

# Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Private Fostering Arrangements Services

Inspection report for private fostering arrangements

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<b>Inspector</b>	Lucy Martin
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<b>Address</b>	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead 4 Marlow Road MAIDENHEAD Berkshire SL6 7YR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01628 798888
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
<b>Registered manager</b>	Heather Andrews
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Heather Andrews
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	

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## **About this inspection**

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## **The inspection judgements and what they mean**

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

## **Service information**

### **Brief description of the service**

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead operates a family placement service in relation to adoption, fostering (including private fostering) and respite care for children with a disability. The team is known as FARS (fostering, adoption and respite). The team is located in central Maidenhead with other local authority children's services. The team manager is responsible to the service manager for placements and permanency, who in turn reports to the Head of Safeguarding and Specialist Services for Children. Although workers within the team may take a lead on, or have an interest in some aspects of the work, all engage in the variety of tasks associated with the work of the team. At the time of this inspection there are no children in private foster care. There have been approximately three young people in the last year who have been privately fostered for a short period of time.

### **Summary**

This inspection took place over a four day period and was completed at the same time as the general fostering inspection and the adoption inspection. Meetings took place with the manager, the fostering team including the member of staff who has a designated responsibility for private fostering and awareness raising, the team manager of the children in need team, the business manager of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and other key personnel within the local authority. A sample of case files and policies and procedures were looked at. The fostering service provided information before the inspection. This inspection has concentrated mainly on policies and procedures and less on direct practice. This is due to the small number of private fostering arrangements in place.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

This is the first inspection of private fostering.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is not judged.

There are no key standards in this area.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The local authority has undertaken a variety of work to ensure that awareness is promoted regarding private fostering. Information letters, leaflets and posters have been sent to a number of places including places of worship, libraries, GP surgeries and schools. Information evenings have been held and visits to local schools have been made. Training has been provided to the social work teams and presentations have been given to the Children and Young People's Forum, to the Head Teachers' Forum and to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The local authority intends to use the Local Safeguarding Children's Board to help with awareness raising regarding private fostering and this is a positive development. The local authority responds effectively to notifications and makes regular visits in accordance with the regulations. There are comprehensive policies and procedures in place which includes how to deal with a variety

of situations. These procedures are currently being updated. The FARS team works with the children's social work teams to ensure that the welfare of privately fostered children is safeguarded and promoted. Core assessments are carried out by the social work teams and the suitability of the private foster carer is assessed by the FARS team. The assessments are presented to the Foster Panel for scrutiny, advice and agreement. Private foster carers receive regular visits from a member of the fostering team who provides advice and support. There are information leaflets available for private foster carers, parents of privately fostered children and for children who are privately fostered. All contain information about how to get further information and support.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is not judged.

There are no key standards in this area.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is not judged.

There are no key standards in this area.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is not judged.

There are no key standards in this area.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead has a comprehensive Statement of Purpose setting out its duties and functions in relation to private fostering and how these will be carried out. This document has recently been updated. In addition, there is also a policy, procedures and practice guidance for private fostering which was written in 2005 and is currently being reviewed and updated. There are good monitoring arrangements in place regarding private fostering arrangements. There are files maintained which are regularly audited and the annual report of the Foster Panel monitors the numbers of privately fostered children and foster carers. There are arrangements in place for reporting to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. A presentation about private fostering and a report was provided to the Board and reporting takes place on an annual basis.

### **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

#### **Statutory requirements**

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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## **Recommendations**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

## **Annex**

## **Annex A**

### **National Minimum Standards for private fostering arrangements**

#### **Being healthy**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

**Ofsted considers none of the above to be key standards to be inspected.**

#### **Staying safe**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- the local authority is notified about privately fostered children living in its area (NMS 2)
- the welfare of privately fostered children is safeguarded and promoted. (NMS 3 )
- private foster carers and parents of privately fostered children receive advice and support to assist them to meet the needs of privately fostered children; privately fostered children are able to access information and support when required so that their welfare is safeguarded and promoted (NMS 4)
- the local authority identifies and provides advice and support to the parents of children who are privately fostered within their area (NMS 5)
- children who are privately fostered are able to access information and support when required so that their welfare is safeguarded and promoted. Privately fostered children are enabled to participate in decisions about their lives (NMS 6).

**Ofsted considers 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### **Enjoying and achieving**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

**Ofsted considers none of the above to be key standards to be inspected.**

#### **Making a positive contribution**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

**Ofsted considers none of the above to be key standards to be inspected.**

#### **Achieving economic well-being**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

**Ofsted considers none of the above to be key standards to be inspected.**

#### **Organisation**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- relevant staff are aware of local authority duties and functions in relation to private fostering (NMS 1)
- the local authority monitors the way in which it discharges its duties and functions in relation to private fostering (NMS 7).

**Ofsted considers 1 and 7 the key standards to be inspected.**