



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

FOSTERING SERVICE

SWIIS Foster Care Ltd

**24 Highfield Road
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 3DP**

Lead Inspector
Lynda Dale

Key Announced Inspection
23rd – 30th June & 5th July 2006 10:00

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	SWIIS Foster Care Ltd
Address	24 Highfield Road Edgbaston Birmingham B15 3DP
Telephone number	0121 452 7120
Fax number	0121 643 6488
Email address	
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	SWIIS Foster Care Ltd
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	Mrs Ann Elizabeth Hannan
Type of registration	Fostering Agency

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

1. The Service is registered to provide foster placements for children and young persons between the ages of 0-21 years for short and long term placements including mothers and baby placements.
2. Placements for mother and baby assessments should only be made with foster carers who have been assessed and are specifically approved and trained to foster this service user group.

Date of last inspection 8th August 2005

Brief Description of the Service:

The Birmingham branch of SWIIS was registered on 28th May 2004. The Service aims to provide a wide range of foster placements from the diverse backgrounds that reflect the demographic population of the locality. The remit of the Service is to provide short and long term placements for children and young people between the ages of 0-21 years. The Service has recently moved to premises in the Edgbaston area of Birmingham. The offices are situated over 2 floors in a converted 19th Century property, which has been fully modernised. There is full access for wheelchair users on the ground floor. The Service provides additional support workers to complete 1-1 work with children. All placements receive an educational support package for which the Service has a team of 6 teachers and 2 support workers. There is also a health advisor to support carers in meeting the health care needs of children and young people.

SUMMARY

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

This inspection was an announced inspection, which took place over 6 working days. The total time taken including planning time and post inspection analysis was 60hrs. There was one inspector who spoke with children in placement and interviewed foster carers, social workers, the health care adviser, the principal education caseworker, a children's resource worker, administrative staff, the Manager and Responsible Individual. The inspector observed a panel and had access to the service's organisations policies and procedures. Four foster carer households were randomly selected for welfare tracking, including one family who had recently completed their assessment. The inspector was given a guided tour of some carers' homes.

Questionnaires sent to children 15 in placement, their carers and placing social workers. At the time of writing this report only 1 questionnaire had been received from a child, 5 from foster carers and none had been returned from placing officers.

The Inspector would like to take this opportunity to thank children, carers and staff for their co-operation with the inspection and the warm welcome given.

What the service does well:

The Service continues to commit significant resources to meeting the educational needs of the children placed and exceed the national minimum standard in this respect.

The overwhelming majority of carers met and who responded to questionnaires described the service and it's staff as very supportive. The out-of-office hours support was highlighted for particular praise.

The healthcare needs of the children and young people placed are well met by service. The health advisor, provides additional support to carers to manage any specific health needs of children placed.

What has improved since the last inspection?

New recording systems have been introduced for carers which help to maintain detailed information on the children placed, in particular information relating to health issues.

The service has made significant improvements in obtaining information and documentation from placing authorities.

The service has introduced memory boxes and health faxes for children young people which are valuable contributions to their identity and life story work.

What they could do better:

The service needs to ensure that the content of carers' supervision is consistent and ensures all carers' operate within the service's policies and procedures.

There has been some slippage with the operation of the Panel around decision-making processes.

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.

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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 at least once during a 12 month period.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at the outcome for Standard:

12

Overall children's health and development is promoted to an excellent standard by the service and carers. Children are appropriately supported to maintain healthy life styles. Isolated shortfalls in relation to routine administration must be addressed to ensure routine safeguarding at all times.

EVIDENCE:

The service has excellent systems to promote and safeguard the health of the children and young people placed. The service employs a specialist a health care advisor who co-ordinates health planning for all children and young people placed and develops links with other relevant health professionals. The health advisor also provides additional advice and support to carers for any special or complex needs of children placed. The service has recently circulated 'health faxes' to all children and young people. These provide age appropriate health information for children and are a useful tool for them to keep records of their own health matters.

The health advisor provides training workshops for carers on specific issues such as drug misuse and sexual health and also provides education to children and young people on a range of health care issues.

Carers met had all registered the children in placement with their own GP's. They also arrange routine dental and opticians check ups and support children when attending hospital and other specialist appointments for ongoing health needs as required. The service has introduced new recording systems for carers to use on the children in placement. These have a comprehensive section for health care records which including illnesses, the administration of medication, accident recording and medical appointments. It was positive to note that the service had also introduced body charts for carers to record injuries in line with the recommendations from the previous inspection.

Overall, carers were completing health records but some isolated shortfalls were identified in relation to recording and storage of medication. This relates variance with carer supervision identified and referred to later in the report.

Children met during the course of the inspection confirmed their carers encourage them to eat healthily and take regular exercise to stay healthy.

During the course of last year's inspection the operations manager implemented a system for monitoring medication, first aid and medical treatment received by all children. This system has been well implemented and followed during the inspection year.

The service has made significant improvements with obtaining relevant medical information from placing authorities. The health care advisor supports this process by working partnership with other health professionals to consolidate health information for the children placed. Unfortunately, there was only one notable shortfall identified in this area. Due to some administrative oversights 4 children's files were found to not have current medical consent forms. Although two did have medical consent forms on file, these not been completed accurately by the placing authority and this had not been identified by the service. Effectively, therefore, there was no valid medical consent for those particular children.

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):

3, 6, 8, 9, 15, 30

The Service has in place good systems to promote and safeguard the welfare of the children placed. Some inconsistencies in the application of these could compromise routine safeguarding if not addressed.

EVIDENCE:

Both the manager and responsible individual are suitably qualified and experienced to manage a fostering service. The service routinely obtains up-to-date CRB checks every 3 years.

Overall, fostering homes visited were of a good standard homely accommodation and provided nurturing environments for the children placed. However, there was some variance found in relation to the advice given by fostering link workers in relation to issues of health and safety and the available space for all who live at the home. Not all necessary safety equipment was in use and there was inconsistent guidance regarding the storage of household chemicals and medication. One fostering household had been approved with outstanding health and safety issues which had been identified but not completed. Sampled files confirmed the service reviews carers' health and safety risk assessments annually. All carers understood the purpose of the inspection visit, were open to the process and contributed well. The inspector would like to take this opportunity to thank the carers visited for their contributions and assistance.

The service is committed to appropriate matching and ensures children and carers are matched on the basis of race, religion and culture wherever possible. The service also reflects on relevant skills the carers may have to match the children's individual needs. Children met told the inspector they were given the chance for introductions, for those placements not made in an emergency. The service is willing to turn down placements where no suitably matched carers are available. This was evidenced by feedback from the carers' survey in which some carers noted there are times when they are without placements whilst an appropriate match is found. The service undertakes matching risk-assessments which were found to be in place on all sampled files. However, some were short on detail for emergency placements.

Carers met during the inspection confirmed that pre-approval training covers safe care and child protection issues in detail. The service has an annual training programme for carers, which includes child protection refresher and advanced training and safer care training. The service should also be commended for providing quarterly Managing Challenging behaviour courses, which cover behaviour management techniques and restraints. Each foster home has an individual safe care policy. It was positive to note that, since the previous inspection, the service has introduced a new system to supplement these accompanying risk assessments. These contain details of all potential risks concerning the individual children placed.

Foster carer agreements include details of the service's no corporal punishment policy. The service has policy and guidance for children who may go missing and carers met were aware of their role in safeguarding children who may go missing.

All CRB's for staff and carers were made available to the inspector. The service has employed only one new social worker and one new support worker since the previous inspection. These files were reviewed and contained evidence of all relevant vetting checks prior to appointment including references with follow up telephone calls to referees and CRB checks.

The inspector was able to observe a Panel during the course of this inspection. Panel membership meets the regulations and includes a member of the Panel who has formerly been fostered, an independent foster carer, an independent chair, an education advisor, the Responsible Individual, a legal advisor, two agency social workers and two other independent members. The manager is not a member of the panel but acts as a panel advisor as good practice. Not all panel members were in attendance on this occasion but the panel was fully quorate. There were no foster carer assessments submitted to this panel, the agenda was exclusively for foster carer annual reviews.

As a good practice measure the service takes not only first but all foster carer's annual reviews to Panel. The service uses a system of independent chairs for foster carer review meetings and these are formally minuted. Following this the link worker prepares a report which is submitted to panel for recommendation. Whilst this is a good system in principal, in practice this has created some delays in carers' annual reviews. The manager explained this was due problems with the availability of some chairs and the service had already taken steps to address this.

The annual review assessments presented to panel were generally of a good standard and the majority gave sufficient information for the panel to make a recommendation. However, there were delays following some review meetings, which had been carried out up to three months prior to the panel, and the content of the reports had become dated. Fostering link workers then gave verbal updates to panel on any changes that had happened since the review meeting. Workers also provided verbal reports regarding unannounced visits and annual health and safety checks. The panel then proceeded to recommend the continued approval of the carers without seeing written clarification of these checks.

Although the Panel continues to operate to a satisfactory standard, the inspector observed some slippage in process from last year's inspection. This largely related to there being a lack of clarity around the formal decision making process and how Panel members reached a consensus. Varying viewpoints were expressed but were not fully explored. A consensus was recorded but the process by which this was reached was unclear. The Chair was unable to meet with the inspector following Panel. However, the Manager and Responsible Individual explained Panel takes a less formal structure for reviews, as carers are not in attendance. Although this Panel was exclusively for reviews, some of these included changes in the carer's terms of approval where a thorough exploration of all issues was necessary to ensure the routine safeguarding of all children placed. Any differences of opinion and/or disagreement should be fully explored and recorded. The Service has panel procedures in place but these do not include a breakdown of the process in cases of disagreement.

It was noted at the previous inspection the Panel usually recommends a broad age range for the approval of most carers. The manager explained this was to ensure the service remains consistent with the conditions of registration made when the service was first registered. These have now been revised and will allow the service to review foster carers' terms of approval within their first year, if there is evidence to support this is appropriate and the carers have relevant skills and experience. The service now plans to use more specific terms of approval for newly approved carers.

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):

7 & 13

Children receive a broad range of opportunities to enjoy and achieve and the service encourages all children young people placed to achieve their full educational potential.

EVIDENCE:

The service demonstrates a commitment to valuing diversity by careful matching between carers and children from similar backgrounds wherever possible. In addition children with specific needs are placed with carers with relevant skills and experience to meet these wherever possible. Ongoing advice and support is provided to carers by the health advisor for children with disabilities and other individual health needs. The carer's post approval training programme includes courses on Mental Health, Understanding Learning Disabilities and Valuing Diversity. The service also has Children's Resource Workers who undertake identity work with young people where appropriate and life story work. Examples seen included working with children around issues of racial identity and self-esteem. The service has recently started to provide memory boxes for children and young people which include a memory book, disposable camera and photo album amongst other useful prompts and tools which will help children to record their memories in placement and contribute to their understanding of their own identities.

The service is well resourced to ensure the educational needs of children are promoted and continues to exceed the minimum standard. There is a specialist education team of 6 education case workers, who are all qualified teachers, and 2 children's resources workers. The education team has

restructured since the last inspection. There is no longer a head of education and instead the team is line managed by the Principal Education Case worker. The inspector was able to meet with the Principal Education Case Worker as part of the inspection and review children's education files. Each child is allocated an education case worker on placement, who works in close partnership with carers, schools and other education providers to deliver an individually tailored education programme for the children in placement in line with their specific needs. In-classroom support is provided for children where needed. Additional homework support is also provided where necessary.

Sampled children's files did not all contain Personal Education Plans (PEPs) from placing authorities. The education team had chased those outstanding from placing authorities, although not always frequently. However, the Principal Education Officer was able to show the inspector a new system recently implemented, intended to address delays in obtaining PEPs from placing authorities. In addition, the education team has its own system of education planning, based on PEPs and statement of needs which is very detailed. These are completed on a termly basis. In addition, a comprehensive progress report is completed on each child. At the time of the previous inspection these were done on a termly basis but they are now done to coincide with LAC reviews every 6 months. All children's files sampled contained up-to-date in-house education plans.

Carers met were clear on their roles in supporting children and young people's educational achievement. Young people spoken to told the inspector their carers encourage them to complete homework and all were involved liaising with schools concerning individual needs of the children placed.

Children met all told the inspector that their carers help them to pursue their own leisure interests. The service also arranges a children's groups and summer activities including song writing workshops and teenage foster children's groups.

The Service does offer a respite service to placing authorities, although the demand for this is low. Respite is offered to other carers from within the service and not in place of the children's parents. No respite carers were seen during this inspection and accordingly Standard 31 was not assessed at this inspection.

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):

10 & 11

The service ensures children and young people are able to make positive contributions and are well supported to maintain contact with their families where appropriate.

EVIDENCE:

Children met during the inspection told the inspector they were able to maintain good contact with their families, where appropriate. This included extended family members and friends. Young people were observed being encouraged and supported to maintain independent contact where appropriate. Pre-approval training includes elements on contact. There are also supplemental courses in the carer's post approval training programme. Contact arrangements are taken into consideration as part of the matching process. The manager reported service continues to use the communication booklet introduced shortly before the last inspection as a means for carers to keep in contact with parents.

As the response to the children's survey was low this has impacted on the ability to firm conclusions regarding consultation. However, from the 1 questionnaire received and the children and young people met during the inspection, there is evidence to support the service continues to consult well with children. Children met said their carers ask their opinions and listen to them. Fostering link workers carry out 2 monthly visits to the carers homes, one of which the child is seen alone. The children's resource worker also advised the inspector that children's activity days are used as a forum to take feedback from the children and young people who attend. The service produces a quarterly children's newsletter, to which young people are encouraged to contribute.

Children met and the young person who replied to the survey were aware of how to make a complaint. Details of how to make a complaint are included in the children's guide. The service publishes details of all children's complaints received and additional complaints in the statement of purpose. This also outlines brief details of the nature of the complaints but protects the identity of those concerned. In addition, a complaints leaflet is included in the statement of purpose pack. However, this does not provide a breakdown the complaints process. There is brief reference to making verbal complaints but this is not fully explained and there is no nominated complaints officer. This could act as a barrier to persons wishing to make a complaint on behalf of a child who may have problems with making written complaints. The service should consider reviewing the statement of purpose and/or compliments and complaints guide to assist persons wishing to make verbal complaints.

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):

14 & 29

The service provides carers with ample resources to promote the economic well being of the children placed.

EVIDENCE:

The service provides written guidance to carers to help young people prepare for adulthood. The carer's annual training programme includes training on independent living skills. Young people met told the inspector that their carers help them to learn independence skills. Carers met described a range of innovative ways in which they had encouraged young people to develop independence skills such as household chores, budgeting and shopping for clothes and personal requisites.

Foster carers are paid allowances and expenses to cover the full cost of caring for each child placed with them. These exceed the Fostering Network guidance on minimum allowances and include elements for activities and school uniforms. Allowances are reviewed annually and carers are provided with a breakdown of the allowances. Carers met confirmed the service pays allowances promptly and on time. The service pays a two-week holiday retainer after the first three months of a placement. If carers take fostered children on holiday with them, the retainer is paid following the carer's annual review. Paid respite is available if identified as part of the child or young person's care plan.

Carers met confirmed the service encourages them to make savings on behalf of the young people placed. Link workers provide guidance on pocket money and savings for the children and young people placed.

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):

1, 2, 4, 5, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26 & 28

Overall the service has sound working structures and is well managed. As the service has expanded minor inconsistencies in service delivery have come to light which if not addressed could compromise outcomes for children.

EVIDENCE:

The statement of purpose was revised following the last inspection. This is now more localised and includes details of the full range of services by the Birmingham branch. Improvements to accessing the complaints procedure have been highlighted earlier in the report.

The manager is a qualified social worker with substantial experience in foster care and has completed a Post Graduate Certificate in Management. The manager continues to demonstrate effective leadership by keeping working systems under review and adapting and improving policies and procedures where necessary. The Responsible Individual is the former manager of the service and is based at the Birmingham branch to provide cover during the manager's absence. The Responsible Individual takes overall responsibility for reviewing the quality of care, with the assistance of the manager. The service has in place strong systems for monitoring all matters detailed in Schedule 7 of the Fostering Regulations 2002. Comprehensive records of these were provided for this inspection.

The service has an adequate number of suitably experienced staff to deliver the service and has recently taken on an additional social worker to ensure that fostering link workers have case loads no higher than 10. There is also a well-resourced and managed administrative support team. Social work and support staff receive monthly supervision from the manager. Teaching staff receive supervision from the principal education caseworker. Sampled records evidenced that overall staff supervision is carried out in accordance with the timescales determined in staff supervision contracts. These also confirmed the service carries out annual appraisals on all staff. There is a comprehensive training programme for carers and the service maintains training portfolios for all carers.

Newly appointed staff told the inspector that the service has sound recruitment and employment practices. There are formal policies in place to support these. The service has public liability and professional indemnity insurance for all staff and carers.

The service has clear strategies for working with and supporting carers which includes out-of-hours telephone support. This was highlighted for particular praise by some carers who responded to the survey. The service reviews all carers annually and these are taken to panel as mentioned earlier in the report. There have been notable improvements in communication between the fostering service and placing authorities since the previous inspection and the service is much better at securing key information about the children placed.

Sampled records confirmed foster carers had all signed Foster Carer Agreements cover the majority of matters detailed Schedule 5. However, the agreements do not specify the amount of training to be provided to carers, as required by the regulations. Carers met confirmed they receive supervision from fostering link workers on a monthly basis. Carers' supervision is recorded and sampled files contained clear evidence of this. Review of supervision records and meetings with carers revealed a number of inconsistencies in the content of carers' supervision. This related to a wide range of issues including carers' recordings, storage of medication, health and safety issues and childcare practice. Whilst there was some notable good practice identified with carers' supervision, other shortfalls noted had compromised service delivery. A number of these shortfalls could compromise the welfare of the children and young people if not addressed. Records confirmed the service carries out annual unannounced visits to carers' homes. There had been occasional delays in completing some of these, although they were not excessive and amounted to only weeks.

The service has a 4-day pre-approval training programme for carers which covers a wide range child care issues including safe care and contact. There is also a very comprehensive annual post-approval training programme for carers which has core elements such as first aid, child protection and managing challenging behaviour (which covers restraints) and valuing diversity that all carers must attend. The programme also has a wide variety of other courses such as Understanding Learning Disabilities, Education and the looked after child, Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Training, domestic violence and the Lucy Faithful Foundation.

There have been notable improvements to children's case files since the previous inspection. In line with requirement from the previous inspection, the service now ensures key information relating to children is held on their own file and not their carers. In addition the service has given carers clear guidance about maintaining separate daily logs for each child placed, in particular for siblings where this was not happening previously.

Although the service still experiences some problems in obtaining information from placing authorities significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection. The majority of LAC paperwork had been obtained or chased by the service although some files did not contain copy medical consents as detailed earlier in the report.

At present, it is the policy of SWIIS to routinely retain original carers' daily logs about children, after their placement has ceased. This is so the service has the information to refer back to in the event of retrospective enquiries being made. Recent guidance from the Department for Education and Skills suggests this data is legally the property of the child and this practice may not be consistent with the Data Protection Act 1998. Originals would need to be amalgamated with the child's local authority file and written consent obtained from the child

and/or their guardian before the service could retain copies. This is not the current practice of SWIIS. The Responsible Individual confirmed the company would obtain specialist legal advice in this respect and report back to the Commission separately.

The service has moved to new premises since the previous inspection. These are situated in the Edgbaston area of Birmingham in a converted 19th Century property. There is generous space for all staff working at the branch, a large meeting room for panel meetings and training events, another small meeting room. There is also a suite of children's rooms for contact and other 1-1 meetings. This is furnished in a child friendly way and has a range of toys and children's resources.

Financial viability was not assessed at this inspection. The service has in place clear financial procedures and a registered accountant audits the accounts. There are systems for the responsible individual to monitor budgets and expenditure on a monthly basis.

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	2

STAYING SAFE	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	3
6	2
8	3
9	4
15	3
30	2

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	4

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

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection? No

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.	FS12	15(2)(b)	The service must obtain written medical consent forms for each child placed to ensure access to emergency and routine medical treatment where necessary.	30/09/06
2.	FS6	11(a) & 28(2)(a)	All outstanding health and safety shortfalls identified during the assessment of carers must be rectified prior to approval.	30/09/06
3.	FS30	11	Panel procedures must include details the decision-making processes when all members of the Panel are not in agreement.	30/09/06
4.	FS30	25(2)	The Chair must ensure that Panel follows the written decision making processes, including contingencies identified for when all members of the panel are not in agreement. All Panel members' opinions must be fully explored and recorded.	30/09/06
5.	FS22	28(5)(b) Schedule 5	Foster care agreements must specify the amount of training to be provided to carers.	31/10/06
6.	FS22	17(1)	The service must ensure carers receive consistent supervision with clear guidance to fully implement agency policies and procedures.	30/09/06

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.	FS6	The service should take steps to ensure that health and safety advice given to carers is consistent.
2.	FS8	The service should ensure matching information is fully recorded for emergency placements.
3.	FS1	The statement of purpose would benefit from a brief summary of the complaints process and confirmation that complaints can be made verbally.
4.	FS11	The service should consider including a brief breakdown of the complaints procedure in the statement of purpose and/or compliments and complaints guide, along with clear guidance on how to make a verbal complaint to assist persons needing to make verbal complaints.
5.	FS24	The Responsible Individual should report back to the Commission when legal advice is obtained concerning the practice of retaining of carers' daily logs about children after their placement has ceased, to confirm compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

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