutes further confirmed that the child's health needs were being met. The inspection included interviewing foster carers and foster children. All the children seen had been registered with a GP, dentist and optician. One carer had been involved in liaising with a local CAMHS service. A foster child who was overweight was being advised by her carer how to improve her diet. The agency's foster panel deploys a medical advisor who signs off medical reports. The agency, as part of its package of care, is able to offer play therapy to children to help them address emotional issues and make sense of life experiences and build their self-esteem. The inspector saw notes of play therapy work over a number of sessions. The child had used a variety of mediums including art, craft and drama to explore her sense of self.

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 at least once during a 12 month period.

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, the inspection of policies and procedures, perusal of files, a meeting with foster carers and visits to placements.

The agency has effective systems in place for ensuring the recruitment and management of staff, the recruitment of foster carers and the matching of children and carers. The organisation of the Fostering Panel was not inspected on this occasion. It had been inspected as recently as February 2006 and met the standards. The panel had demonstrated that it has the competence to make good quality decisions about the assessment and approval of foster carers.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 3 The management of the fostering service is suitable to run a business concerned with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The directors and managers are experienced in running fostering services – see NMS 2 that refers to qualifications. Evidence showed that the agency is operating a rigorous recruitment policy for staff and foster carers and that all checks including CRB checks and references were in place. The qualifications of supervising social workers were also seen. There was further evidence that

staff have been 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. The inspection included the perusal of foster carer's files and visits to three foster homes where foster children 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 separately, expressed full satisfaction that they were being suitably cared for and their needs were being met. This was also confirmed from receipt of questionnaires. The visits to placements confirmed that Chrysalis Care is promoting an excellent standard of care to the children placed with its carers.

New foster carers are provided with information packs containing policies and procedures and are brought 'up to speed' by the Supervising Social Worker. In addition, the agency offers 'Foundation Training,' an online course for new foster carers that complements other training. It is especially helpful for carers who cannot attend other training events.

A variety of training has been offered to foster carers. There are three groups undertaking the NVQ level 3 in social care. Two carers who were interviewed confirmed they had completed or were about to finish the NVQ course. Two have completed the course and twelve are currently doing the training. Four carers are studying the B.Tech Course. The agency also offers a training session every month and the training is held as locally as possible to the carers. Foster carers confirmed they had attended courses including Safe Care, Bereavement and Loss, First Aid, Behaviour Management and 'Every Child Matters'.

The inspector visited three foster homes during the inspection. The accommodation was observed as comfortable and suitable for the purpose of meeting the needs of foster children.

The inspector heard evidence that foster carers are well supported in their role by their Supervising Social Worker. Foster carers were interviewed and confirmed that they were receiving regular support-every four weeks. Additionally, they were receiving regular telephone contact, from their Supervising Social Worker. Chrysalis Care also operates a duty service that offers out of hours support to foster carers.

Foster carers also have the opportunity of attending a support group that are held monthly at either Whitstable or Bexleyheath. One of the foster carers told the inspector that she found the support group a positive experience where she got support from her peer colleagues. NMS 8 The service matches children to carers by giving consideration to the child's age, gender, disability, racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic needs before placing appropriately. The inspector observed the duty board that provides information about the vacancy situation. The agency makes every effort to match carefully and not just fill placements merely for the sake of it. The number of placement disruptions between March and September 2006 is four. This is indicative that there has been careful matching and that on the whole the majority of placements (97%) have been successful. Since the last inspection the agency has made a policy decision not to make placements with new carers outside of their registration category.

NMS 9 Children are protected from abuse and/or exploitation. The agency has a child protection and bullying policy that was seen as evidence. The inspector saw evidence of a Family Safe Care Policy on a carer's file. It covered such topics as bedtimes, bathing, going out, sexual health and alcohol and drugs. Foster carers have been offered training in the safe caring of children. Evidence was also seen that foster carers had attended child protection training in relation to 'Every Child Matters'.

NMS 15 Staff working for Chrysalis Care are competent to work with children and young people. The inspection included interviews with the staff team and evaluation of staff recruitment records and files. The agency employs a range of staff with varied backgrounds and experience. The range of experience covers social work, play therapy and counselling.

Chrysalis Care has comprehensive and robust recruitment procedures. Inspection of staff files showed that there were up to date CRB checks and NSPCC and Local Authority checks were in place. Practitioner staff had been registered with the General Council for Social Care. In addition evidence was seen of employment forms, references, staff qualifications and terms and conditions of appointment.

NMS 30 In view of the fact that the panel had been inspected only 7 months previously and had met the standards, the inspector did not attend the panel on this occasion. From reading the minutes of the fostering panel meetings, the panel appeared well organised. It operates to a clear agenda and has a good balance of gender, ethnicity and expertise amongst its members. The panel includes an ex-young person in care. Medical advice to the panel is offered via a GP who does not actually sit on the panel. The core of the panel's business is approving assessments and monitoring reviews. The inspector saw a sample of form F's that were of a satisfactory standard.

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 at least once during a 12 month period.

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 a group of foster carers, visits to placements, inspection of Form F's and discussion with young people in placement, including questionnaires.

The service gives priority to meeting the educational needs of children.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 7 Chrysalis Care has an Equal Opportunities Policy and values diversity. The agency has recruited and supports a range of foster carers that reflect the ethnicity of the community served and the diversity of the children who are placed. The inspector saw evidence of this, as held by the agency. The agency seeks to match each child to a suitable carer who can meet the child's individual needs. One foster carer informed the inspector 'we appreciate the multi-ethnic perspective of the agency. Everybody's need is cared for'.

NMS 13 The agency promotes educational achievement and recreational activities. Chrysalis Care has an Education Policy and is committed to promoting educational standards for the children in placement. All children in placement, except those of pre-school age, are attending school. The majority have a Personal Education Plan. The inspector met with a group of foster carers. They confirmed that Chrysalis Care had provided tuition to children in placement. One carer said she regularly attended reviews and meetings to discuss the Personal Education Plan of the child in placement. Another carer said the Supervising Social Worker attended meetings with her, whenever

necessary. The inspector visited three foster placements. All provided facilities where the young person could do their homework and opportunities to use a computer. The inspector observed a foster carer helping the foster child understand how to tell the time. Other support given by carers included helping the child every day with her homework, taking up an issue of bullying with the Head Teacher and attending a parent meeting.

Chrysalis Care has a Children's Services Manager whose job includes liaising with Education Departments and harnessing education support including tuition. The agency offers this facility as part of its service, at no extra cost.

Chrysalis Care also promotes social activities on behalf of its foster children. Foster carers spoke of children involved in football, athletics and dance clubs, attending Sunday School and visiting the theatre. Evidence on children's files showed that one child had been on a trip to Paris, another was engaged in gym activities and another visiting the library. One foster child said she attended an activities centre during half-term. Another child said' *Chrysalis Care take me out to the bowling alley, the theatre and the park. I like the trips. We also have a Xmas party'*.

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 at least once during a 12 month period.

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, visits to the placements and discussion with foster carers and young people in placement. Young people had also completed questionnaires.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 10 Records on file were seen that confirmed that contact is supported by the carer and is taking place between the child/young person and their birth family, where appropriate. The inspector met with a group of foster carers. All the carers understood the need for encouraging contact. Some of the carers were escorting children to a contact venue to meet their family. Evidence on a child's file verified that contact with the birth family was regularly discussed at the Looked After review. One child informed the inspector that she goes to a contact centre to see her mother and another said she has contact with her brother once a month.

NMS 11 The agency's policy is to consult as much as possible with children/young people in placement. Apart from the opportunity that children have to express their views through attendance at their Looked After review and completion of LAC Consultation Forms, the agency convenes a support group for children each holiday (three or four times a year) The children's support groups provide the opportunity for young people to meet and discuss issues associated with their experiences. The groups are held at Bexleyheath and Whitstable. The agency has also produced a Children's Guide and a Complaints Procedure and Complaints Form. The literature also includes useful telephone numbers such as Chrysalis Care, Childline, Voice and the CSCI. This

was seen as evidence. All the children interviewed said they attended their Looked After Review. They also knew how to make a complaint and who to speak to. One young person confirmed her attendance at the support group.

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, a meeting with foster carers and visits to the placements.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 14 Chrysalis Care has policies relating to Leaving Care and preparing young people for independence. The agency has produced a leaving care pack. It covers information on budgeting, cooking, writing a CV and household matters. The foster carer is expected to work through the topics with the young person. It was noted that eight young people over 15 years had a Pathway Plan.

NMS 29 Chrysalis Care does not publicise foster carer's payments. A basic rate is payable to carers and additional sums are paid for clothing and pocket monies dependent on the young person's age. Foster carers were satisfied that they were being paid a competitive rate.

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 17, 21, 24 and 32 the key standards to be inspected at least once during a 12 month period.

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 this service, meeting with managers and staff, inspection of policies and procedures, perusal of files, meeting with foster carers and visits to placements.

EVIDENCE:

NMS 1 Chrysalis Care has a clear Statement of Purpose. It is produced in an excellent style that sets out clearly the services provided for children, its aims and objectives and the way the service is organised and managed, including the process for approving and supporting foster carers. It addresses all the requirements of the regulations. A copy of the Statement of Purpose was seen as evidence.

NMS 2 Chrysalis Care has an experienced management group. The Directors have a social work background and have Social Work or Therapy qualifications. The Area Manager has a Dip. SW qualification. The Customer Manager has a degree in Social Studies and a CQSW. The Senior Social Worker and Senior Practitioners have Dip. SW qualifications. One of the Senior Practitioners also has a Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work. The Supervising Social Workers are all qualified. There also two Assistant Social Workers currently doing a degree course in Social Work. Qualifications of staff were seen on file. The administrative staff are experienced. One foster carer replied in her questionnaire 'there is a good management team'.

NMS 4,5 16 The agency has clear procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the fostering service and ensuring quality performance. The Board of Directors meets fortnightly and is responsible for the strategic planning of the services. The Area Manager and the Customer Manager are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the service and report to the Board every three weeks. The Fostering Panel's role is to make recommendations on the approval of new foster carers and carry out reviews on existing carers. Through the chair, it also advises the agency on quality assurance and service standards issues.

Staff are managed through supervision. Team meetings are held every three weeks. A Social Work Practice meeting is held every month. Staff stated that they were very satisfied with the level of support from management and the fact that their training needs were being met.

The service is managed efficiently. The inspector saw evidence that the agency is maintaining a range of data collection and statistics that provides information on the activities of the service. The Area Manager is responsible for completing an Annual Report. Files and records were observed to be well organised.

The inspection included looking at referral of events listed in Schedule 8 (Events and Notifications Regulation 43(1)). The schedule includes the need for the agency to notify the CSCI regarding the instigation of any child protection enquiry and notification necessitating referral to the police or information about a serious accident. There had been five events since the last inspection under these categories and all were notified to the CSCI.

NMS 17 The agency has adequate numbers of trained and competent staff the qualifications of staff is covered under NMS 2. The agency currently has one vacancy, a Senior Social Worker post. One Supervising Social Worker has recently been appointed and will soon be joining the agency. There was evidence from records that the experience, skills and qualifications of staff working within the agency meets the National Minimum Standards.

NMS 18 Chrysalis Care is a fair and competent employer and has sound employment practices. A selection of staff files was randomly chosen and included application forms, references, up to date CRB checks, GSCC registration, terms and conditions of employment, job descriptions, references, probationary period reviews and copies of qualifications. The inspector noted one file where there had been some slippage in carrying out an appraisal. One of the Directors admitted that last year the agency did not appraise the staff but is aiming to rectify the situation. Chrysalis Care is now implementing a new the 'Peninsula appraisal svstem known as Appraisal Svstem'. Α recommendation has nevertheless been set to ensure appraisal objectives are track and that appraisals are regular and planned. See kept on recommendation 1.

NMS 19. Chrysalis Care has provided appropriate training for its staff. Staff confirmed that they had undertaken training in the following:- Managing difficult behaviour, Safe Care, Training the Trainers, Counselling and Bereavement and 'Every Child Matters'. Staff meet on a monthly basis to discuss and share social work practice.

NMS 20 This standard requires that all staff are properly accountable and supported. Whilst there are clear lines of accountability for the majority of staff, the relationship between the board and the two managers lacks clarity. Although the Board has regular dialogue with the managers, the senior managers within in the agency do not receive formal one to one supervision. A recommendation has been set to include this as part of management procedure. **See recommendation 2.**

NMS 21, 22 and 23 Foster carers are offered regular support from Supervising Social Workers and the agency operates an out of hours service. The inspector met a couple of foster carers who gave positive feedback. They informed the inspector that Chrysalis Care is giving priority to supporting its carers. They generally see their Supervising Social Worker in person every 4 weeks. They were also receiving weekly telephone contact. This was confirmed also from evidence of supervision notes recorded on the foster carers file. The foster carers support group meets every other month. One of the carers who was interviewed confirmed her attendance at the group and said she experienced it as helpful. Foster carers confirmed that they have been offered training as described under NMS6. The agency has a Children's Services section that supports the foster placement through individual support to foster children. It provides and arranges services including counselling, education, respite care and behaviour and anger management.

NMS 24 The inspector examined children's files. Records were comprehensive. The inspector saw that where information was missing, the agency had taken the initiative to write to the Local Authority requesting information regarding the child's care plan, placement agreement, social history, personal education plan, health plan, psychological report and planning and review minutes. NMS 27 and 28 The inspector discussed the financial viability of the agency. The inspector has received correspondence from the agency's accountants that confirm that adequate financial controls are in place and that the company is financially viable and meeting all its obligations.

NMS 32 Chrysalis Care recognises the contribution of family and friends as carers. All the agency's foster carers have a back-up carer, usually a relative or friend. They have all been assessed and police checked. The back-up carers will usually provide cover for situations such as respite care, training and undertaking the school-run.

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 **2** Standard Almost Met (Commendable) (Minor Shortfalls)

3 Standard Met (No 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		ACHIEVING ECONOMIC	
Standard No Score		WELLBEING	
12	4	Standard No	Score
		14	4
STAYIN	G SAFE	29	3
Standard No	Score		
3	3	MANAGEMENT	
6	3	Standard No	Score
8	3	1	3
9	3	2	3
15	4	4	4
30	3	5	3
		16	3
ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING		17	3
Standard No	Score	18	3
7	3	19	3
13	4	20	3
31	Х	21	4
		22	4
MAKING A POSITIVE		23	3
CONTRIBUTION		24	3
Standard No	Score	25	Х
10	3	26	Х
11	3	27	3
		28	3
		32	3

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

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.	FS20	Staff should receive regular, planned appraisals undertaken by their line manager
2.	FS20	The senior managers within in the agency should receive formal supervision and a record kept of the content and progress made.

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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