

East Riding of Yorkshire Council Private Fostering Arrangements Service

Inspection report for private fostering arrangements

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Inspector	David Martin / Simon Morley
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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 East Riding of Yorkshire Council is responsible for identifying and monitoring private fostering arrangements. It also has a duty to publicise information about private fostering both with partner agencies and the general public. The safeguarding board has taken the lead in carrying out this function.

Summary

This report follows the first announced inspection of private fostering arrangements in the East Riding of Yorkshire. The inspection was carried out to assess how well the council fulfils its duties and responsibilities in relation to National Minimum Standards under the outcomes for safeguarding and management. At the time of the inspection, the council was aware of one privately fostered child. The council has responded well to its responsibilities and the safeguarding board has taken a very strong lead in raising awareness and monitoring arrangements. There are very sound systems in place to ensure that the high profile of private fostering is sustained.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

This is the first inspection of the private fostering arrangements in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The safeguarding board has produced an excellent range of publicity materials including posters and leaflets for partner agencies and the public. Particularly innovative has been the inclusion of information in the payslips of all council employees. The board has also carried out roadshows and worked with groups such as the Interfaith Forum to raise awareness. Throughout its publicity material there is a clear legal definition of private fostering. The council responds to all notifications appropriately. In addition it carried out a review of all social work case files in an attempt to identify any private fostering arrangements that may have been overlooked. This is very good practice and ensures that all social workers are aware of their responsibilities. Where a private fostering arrangement has been identified, the council makes appropriate arrangements to ensure that the carers are suitable and that the young person's views are taken into account. Carers are subject to rigorous vetting and a 'form F' type assessment is carried out. The allocated social worker carries out monitoring visits and provides ongoing support and advice to both carers and the young person. Fieldwork services and the safeguarding board take into consideration any needs in relation to safeguarding, health care, education and contact. These measures ensure that privately fostered children are safe and their needs are being met.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is not judged.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The council has produced a clear and strong private fostering statement which sets out its duties and responsibilities and includes a legal definition. It identifies how it will respond to notifications and who is responsible for monitoring private fostering arrangements. The statement and publicity material has been widely distributed, ensuring that the profile of private fostering is currently very high. Private fostering is a standing agenda item for safeguarding board meetings. All partner agencies are aware of their responsibilities. The safeguarding board has also developed a sub group practice meeting specifically for private fostering. This ensures that as many people as possible are kept informed about current good practice and local developments. Case records for privately fostered young people are well maintained and demonstrate the council's ongoing commitment to ensuring that private fostering arrangements are safe.

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.