

# Stockport MBC Private Fostering Arrangements

Inspection report for private fostering arrangements

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<b>Inspector</b>	Sue Winson
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<b>Address</b>	Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council Ponsonby House Edward Street Stockport Cheshire SK1 3UR
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 4744611
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Stockport MBC Children and Young People's Director
<b>Registered manager</b>	
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Michael Peter Jameson
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	1 January 1900

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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**

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) carries out its duties in relation to private fostering through its Early Intervention Family Support Team, whose manager monitors the notifications and arrangements and works with the Service Manager, Adoption and Fostering. A small number of children have been identified as living in private fostering arrangements.

### **Summary**

The authority can demonstrate that its systems, policies and practices serve to safeguard the welfare of children and young people in private foster care.

The overall quality rating is satisfactory.

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

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

Not applicable as this is the first inspection of private fostering arrangements.

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

The provision is not judged.

There are no standards to be inspected under this outcome area.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The local authority has suitable arrangements in place to safeguard the welfare of children and young people in private foster care. Strategies have been planned and carried out in order to promote awareness of private fostering legislation and guidance. These have included articles in the local press and the distribution of posters and leaflets to a wide range of services, such as libraries, schools, clinics and medical centres. Clear information is available on the local authority's website including frequently asked questions for children and young people, carers and parents. All the information sets out the duty to notify the local authority as well as the support that will be provided. They contain the information that an interpreter can be provided. Despite this, numbers of notifications remain low and the managers are in discussion with the safeguarding board, and other services to discuss future strategies. Private fostering has been included in multi-agency training throughout the council services, and the managers are part of a group in the north west which is considering private fostering throughout the region. Records demonstrate that notifications are dealt with in a timely manner, and visits and comprehensive assessments are carried out by social workers with experience of working with children and families. Statutory checks are taken up on carers. Planning and review meetings take place to clarify the arrangements, and ensure that the child or young person's needs are being met and to discuss support needs. Contact with parents, education and health are considered. A range of community support is available as necessary. An named social worker is provided who visits take place in accordance with the policy and young people's views are ascertained and recorded. Support to private foster carers is provided, and is to be enhanced by the increasing the role of the family placement team in providing ongoing support. As the numbers have been low it has not been possible to arrange support groups for carers. Documents

recognise the role and responsibilities of those with parental responsibility, and clear agreements are in place between parents and carers.

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

The provision is not judged.

There are no standards to be inspected under this outcome area.

**Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is not judged.

There are no standards to be inspected under this outcome area.

**Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is not judged.

There are no standards to be inspected under this outcome area.

**Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The local authority has comprehensive policies and procedures in place which are carried out in practice to safeguard children and young people. These cover all the areas specified in the regulations and National Minimum Standards, and include staff training and management responsibilities. Systems are in place to record the number, nature and sources of any enquiries about private fostering and actions taken. Effective auditing and review systems ensure they are complying with own policy. Annual reports are compiled which include an evaluation of the outcomes of work with privately fostered children. Reports to the local safeguarding board outline how the welfare of children is safeguarded and promoted. Files are well organised and contain all the relevant information. Children and young people are seen alone and asked for their wishes and feelings about the arrangements. They are encouraged to be involved in the planning process.

**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.**