



*Making Social Care  
Better for People*

# inspection report

## FOSTERING SERVICE

### **Norfolk County Council Fostering Services**

**Social Services, County Hall  
Martineau Lane  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR1 2SQ**

*Lead Inspector*  
Clive Lucas

*Unannounced Inspection*  
28th April 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

## 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 [www.dh.gov.uk](http://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](http://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

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<b>Name of registered manager (if applicable)</b>	N/A
<b>Type of registration</b>	N/A

# **SERVICE INFORMATION**

## **Conditions of registration:**

N/A

**Date of last inspection**      13th June 2005

## **Brief Description of the Service:**

Norfolk Social Services Fostering Service is contained within the Children and Families division of Norfolk Social Services. The Service is divided into 3 main areas, mainstream fostering, specialist fostering and short term breaks. This report is in respect of the mainstream and specialist fostering. There will be a separate report for the short-term break scheme.

# **SUMMARY**

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

This inspection was planned in advance with the service managers. Before the inspection questionnaires were sent to the service manager, a selection of parents, carers and placing social workers. All young people aged 10 and over received a questionnaire. During the inspection 6 cases were looked at, involving reading files speaking with support workers and visiting carers and young people. A group of carers was spoken with and also representative groups of support workers. Managers and other key staff were spoken with individually. Representatives from Norfolk Fostercare were also spoken with, and a foster panel was attended.

## **What the service does well:**

This is a good service, which is continuing to improve. If it continues to improve and address the matters highlighted in this report, it has the potential to become an excellent service.

In the vast majority of cases the service is providing safe and nurturing environments for children and young people. Very positive comments were received from young people in their questionnaires. Carers were also positive.

The majority of carers feel that they are supported well and value their support workers. Contact with family and friends is promoted.

Young people reported that they receive support for their education from their carers. Inspectors' observations support this view.

The Registered Manager and the County Manager have a good overview of the service.

## **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The Annual Quality Assurance Assessment reported a large number of improvements that had been made. A selection of the stated improvements were looked at during the inspection, and substantiated.

Very good progress has been made in addressing the requirements and recommendations of the previous report. All of the issues identified in the additional visit of December 2005 have been addressed.

Of particular note is the work that has been done to support unqualified staff and the new procedures for dealing with allegations and concerns.

## **What they could do better:**

The fostering service needs to:

- review the way carers and young people are matched in the specialist looked after children team to make sure that placements are in the best interests of young people,
- clarify the role of foster carers in transporting young people to education and contact, so that placements are not disrupted and young people's education is not jeopardised,
- build on the way they currently get the views of carers and young people to provide a formal system that will lead to further improvements in the service,
- make payments to carers more timely and understandable, and
- look at the workloads that support workers have, to make sure that they can adequately do their job and support and supervise carers properly.

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](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk) or by contacting your local CSCI office.

# **DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS**

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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

The outcome for this standard is good. The fostering service is actively promoting the health and development of the young people who are placed with its carers.

## EVIDENCE:

The Fostering Service is well aware of the health services in its area. Norfolk Social Services have an inter-agency (Lifescop) team who work with looked after children. The team includes a clinical psychologist (position currently vacant, but recruitment in process) and a designated nurse who are available for children who are fostered and who can help to access other health services. A post for a primary mental health worker has been funded to provide services for young people in foster care in the west of the county.

The report of last year's inspection noted that not all carers were undertaking first aid training. The reasons for this seemed to be in some cases the location and timing of courses and in other cases reluctance to renew training which has previously been undertaken. This year inspectors found that substantial effort was being put into making sure that all carers have first aid training. New carers have to do the first aid course before they are taken to panel for approval. Examples were also found of panels promoting the first aid training of existing carers who had not yet done this training.

In cases that were looked at by the inspectors, there were examples of a range of health professionals involved with the young people in the foster homes.

Overall the outcome for this standard was met. However, one example was noted when a foster carer had not been keeping appropriate records of medication and health matters for a young person placed with them. This seems to be an isolated case.



## 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 and 30

The outcome for this group of standards is adequate. There are some areas of good practice or improvement such as providing safe healthy and nurturing environments and matching of carers and young people (except in the specialist looked after children team). Other areas require attention such as the matching in the specialist looked after children team and pre-approval training for carers in both specialist teams.

### EVIDENCE:

Response to placing social workers' and children's questionnaires indicated that in the vast majority of cases foster carers were providing safe healthy and nurturing environments. Children in particular were very positive about the care that they received. A selection of comments from children and young people is included below.

*"My carer is helping me reach my biggest dream, tells me I can do it."*

*"I am being loved and well cared for here."*

*"We get treated very very good we are loved."*

*"They (carers) love me."*

*“(Carers) help me understand and listen and explain things and make them clearer.”*

An additional visit was made in December 2005 to follow up some issues arising from child protection investigations. One of these cases involved foster carers who were visited regularly by fostering support workers, placing social workers and other professionals. However, when a child protection allegation was made the home was found to be in a very poor and unacceptable condition.

The service has undertaken a review of this case to make sure that any lessons are learned. During this inspection discussions with carers and support workers, as well as paperwork showed that unannounced visits to foster homes are taking place at least once a year. Health and safety checks are also being done at least once a year.

Previous inspections have identified that some carers for the specialist looked after children team have been provided with caravans for foster children. The inspectors were informed that this was to provide accommodation that was acceptable to young people, who were not able to live full time with a family. A bedroom would also be available in the house and some young people had moved into the house once they felt settled. Last year’s inspection identified two cases where there was no bedroom available in the house, only in the caravan. Furthermore there was some confusion from one carer with a caravan and her support worker as to how the caravan would be used.

Information has now been provided in the service’s Statement of Purpose to explain the role of the caravans. While this is a positive step, the information is written as guidance for staff rather than as information for the people who have a right to receive a copy of the Statement of Purpose. It is recommended that the information in the Statement of Purpose on the use of caravans be written in an appropriate way for the people who may read it. At the time of this year’s inspection none of the caravans were in use. Specialist caravan suppliers carry out regular health and safety checks for the caravans. One of the cases looked at involved a young person who had been living in one of the caravans, but had subsequently moved on. The health and safety check for that caravan did not take place until after she had moved in. This seems to have been due to a series of unforeseen events and not the norm. The service manager must ensure that in every case caravans are confirmed to be safe and suitable before a young person moves in.

Overall the process of matching young people and carers, and of evidencing the matching process, has moved forward in the last year. Carers and fostering staff described a system where matching is well considered. One case that was looked at was of a young person from a minority ethnic background. The matching of this placement had been well thought out.

Some fostering staff and carers said that matching does not work so well in the specialist looked after children team. They described pressure from senior managers to make placements, especially to avoid the use of agency placements, or to return young people from agency placements to in-house carers. It was said that this led to inappropriate placements and placements breaking down, resulting in more moves for young people. A phrase that was used was that some young people were being "*set up to fail*". Inspectors noted some examples of poor placement practice that supported these views.

It is good practice to place young people as close to their home area as possible, so that they can continue with their social and family networks and education. However, it is of concern if placements are being made inappropriately in order to make financial savings, and as a result young people are experiencing inappropriate care and placement breakdowns. The service manager must ensure that a review be undertaken of the use of placements within the specialist looked after children team, to ensure that only appropriately matched placements are made, and the needs of the young people are paramount.

A new form has been introduced to ensure that matching criteria are recorded, and to meet the requirements of regulation 34 and Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 (providing a foster placement agreement). As long as this form and the Looked After Children documents are appropriately completed, all of the required elements of the foster placement agreement are provided. However, in some cases the Looked After Children documents were not fully completed, related to previous placements or were only provided some months after placement. The service manager must ensure that foster placement agreements that include all of the elements set out in Schedule 6 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 are provided.

There have been a number of child protection incidents in the last 12 months. The additional visit of December 2005 identified concerns over how child protection matters were identified. A new procedure is being introduced for identifying and reporting child protection matters as well as general concerns. A group consisting of foster carers, fostering and child protection staff has developed this procedure. The procedure should aid the raising of concerns and the appropriate responses to them.

There is a management system for collating all child protection allegations. These are reported monthly to senior managers, who look at the overall picture. However, the evaluating of the child protection allegations relies on the conscientious work of individual managers, rather than a formal system. It is recommended that a formal system be introduced to evaluate child protection allegations on a regular basis, so that the evaluation of the allegations does not rely on individuals, who may at times be unavailable.

Training course on safeguarding children are available to carers and fostering staff. However, the carers for the specialist fostering and specialist looked after children teams do not undertake any pre-approval training, such as the Skills to Foster course. While many of these carers may have previously been working as carers in the short-term break or family placement teams, not all of them have. Consequently some of the carers for some of the more challenging young people will not have had essential training (including child protection) before beginning to look after young people. After the inspection managers of the service informed the inspectors that they had calculated that 85% of recruits to the specialist teams had previously undertaken the Skills to Foster course when fostering for different teams. The remaining 15% received individual tailored training in their homes, which includes child protection training. This will be looked at in more detail in a future inspection.

A selection of recruitment records for fostering staff and fostering panel members was looked at. These were appropriately kept, evidencing that the information required by Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 was being obtained.

The service employs a number of unqualified staff as carer support workers (CSWs). These staff are not involved in the assessment or approval of carers, but do undertake supervision of carers. The service has provided training and guidance for these staff. Qualified staff (senior staff or managers, who supervise the CSWs) retain case accountability for the carers supervised by CSWs. While the system seems to be working well at the present time, there is a limit to the amount of cases that the supervising seniors and managers can efficiently retain case accountability for. It is recommended that the managers of the service monitor the ratio of qualified and unqualified staff.

Norfolk's fostering service uses five fostering panels. Inductions and training are provided for panel members, and quality assurance measures are in place. It was noted from records and observation of a panel, that panels are taking a positive role in encouraging carers to undertake training. There was also evidence of panels monitoring health and safety issues and asking for further work to be done if issues were not covered. The venue used by one panel did not allow for a separate, private room for carers to wait and for the chair to speak with them before or after their attendance at the panel. This panel are looking for an alternative venue.

# 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 and 13 (Standard 31 will be inspected separately).

The outcome for this group of standards is good. Diversity is valued and work is being done to try and provide a more diverse group of carers. Education is supported well within the fostering service, but some issues of funding relating to the wider Children's Services Department were identified.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The service has been actively trying to increase its carers from minority ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

One case that was looked at showed good examples of meeting the needs of a young person from a minority ethnic background by the fostering service. The placement of children with disabilities was also well handled. Another case that was looked at was of a young person with learning difficulties. They had been well matched with their carer and were fully included in the family's life. The inspectors were impressed with this placement.

The feedback from young people who completed the pre-inspection questionnaires was that they are positively supported in their education by their carers. Evidence from discussions with carers supported this view.

The service uses a team of workers to support young people who are not in full time education. Some carers reported receiving more support in this area than others. An education newsletter is produced for carers and they made positive comments about this.

One case that was looked at was a pre-school child who was identified as needing a nursery placement. Funding had not been provided for this placement, it was to be considered at the next review. The foster carer funded the placement herself and was going to try and claim it back. The decision about the funding rests with the placing social work team, but it is recommended that the fostering service make strong representations in cases such as this where identified educational needs (including pre-school) are not met.

Some workers said that the educational preferences and needs of some young people were being compromised by a lack of funding for transport to school. They said that other matching criteria were being disregarded if a placement would require transport to school, or that in some cases young people have had to change schools. This is also tied up with issues of transport to contact. There is a lack of clarity between carers, support workers and placing social workers as to what should and can be expected of carers in the way of transporting young people to schools and contact meetings.

It is recognised by inspectors that long trips to school are not ideal and that they can themselves place pressures on the education of young people. However, it is strongly recommended that senior managers monitor the impact of the lack of transport funding, and also that clarity is provided on the role of carers in transporting young people both in general and in specific placement agreement records.

## **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 and 11.

Overall the outcome for this group of standards is good. Contact is supported and the service undertakes some consultation. Clarity over the foster carer's role in providing transport is required, and the consultation process needs formalising.

### **EVIDENCE:**

Contact is promoted and supported by the fostering service. Contact arrangements are set out in young people's records. There have been some issues relating to transport for contact. Carers and support workers reported a lack of consistency in how and if carers are paid for transporting young people to contact. One carer spoke of emotional pressure to provide transport for contact even though the young person was placed with them in the knowledge of the carer's existing commitments. It was suggested by the placing social worker that the young person might have to be moved if the carer was not able to provide transport. See comments for Enjoying and Achieving.

The registered manager stated in the Annual Quality Assurance Assessment that there is a need to look for more contact venues in order to alleviate the need for transport to contact.

There are some systems in place for consultation with young people and carers. These include the service manager's surgeries for any carers to speak with him, two groups for young people in care, carer supervision and informal social events. As with the evaluation of child protection matters (see comments in Staying Safe) the consultation with carers and young people relies on the conscientious work of individual managers, rather than a formal system. The service manager must ensure that there is a system for

consultation that provides all carers and young people with the opportunity to contribute, and leads to a plan to further improve the service.

# 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 and 29.

The outcome for this group of standards is adequate. There is good practice in 18 year olds being able to remain in placement, but clarity is still required over how this will work in practice. There also continues to be confusion over carer payments.

### EVIDENCE:

One issue that arose during the inspection of May 2006 was the status of young people when they reach eighteen years of age and remain in the foster home, or visit on a regular basis. It was acknowledged that this is an area in which the service needs to develop a policy. This work has not yet been done, but it is planned. It is an example of good childcare that young people are able to remain in their foster homes over the age of eighteen, or return for support.

It is recommended that a policy be developed for those young people in foster care who on reaching eighteen years of age remain in the foster home, or visit on a regular basis.

As in the inspection of May 2006, a number of carers raised issues about the timeliness and clarity of payments. It is recommended that payments be paid promptly, that the full cost of caring for each child is met and that there is clarity over what and whom the payments are for.

# 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):**

17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26 and 32.

Overall the outcome for this group of standards is good and the service is well managed. The service has addressed all of the matters that arose following the additional visit of December 2005. Carers are well supported and supervision of carers is generally taking place regularly. Training is good, but there needs to be some pre-approval preparation for carers in the specialist teams. Work with family and friends who are carers has improved, but is not consistent.

## **EVIDENCE:**

The Statement of Purpose has been amended, some minor work has been recommended (see comments for Staying Safe). This is all that is required for this standard to be met.

Some teams within the fostering service reported that workloads were manageable, but at capacity. Others said that their workloads were unmanageable. Some workers had reported struggling with their workloads during last year's inspection. At that time there were plans to reduce workloads by employing extra staff. The situation is worse this year largely due to the service's success in recruiting more carers, as this is having a knock on effect on the supervision and support teams.

Records of the annual reviews of carers showed that some had not taken place due to the pressures of high workloads. One team has a number of out of date reviews, some several years out of date. Some staff also said that the agreed frequency of carer supervision was limited by high workloads. However all staff spoken with commented on their positive views of the jobs they do and the support they get from their line managers. The service manager must ensure that staff workloads are manageable and that there are contingency plans to resolve any shortfall.

The additional visit of December 2006 identified a case when a carer's approval was reviewed on 10 November 2005. Neither the supervising worker nor the placing social work assistants raised any concerns about the carers (other than the recording of contact dates). On 29 November 2005 a child protection strategy meeting was held due to all workers having concerns about the carer's ability to cope, frequent telephone calls to all workers for support and concern that young people's emotional needs could not be met.

The change from nobody having concerns about the carers on 10 November 2005, to everyone having concerns 19 days later, cast doubt on the efficacy of the approval review process. The introduction of the new procedure for reporting child protection allegations and other concerns about carers should help prevent such a circumstance occurring again. Staff who supervise carers have been reminded about their duty to report and address all concerns about carers.

The additional visit also identified a case where an exemption certificate was granted for a carer to look after four young people. There was no evidence recorded on file that the exemption was justified, in fact its justification was questionable. Records indicated that it was for the carer's benefit rather than for any of the foster children's. In this case there was no written assessment on which the agency decision maker could base his decision. The paperwork

for such exemptions has been reviewed to ensure that they are only made when it is the best interests of the young person to be placed and the other young people already in placement.

Some support workers are still reporting frustrations in their relationships with some fieldwork social workers, but this seems to be to a lesser degree than previously. The service manager is aware of and is addressing this.

Carers reported that they get good support from their support workers and this is very much appreciated (however one carer said that she had only had one visit in four years - details of this have been passed to the service manager for investigation). The role of the supervising social worker was generally well understood. In most cases supervision of carers happens at the agreed frequency, but the frequency agreed can be limited by the support workers' caseloads (see comments above). It is recommended that managers agree the frequency of supervision and any limitations due to workload be reported to senior managers.

The additional visit of December 2005 identified that important issues were not being raised in supervision of carers. Information has subsequently been provided for support workers on what to cover in supervision.

Out of hours support and advice is provided for all carers. One specialist carer said that they had been assured they would have respite care, but they had not had any, as a suitable respite carer could not be found. It is recommended that the availability of respite care be reviewed, to ensure that conditions that carers are assured of can be fulfilled.

Not all complaints about carers were clearly recorded as such. One was not recorded as a complaint as the complainant did not put it in writing. Another carer had two matters of concern raised by social work staff. Each was dealt with in isolation by the support worker, but not officially recorded as complaints. While these matters were looked at by the workers concerned, the failure to record them as complaints meant that in neither case was this information made available as part of the review of the carer. This may result in patterns or significant issues failing to be identified. The new procedure for handling allegations and concerns should stop this re-occurring.

In the Annual Quality Assurance Assessment the Skills to Foster course was highlighted, as it ensures that carers are well prepared to foster. As stated in Staying Safe, carers for the specialist teams do not do this course. The service manager must ensure that all carers receive appropriate, timely training and preparation to look after the young people placed with them.

There is a good training programme, which makes use of experienced carers as mentors and trainers. Again, as in previous years, some carers identified issues of accessibility of courses, but there was an acknowledgement that the

situation is improving. The service is being successful in getting carers who have previously been reluctant to take part in training, onto essential courses. However, some carers reported that reluctant attendees could have a negative effect on the course. The trainers are aware of this and are addressing it.

Appropriate case records for children and administrative records are kept. Planned IT developments for children's records should bring positive benefits. Recent guidance for carers on what and how they records was reported by carers to be confusing. The service is aware of this issue and is planning to review the guidance.

The fostering teams based in Norwich have recently moved to new premises. These offer a far higher standard of accommodation, which was appreciated by those staff spoken with. There is also improved IT provision in these offices. The team based in Kings Lynn still occupies a crowded open plan office and has poor IT available to support them. Several teams commented that they have poor administrative support. They feel that when they are struggling to complete their workloads, additional administrative support would reduce the amount of work that does not get done, as they usually prioritise visits and supervision over recording and administration. It is recommended that the administrative support across the service, and the accommodation and IT facilities in the Western team be reviewed.

During the last inspection it was noted that there had been improvement in the supervision and support of family and friends as carers. This included a new support group for these carers and acceptance that they should receive services in the same way as other carers. The approval of family and friends who act as emergency carers should be completed within 6 weeks, which is a very tight time scale. Sessional workers are used so that the approval process can begin as soon as possible.

Some of the returned foster carer questionnaires were completed by people who identified themselves as kinship carers. They made positive comments about the service. However, one of the cases looked at during this inspection was of kinship carers. Whilst they were providing a loving home for the child, these carers had not received any pre-approval training and had not had any training subsequent to their approval. They had gone 5 months between two of their supervision sessions, despite records indicating that there were stresses for the carers. They were not keeping any records as nobody had explained to them what was required. It is the view of the inspectors that there are improvements in the way the kinship carers are supported and supervised, but there are still cases when they are not subject to all of the National Minimum Standards as other carers are. It is recommended that managers review the way that kinship carers are supported and supervised, to ensure that while the particular contributions they can offer are recognised, they are fully supported and supervised.



# 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

<b>BEING HEALTHY</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>12</b>	3

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

<b>ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>7</b>	3
<b>13</b>	3
<b>31</b>	X

<b>MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>10</b>	2
<b>11</b>	2

<b>ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING</b>	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
<b>14</b>	3
<b>29</b>	2

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

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection?

**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.	FS6	29	The service manager must ensure that in every case caravans are confirmed to be safe and suitable before a young person moves in.	31/07/06
2.	FS8	33	The service manager must ensure that a review be undertaken of the use of placements within the specialist looked after children team, to ensure that only appropriately matched placements are made, and the needs of the young people are paramount.	31/08/06
3.	FS8	34	The service manager must ensure that foster placement agreements, which include all of the elements set out in Schedule 6 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002, are provided.	31/07/06
4.	FS11	42	The service manager must ensure that there is a system for consultation that provides all carers and young people with the opportunity to contribute, and leads to a plan to further	31/10/06

			improve the service.	
5.	FS17	19	The service manager must ensure that staff workloads are manageable and that there are contingency plans to resolve any shortfall.	31/10/06

## 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.	FS1	It is recommended that the information in the Statement of Purpose on the use of caravans be written in an appropriate way for the people who may read it
2.	FS9	It is recommended that a formal system be introduced to evaluate child protection allegations on a regular basis, so that the evaluation of the allegations does not rely on individuals, who may at times be unavailable.
3.	FS17	It is recommended that the managers of the service monitor the ratio of qualified and unqualified staff.
4.	FS17	It is recommended that a policy be developed for those young people in foster care who on reaching eighteen years of age remain in the foster home, or visit on a regular basis.
5.	FS13	It is recommended that the fostering service make strong representations in cases where identified educational needs (including pre-school) are not met.
6.	FS13 FS10	It is strongly recommended that senior managers monitor the impact of the lack of transport funding, and also that clarity is provided on the role of carers in transporting young people both in general and in specific placement agreement records.
7.	FS29	It is recommended that payments be paid promptly, that the full cost of caring for each child is met and that there is clarity over what and whom the payments are for.
8.	FS22	It is recommended that managers agree the frequency of supervision and any limitations due to workload be

		reported to senior managers.
9.	FS22	It is recommended that the availability of respite care be reviewed, to ensure that conditions that carers are assured of can be fulfilled.
10.	FS26	It is recommended that the administrative support across the service, and the accommodation and IT facilities in the Western team be reviewed.
11.	FS32	It is recommended that managers review the way that kinship carers are supported and supervised, to ensure that while the particular contributions they can offer are recognised, they are fully supported and supervised.

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