



Making Social Care
Better for People

inspection report

Fostering Services

Ryancare Fostering Ltd

Oak House

5A Wellington Road

Wanstead

London

E11 2AN

12 January 2005

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Launched in April 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is the single inspectorate for social care in England.

The Commission combines the work formerly done by the Social Services Inspectorate (SSI), the SSI/Audit Commission Joint Review Team and the National Care Standards Commission.

The role of CSCI is to:

- Promote improvement in social care
- Inspect all social care - for adults and children - in the public, private and voluntary sectors
- Publish annual reports to Parliament on the performance of social care and on the state of the social care market
- Inspect and assess 'Value for Money' of council social services
- Hold performance statistics on social care
- Publish the 'star ratings' for council social services
- Register and inspect services against national standards
- Host the Children's Rights Director role.

Inspection Methods & Findings

SECTION B of this report summarises key findings and evidence from this inspection. The following 4-point scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The 4-point scale ranges from:

- 4 - Standard Exceeded (Commendable)
- 3 - Standard Met (No Shortfalls)
- 2 - Standard Almost Met (Minor Shortfalls)
- 1 - Standard Not Met (Major Shortfalls)

'O' or blank in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

'9' in the 'Standard met?' box denotes standard not applicable.

'X' is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

FOSTERING SERVICE INFORMATION

Local Authority Fostering Service?

NO

Name of Authority

Address

Local Authority Manager

Tel No:

Address

Fax No:

Email Address

Registered Fostering Agency (IFA)

YES

Name of Agency

Ryancare Fostering Ltd

Tel No

020 8989 4970

Address

Oak House, 5A Wellington Road, Wanstead, London, E11
2AN

Fax No

020 8989 0854

Email Address

Registered Number of IFA

G050000377

Name of Registered Provider

Mr Adrian Paul Ryan

Name of Registered Manager (if applicable)

Mr Jonathan Francis James Drury

Date of first registration

1 August 2003

Date of latest registration certificate

1 August 2003

Registration Conditions Apply ?

NO

Date of last inspection

26/01/04

| | | | |
|--|----------|--|----------------|
| Date of Inspection Visit | | 12 January 2005 | ID Code |
| Time of Inspection Visit | | 10:00 am | |
| Name of Inspector | 1 | Ms Gwen Lording | 073506 |
| Name of Inspector | 2 | | |
| Name of Inspector | 3 | | |
| Name of Inspector | 4 | | |
| Name of Lay Assessor (if applicable) Lay assessors are members of the public independent of the CSCI. They accompany inspectors on some inspections and bring a different perspective to the inspection process. | | | |
| Name of Specialist (e.g. Interpreter/Signer) (if applicable) | | | |
| Name of Establishment Representative at the time of inspection | | Mr Adrian Ryan – registered provider & Mr Jonathan Drury – registered manager | |

Introduction to Report and Inspection

Inspection visits

Description of Fostering Service

Part A: Summary of Inspection Findings

Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State

Implementation of Statutory Requirements from last Inspection

Statutory Requirements from this Inspection

Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection

Part B: Inspection Methods & Findings

(National Minimum Standards For Fostering Services)

- 1. Statement of purpose**
- 2. Fitness to carry on or manage a fostering service**
- 3. Management of the fostering service**
- 4. Securing and promoting welfare**
- 5. Recruiting, checking, managing, supporting and training staff and foster carers**
- 6. Records**
- 7. Fitness of premises**
- 8. Financial requirements**
- 9. Fostering panels**
- 10. Short-term breaks**
- 11. Family and friend carers**

Part C: Lay Assessor's Summary (where applicable)

Part D: Provider's Response

D.1. Provider's comments

D.2. Action Plan

D.3. Provider's agreement

INTRODUCTION TO REPORT AND INSPECTION

Independent and local authority fostering services which fall within the jurisdiction of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) are subject to inspection, to establish if the service is meeting the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and the requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000, the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and the Children Act 1989 as amended.

This document summarises the inspection findings of the CSCI in respect of Ryancare Fostering Ltd. The inspection findings relate to the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services published by the Secretary of State under sections 23 and 49 of the Care Standards Act 2000, for independent and local authority fostering services respectively.

The Fostering Services Regulations 2002 are secondary legislation, with which a service provider must comply. Service providers are expected to comply fully with the National Minimum Standards. The National Minimum standards will form the basis for judgements by the CSCI in relation to independent fostering agencies regarding registration, the imposition and variation of registration conditions and any enforcement action, and in relation to local authority fostering services regarding notices to the local authority and reports to the Secretary of State under section 47 of the Care Standards Act 2000. The report follows the format of the National Minimum Standards and the numbering shown in the report corresponds to that of the standards.

The report will show the following:

- Inspection methods used
- Key findings and evidence
- Overall ratings in relation to the standards
- Compliance with the Regulations
- Notifications to the Local Authority and Reports to the Secretary of State
- Required actions on the part of the provider
- Recommended good practice
- Summary of the findings
- Report of the Lay Assessor (where relevant)
- Providers response and proposed action plan to address findings

This report is a public document.

INSPECTION VISITS

Inspections will be undertaken in line with the agreed regulatory framework with additional visits as required. This is in accordance with the provisions of the Care Standards Act 2000. The following inspection methods have been used in the production of this report. The report represents the inspector's findings from the evidence found at the specified inspection dates.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

Ryancare Fostering Limited is an independent Fostering Agency operating from an office based at Wanstead in the London Borough of Redbridge, and has been operational since 2002.

The agency provides a range of services, including short and long term fostering, including sibling groups, for children between 0-18 years of age.

All placements are commissioned by a local authority and Ryancare Fostering subscribes to the PAN London Agreement.

The service aims to meet the identified needs of children and young people placed with them and to fully support foster carers within that task.

Since the last inspection the agency has recruited an additional two supervising social workers and this has broadened the range of experiences of the team.

Ryancare Fostering places a strong emphasis on support, training and supervision with the aim of providing a high and consistent standard of safe care to the children and young people placed in their care.

PART A SUMMARY OF INSPECTION FINDINGS

Inspector's Summary

(This is an overview of the inspector's findings, which includes good practice, quality issues, areas to be addressed or developed and any other concerns.)

This inspection was undertaken over a period from 13th November 2004 to 12th January 2005. This was to enable the Inspector to observe foster carer training, the fostering panel and to visit foster carers in their homes.

The Inspector received feedback forms from children/ young people, foster carers and placing authorities. The comments made about the care and support provided by the agency were very positive.

It should be noted that that both of the requirements from the last inspection have been met.

During this inspection all of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services have been met in full and four of the standards have been exceeded. The inspection report will detail the evidence to support this.

The Inspector found the quality of service provided by the Agency to be of a high standard. The registered persons are committed to work in partnership with the Commission for Social Care Inspection to ensure that the Agency is operating in line with the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and The Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE (STANDARD 1)

The Statement of Purpose has been updated and amended to reflect the changes in the staffing structure. Both the Statement of Purpose and The Children and Young Persons Guide are both comprehensive documents.

FITNESS TO CARRY ON OR MANAGE A FOSTERING SERVICE (STANDARDS 2-3)

Only Standard 3 was assessed at this inspection and met.

An inspection of staff files was made and there was evidence to demonstrate that the requirements as set out in Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 were being complied with.

MANAGEMENT OF THE FOSTERING SERVICE (STANDARDS 4-5)

These standards were not assessed on this occasion. However, both these standards were assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

SECURING AND PROMOTING WELFARE (STANDARDS 6-14)

Eight of the nine standards were assessed and met. Two of the standards were exceeded. Through discussion with staff and foster carers; attendance at the Fostering panel and preparation training, there was a lot of evidence to demonstrate that the fostering service

ensures that children/ young people and their families are provided with foster care services which value diversity and promote equality. The fostering service places a high focus on “safe care” practice and this is reinforced through supervision, training and support groups. Foster carers were very positive in respect of the support and practical assistance given to them by their supervising social workers.

The fostering service encourages each child/ young person in foster care to maintain and develop family contacts and friendships as appropriate to their care plan and foster placement agreement. This is particularly important where children/ young people may be placed a long way from home or where difficult issues may arise from contact arrangements. The Inspector was encouraged to see the amount of work done in this area.

RECRUITING, CHECKING, MANAGING, SUPPORTING AND TRAINING STAFF AND FOSTER CARERS (STANDARDS 15-23)

Five of the nine standards were assessed and all were met. The remaining standards were not assessed on this occasion. However, these standards were assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

Through interviews with staff and inspection of documents, policies/ procedures and records maintained there was evidence to demonstrate that the people who work in or for the fostering service are suitable to work with children/ young people and that they are recruited, managed, trained and supported to ensure the best possible outcomes for children/ young people in foster care.

In discussion with foster carers and feedback received from questionnaires it was very evident that carers felt very well supported by the agency: that staff were very responsive; and that their opinions as foster carers were listened to and valued.

RECORDS (STANDARDS 24-25)

Both standards were assessed and met. Standard 25 was exceeded.

Records inspected contained all significant information relevant to the operation of the foster care service and as required by regulation. The fostering service’s administrative records are constructed and maintained to a very high standard and in such a way that the process of “tracking” events and decision-making is made easy.

FITNESS OF PREMISES FOR USE AS A FOSTERING SERVICE (STANDARD 26)

This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed at the last inspection and met in full.

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS (STANDARDS 27-29)

These standards were not assessed at this inspection. However, the standards were assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

FOSTERING PANELS (STANDARD 30)

This standard was assessed and was exceeded.

The Inspector observed a panel and interviewed the panel chair as part of the inspection. The fostering panel have clear written policies and procedures, which are implemented in practice, about the handling of their functions.

The Inspector observed robust discussions of issues and appropriate facilitation by the chair. Detailed consideration is given to the Form F assessment, acknowledging strengths and identifying areas in need of development. The Form F assessments were noted by the Inspector to be of a very high standard.

SHORT-TERM BREAKS (STANDARD 31)

Ryancare Fostering Service does not provide short-term placements within the meaning of the Fostering Services Regulation 37.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS AS CARERS (STANDARD 32)

This standard is not relevant to Ryancare Fostering Service.

Reports and Notifications to the Local Authority and Secretary of State

(Local Authority Fostering Services Only)

The following statutory Reports or Notifications are to be made under the Care Standards Act as a result of the findings of this inspection:

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(3) of the Care Standards Act 2000 that the Commission considers the Local Authority's fostering service satisfies the regulatory requirements:

NO

Notice to the Local Authority under section 47(5) of the Care Standards Act 2000 of failure(s) to satisfy regulatory requirements in their fostering service which are not substantial, and specifying the action the Commission considers the Authority should take to remedy the failure(s), informing the Secretary of State of that Notice:

NO

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(4)(a) of the Care Standards Act of a failure by a Local Authority fostering service to satisfy regulatory requirements which is not considered substantial:

NO

Report to the Secretary of State under section 47(1) of the Care Standards Act 2000 of substantial failure to satisfy regulatory requirements by a Local Authority fostering service:

NO

The grounds for the above Report or Notice are:

Implementation of Statutory Requirements from Last Inspection

Requirements from last Inspection visit fully actioned?

YES

If No please list below

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Identified below are areas not addressed from the last inspection report, which indicate a non-compliance with the Care Standards Act 2000 and Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

| No. | Regulation | Standard | Required actions | |
|-----|------------|----------|------------------|--|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Action is being taken by the Commission for Social Care Inspection to monitor compliance with the above requirements.

COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION (IF APPLICABLE)

(Registered Independent Fostering Agencies only)

Providers and managers of registered independent fostering agencies must comply with statutory conditions of their registration. The conditions applying to this registration are listed below, with the inspector's assessment of compliance from the evidence at the time of this inspection.

| Condition | Compliance | |
|------------------|-------------------|--|
| | | |
| Comments | | |

| Condition | Compliance | |
|------------------|-------------------|--|
| | | |
| Comments | | |

| Condition | Compliance | |
|------------------|-------------------|--|
| | | |
| Comments | | |

| Condition | Compliance | |
|------------------|-------------------|--|
| | | |
| Comments | | |

Lead Inspector _____
Second Inspector _____
Regulation Manager _____
Date _____

Signature _____
Signature _____
Signature _____

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS IDENTIFIED DURING THIS INSPECTION

Action Plan: The appropriate Officer of the Local Authority or the Registered Person (as applicable) is requested to provide the Commission with an Action Plan, which indicates how requirements are to be addressed. This action plan will be made available on request to the Area Office.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Identified below are areas addressed in the main body of the report which indicate non-compliance with the Care Standards Act 2000, the Children Act 1989, the Fostering Services Regulations 2002, or the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services. The Authority or Registered Person(s) is/are required to comply within the given time scales in order to comply with the Regulatory Requirements for fostering services.

| No. | Regulation | Standard * | Requirement |
|-----|------------|------------|---|
| | | | No requirements have been made at this inspection. |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

GOOD PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THIS INSPECTION

Identified below are areas addressed in the main body of the report which relate to the National Minimum Standards and are seen as good practice issues which should be considered for implementation by the Authority or Registered Person(s).

| No. | Refer to Standard * | Recommendation Action |
|-----|---------------------|-----------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

* Note: You may refer to the relevant standard in the remainder of the report by omitting the 2-letter prefix e.g FS10 refers to Standard 10.

PART B**INSPECTION METHODS & FINDINGS**

The following inspection methods have been used in the production of this report

| | |
|---|----------|
| Number of Inspector days spent | 6 |
| Survey of placing authorities | YES |
| Foster carer survey | YES |
| Foster children survey | YES |
| Checks with other organisations and Individuals | YES |
| • Directors of Social services | YES |
| • Child protection officer | NO |
| • Specialist advisor (s) | NO |
| • Local Foster Care Association | NO |
| Tracking Individual welfare arrangements | YES |
| • Interview with children | YES |
| • Interview with foster carers | YES |
| • Interview with agency staff | YES |
| • Contact with parents | NO |
| • Contact with supervising social workers | YES |
| • Examination of files | YES |
| Individual interview with manager | YES |
| Information from provider | YES |
| Individual interviews with key staff | YES |
| Group discussion with staff | NO |
| Interview with panel chair | YES |
| Observation of foster carer training | YES |
| Observation of foster panel | YES |
| Inspection of policy/practice documents | YES |
| Inspection of records | YES |
| Interview with individual child | NO |
| Date of Inspection | 13/11/04 |
| Time of Inspection | 09.30AM |
| Duration Of Inspection (hrs) | 22 |

The following pages summarise the key findings and evidence from this inspection, together with the CSCI assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards have been met. The following scale is used to indicate the extent to which standards have been met or not met by placing the assessed level alongside the phrase "Standard met?"

The scale ranges from:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 4 - Standard Exceeded | (Commendable) |
| 3 - Standard Met | (No Shortfalls) |
| 2 - Standard Almost Met | (Minor Shortfalls) |
| 1 - Standard Not Met | (Major Shortfalls) |

"0" in the "Standard met?" box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion.

"9" in the "Standard met?" box denotes standard not applicable.

"X" is used where a percentage value or numerical value is not applicable.

Statement of Purpose

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- **There is clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and the fostering service ensures that they meet those aims and objectives.**

Standard 1 (1.1 - 1.6)

There is a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and of what facilities and services they provide.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

The Statement of Purpose has been updated and amended to reflect the changes in the staffing structure. This is a comprehensive document that provides a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and of what facilities and services they provide. The Children and Young Persons Guide to the fostering service includes a summary of what the service sets out to do for children/ young people and is provided to children/ young people as soon as they are fostered. The guide is produced in two formats to provide information to children/ young people that are age/ ability appropriate. The guides contain information on how a child/ young person can secure access to independent advocates and about how to complain.

The fostering service's policies and procedures available to staff and foster carers is reflective of their aims and objectives.

Fitness to Carry On or Manage a Fostering Service

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The fostering service is provided and managed by those with the appropriate skills and experience to do so efficiently and effectively and by those who are suitable to work with children.

Standard 2 (2.1 - 2.4)

The people involved in carrying on and managing the fostering service possess the necessary business and management skills and financial expertise to manage the work efficiently and effectively and have the necessary knowledge and experience of childcare and fostering to do so in a professional manner.

| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? |
|---------------------------|---------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|

| | |
|--|---|
| | 0 |
|--|---|

This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

Standard 3 (3.1 - 3.4)

Any persons carrying on or managing the fostering service are suitable people to run a business concerned with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? |
|---------------------------|---------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|

| | |
|--|---|
| | 3 |
|--|---|

An inspection of relevant staff files was made and the Inspector was able to evidence that the requirements set out in Schedule 1 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 were being complied with.

Management of the Fostering Service

The intended outcomes for the following set of standards are:

- The fostering service is managed ethically and efficiently, delivering a good quality foster care service and avoiding confusion and conflicts of role.

Standard 4 (4.1 – 4.5)

There are clear procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the fostering service and ensuring quality performance.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

Number of statutory notifications made to CSCI in last 12 months:

3

Death of a child placed with foster parents.

0

Referral to Secretary of State of a person working for the service as unsuitable to work with children.

0

Serious illness or accident of a child.

0

Outbreak of serious infectious disease at a foster home.

0

Actual or suspected involvement of a child in prostitution.

1

Serious incident relating to a foster child involving calling the police to a foster home.

1

Serious complaint about a foster parent.

0

Initiation of child protection enquiry involving a child.

0

Number of complaints made to CSCI about the agency in the past 12 months:

1

Number of the above complaints which were substantiated:

0

Standard 5 (5.1 - 5.4)

The fostering service is managed effectively and efficiently.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

Securing and Promoting Welfare

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The fostering service promotes and safeguards the child/young person's physical, mental and emotional welfare.

Standard 6 (6.1 - 6.9)

The fostering service makes available foster carers who provide a safe, healthy and nurturing environment.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

As part of the inspection process the Inspector visited a number of foster carer homes and in addition spoke to a foster carer by telephone. Foster carers are made aware and understand that they may be interviewed or visited as part of the Commission's inspection process. This information is included in the Foster Care Handbook and they receive information in advance of the inspection to help them understand the process.

All of the homes visited were warm, adequately furnished and maintained to a good standard of cleanliness. Within the homes visited, all the fostered children/ young people had their own bedrooms. The accommodation arrangements reflected the child's/ young person's need for privacy and space.

Health and safety assessments are undertaken as part of the annual review and the Inspector was able to evidence this on foster carer files. Health and safety issues are covered as part of the preparation training for foster carers and they are also provided with written guidelines on their health and safety responsibilities. In addition there is a standing item on the Supervising Social Worker (SSW) Visit Form that acts as a prompt for SSW to address health and safety issues during each visit to a foster carer home.

Standard 7 (7.1 - 7.7)

The fostering service ensures that children and young people, and their families, are provided with foster care services which value diversity and promote equality.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

Through discussion with staff and foster carers; attendance at the fostering panel and preparation training, there was a lot of evidence to demonstrate that the fostering service ensures that children, young people and their families are provided with foster care services which value diversity and promote equality. This principle is reinforced through policy and procedure, the Foster Carer Handbook, regular supervision and training.

The fostering service ensures, through support given to foster carers by the supervising social worker and ongoing training, that each child/ young person is encouraged to develop and maximise his/ her potential and to lead as full a life as possible. Arrangements are made for foster carers to receive and resource information so that appropriate and informed care can be provided for children/ young people which respects and preserves their ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

During discussions with two foster carers they felt that they received very little support from the placing authority when they were experiencing difficulties around the placements. They indicated that primarily their support came from Ryancare with whose help they were able to resolve more complex problems. Foster carers were very positive in respect of the support and practical assistance given to them by their supervising social workers. The Inspector was able to evidence sensitive practice by the fostering service and a commitment to finding and providing appropriate support to the young people in foster care.

The registered providers have met all the elements of this standard and in addition have demonstrated high quality provision in this aspect.

Standard 8 (8.1 - 8.7)

Local authority fostering services, and voluntary agencies placing children in their own right, ensure that each child or young person placed in foster care is carefully matched with a carer capable of meeting her/his assessed needs. For agencies providing foster carers to local authorities, those agencies ensure that they offer carers only if they represent appropriate matches for a child for whom a local authority is seeking a carer.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Through discussions with staff, foster carers and inspection of files, the Inspector was able to track the process of referral through to the placement of children/ young people. There is a very stringent process that takes place before a placement is considered.

The responsible individuals ensure that comprehensive information is received from the placing authority and takes into account the care plan and written assessments of the child/ young person and their family, prior to the identification of a foster carer. Therefore matches are achieved by means of information sharing and the involvement of all relevant professionals, the child/ young person and his/ her family, potential carers, their families and other children in placement.

The agency have clear expectations in respect of Foster Placement Agreements and what is required from the foster carer, local authority and the agency themselves. There was written evidence to demonstrate that foster placement agreements contained specific reference to elements of matching which were taken into consideration when the placement was agreed and identified areas where foster carers needed additional support to compensate for gaps in the match between the child/ young person and the carer. If there are practical limitations then training is identified or additional support is provided.

Where possible, a period of introduction is planned for the child/ young person to visit the proposed foster carer. Through discussion with foster carers it was evident that they are aware that this should be enabled whenever possible. However, this is not always possible in the case of emergency placements.

| | | |
|--|----------------------|----------|
| Standard 9 (9.1 - 9.8) | | |
| The fostering service protects each child or young person from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation. | | |
| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? | 3 |
| <p>All foster carers receive training in the recognition of abuse, how to respond to signs or indicators of abuse and caring for a child who has been abused. This was evidenced through training programmes and foster carers' individual training profiles. The training aims to develop foster carers' awareness and understanding of all issues relating to the protection of each child/ young person from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation. The agency places a high emphasis on "safe care" practice and this is reinforced through supervision, training and support groups. The Inspector was able to evidence this in practice during a visit to a foster carer's home. The Foster Carer Handbook contains clear information and guidance to foster carers in safe care practice. There are clear policies and procedures on anti-bullying; that corporal punishment is not acceptable; and if a foster child/ young person is missing from home.</p> <p>There are management systems in place to collate and evaluate information on the circumstances, number and outcome of all allegations of neglect or abuse of a child/ young person in foster care. The Inspector was satisfied that the information is scrutinised on a regular basis by an independent childcare consultant.</p> <p>The agency notifies the Commission, without delay, of all events as listed in Schedule 8, Regulation 43 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2002.</p> | | |
| Percentage of foster children placed who report never or hardly ever being bullied: | 100 | % |

| | | |
|--|----------------------|----------|
| Standard 10 (10.1 - 10.9) | | |
| The fostering service makes sure that each child or young person in foster care is encouraged to maintain and develop family contacts and friendships as set out in her/his care plan and/or foster placement agreement. | | |
| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? | 4 |
| <p>Through inspection of files and discussion with staff and foster carers it was evident that the fostering service encourages each child/ young person in foster care to maintain and develop family contacts and friendships as appropriate to their care plan and foster placement agreement. This is particularly important where children/ young people may be placed a long way from home or where difficult issues may arise from contact arrangements. The Inspector was encouraged to see the amount of work done in this area.</p> <p>There was evidence of clear procedures setting out how appropriate contact arrangements for each child/ young person in foster care are to be established, maintained, monitored and reviewed. It is an expectation that contact arrangements form part of the foster placement agreement and care plan. There was documentation on file to evidence that, if this information was not included, then a written request had been sent to the placing authority for this information to be sought.</p> <p>The Inspector was able to evidence that carers record the outcome of contact arrangements. Financial and practical support is provided to the carer for transport or other costs involved in ensuring contacts take place.</p> <p>The registered providers have met all elements of this standard and in addition have demonstrated high quality provision in this aspect.</p> | | |

Standard 11 (11.1 - 11.5)

The fostering service ensures that children's opinions, and those of their families and others significant to the child, are sought over all issues that are likely to affect their daily life and their future.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Through discussion with staff and foster carers and responses in feedback questionnaires there was evidence to demonstrate that foster carers are encouraged to seek out children's/ young people's opinions and understand the importance of listening to the views of children/ young people placed in their care.

The fostering service's policies and practice guidance demonstrate that they ensure that children's/ young people's opinions and those of their families and significant others, are sought over all issues that are likely to affect their daily life and their future.

There is a standing item on the Supervising Social Worker (SSW) Visit Form that acts as a prompt for SSW to promote consultation with children/ young people on a regular and frequent basis to ensure that their opinions and views are sought on all matters affecting them, including day to day matters.

From responses in feedback questionnaires it was evident that children/ young people knew how to raise any concerns or complaints. The Children/ Young Persons Guide contains information about how to complain/ raise an issue of concern and is produced in two formats to provide information that is age/ ability appropriate.

Standard 12 (12.1 - 12.8)

The fostering service ensures that it provides foster care services which help each child or young person in foster care to receive health care which meets her/his needs for physical, emotional and social development, together with information and training appropriate to her/his age and understanding to enable informed participation in decisions about her/his health needs.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Through discussion with staff and foster carers and information contained in policies and good practice guidance, there was evidence to demonstrate that Ryancare provides foster care services which help each child/ young person to receive health care which meets his/ her needs for physical, emotional and social development, and that children/ young people are enabled to make informed decisions about their health needs.

Where placement agreements received from the responsible authority did not contain a full description of the health needs of a child/ young person, there was documentation evidenced on file that this information had been sought by the fostering service.

Foster carers were clear about their responsibilities in respect of registering a child/ young person with a GP or dentist and taking the child to any health appointments when required. Foster carers receive training in health and hygiene issues and first aid.

Standard 13 (13.1 - 13.8)

The fostering service gives a high priority to meeting the educational needs of each child or young person in foster care and ensures that she/he is encouraged to attain her/his full potential.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

3

Through discussions with staff and foster carers; case tracking; feedback from questionnaires: policies and good practice guidance it was evident that the fostering service and foster carers give a high priority to meeting the educational needs of each child/ young person. Foster carers were seen to promote an environment an environment in which education and learning is promoted and valued.

There is a standing item on the Supervising Social Worker (SSW) Visit Form, which prompts SSW to discuss educational needs and attainments.

The Inspector found evidence on files of requests to responsible placing authorities for information in respect of personal education plans.

The foster placement agreement identifies the financial responsibility for all associated school costs. Foster carers are clear in respect of their role in school contact, for example parent's evenings, open days and discussions with teachers.

Standard 14 (14.1 - 14.5)

The fostering service ensures that their foster care services help to develop skills, competence and knowledge necessary for adult living.

Key Findings and Evidence**Standard met?**

0

This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

Recruiting, Checking, Managing, Supporting and Training Staff and Foster Carers

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The people who work in or for the fostering service are suitable to work with children and young people and they are managed, trained and supported in such a way as to ensure the best possible outcomes for children in foster care. The number of staff and carers and their range of qualifications and experience are sufficient to achieve the purposes and functions of the organisation.

Standard 15 (15.1 - 15.8)

Any people working in or for the fostering service are suitable people to work with children and young people and to safeguard and promote their welfare.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

Through interviews with staff and inspection of documents, files, policies/ procedures and records maintained there was evidence to demonstrate that the people who work in or for the fostering service are suitable to work with children/ young people and that they are recruited, managed, trained and supported as to ensure the best possible outcomes for children/ young people in foster care. All records inspected were being maintained to a good standard. There are clear written recruitment and selection procedures for appointing staff, which follow good practice in safeguarding children/ young people and the fostering service operates a robust recruitment procedure.

The fostering service has recruited two additional supervising social workers since the last inspection.

All social work staff involved in assessment and approval of foster carers are qualified social workers, with relevant foster care and family placement work and are trained in assessment. The fostering service does not currently use unqualified staff or have students on placement.

Total number of staff of the agency:

6

Number of staff who have left the agency in the past 12 months:

0

Standard 16 (16.1 - 16.16)

Staff are organised and managed in a way that delivers an efficient and effective foster care service.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

| | | |
|--|----------------------|---|
| Standard 17 (17.1 - 17.7) The fostering service has an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff and recruits a range of carers to meet the needs of children and young people for whom it aims to provide a service. | | |
| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? | 3 |
| <p>The fostering service has an adequate number of sufficiently experienced and qualified staff to meet the needs of children/ young people for whom it aims to provide a service and is in line with the Statement of Purpose.</p> <p>There is a clearly set out process for the assessment of foster carers and this is further supported by a high standard of Form F assessments and the monitoring of this standard by the panel chair.</p> <p>Foster carers are recruited in line with the British Agencies for Fostering and Adoption (BAAF) Guidance and the Competency Framework in the assessment of qualities, competencies and aptitudes. The fostering services recruitment strategy aims and succeeds in recruiting a range of carers to meet the needs of children/ young people for whom it aims to provide a service.</p> | | |

| | | |
|---|----------------------|---|
| Standard 18 (18.1 - 18.7) The fostering service is a fair and competent employer, with sound employment practices and good support for its staff and carers. | | |
| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? | 0 |
| <p>This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.</p> | | |

| | | |
|--|----------------------|---|
| Standard 19 (19.1 - 19.7) There is a good quality training programme to enhance individual skills and to keep staff up-to-date with professional and legal developments. | | |
| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? | 3 |
| <p>There was evidence of a good quality training programme to enhance individual skills and ensure that staff are kept up to date with professional and legal developments and changes in legislation or guidance that is relevant to their roles. For example, The Children’s Act, Working Together with Children, Victoria Climbié Enquiry.</p> <p>All staff receive an induction programme, which commences on the first day of employment and is completed within 12 weeks. The Inspector was able to evidence, through discussion with staff that there is a clear plan for the training and development of all staff involved in fostering work.</p> <p>The effectiveness of all training is evaluated and training programmes are reviewed and updated annually.</p> <p>All foster carers are required to attend a three-day ”Skills to Foster” training.</p> | | |

| | | |
|--|----------------------|----------|
| Standard 20 (20.1 - 20.5) | | |
| All staff are properly accountable and supported. | | |
| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? | 0 |
| This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations. | | |

| | | |
|--|----------------------|----------|
| Standard 21 (21.1 - 21.6) | | |
| The fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers. | | |
| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? | 3 |
| <p>Through discussions with staff and foster carers, and from viewing policies/ procedures and foster carer files, it was evident that the fostering service has a clear strategy for working with and supporting carers.</p> <p>In discussion with foster carers and feedback received from questionnaires it was very evident that that carers felt very well supported by the agency; that staff were very responsive; and that their opinions as foster carers were listened to and valued.</p> <p>The agency operates an effective out of hour's support system.</p> <p>Foster carers are encouraged to attend the monthly support groups and they are generally well attended. Carers viewed these groups as an important part of their support network.</p> <p>The role of the supervising social worker is clear to both the worker and the foster carer. All foster carers are reviewed annually and reports are prepared and presented to the Fostering Panel.</p> <p>Two placing authority social workers completed feedback questionnaires and the Inspector made telephone contact with three others. All considered that there was a good and effective system of communication between themselves and the fostering agency.</p> | | |

| | | |
|--|----------------------|----------|
| Standard 22 (22.1 - 22.10) | | |
| The fostering service is a managed one that provides supervision for foster carers and helps them to develop their skills. | | |
| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? | 0 |
| This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations. | | |

Standard 23 (23.1 - 23.9)

The fostering service ensures that foster carers are trained in the skills required to provide high quality care and meet the needs of each child/young person placed in their care.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

As part of the inspection process the Inspector attended one, of the three days “Skills to Foster” training. This training is held over three consecutive weekends and is held in a venue local to the agency. The training was well attended and presented at a level appropriate to the participants.

All training is within a framework of equal opportunities, anti discriminatory practice and is organised to encourage and facilitate attendance through convenient times and venues. The provision of safe caring forms a high priority within Ryancare Fostering training programme and appropriate training on safe caring is provided for all members of the foster household.

The effectiveness of all training is evaluated and reviewed annually.

Records

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- All appropriate records are kept and are accessible in relation to the fostering services and the individual foster carers and foster children.

Standard 24 (24.1 - 24.8)

The fostering service ensures that an up-to-date, comprehensive case record is maintained for each child or young person in foster care, which details the nature, and quality of care provided and contributes to an understanding of her/his life events. Relevant information from the case records is made available to the child and to anyone involved in her/his care.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

3

From discussion with staff and through viewing case records and policy/ procedural guidance there was evidence to demonstrate that the fostering service maintains comprehensive and well organised records for each child/ young person. There is a written policy on case recording, which establishes the purpose, format and contents of files. Relevant information from the records is made available to the child/ young person and those involved in his/ her care.

Where necessary information is not forthcoming from the placing authority, the Inspector found evidence of written requests to obtain relevant information and records.

Through discussion with foster carers and the Inspectors attendance at foster carer training, it was evident that the agency ensures that foster carers are aware of confidentiality and the importance of storing information in a secure manner. Foster carers receive training and ongoing support in how to record information and significant life events for the child/ young person; the need to encourage children/ young people in their care to reflect on and understand his/ her history; and to keep appropriate memorabilia.

Standard 25 (25.1 - 25.13)

The fostering service's administrative records contain all significant information relevant to the running of the foster care service and as required by regulations.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

Records inspected contained all significant information relevant to the operation of the foster care service and as required by regulation. The fostering service's administrative records are constructed and maintained to a very high standard and in such a way that the process of "tracking" events and decision-making is made easy.

Separate records are kept for all staff, both employed and independent sessional; foster carers; children/ young people; complaints and allegations. There is a system for monitoring the quality and adequacy of records and to ensure legibility all records are typed and countersigned by the manager. Of those records inspected entries were found to be clearly expressed, non-stigmatising and distinguished between fact, opinion and third party information. There is a reliable method of diarising/ bring forward to ensure records are maintained up to date, for example references and checks.

There is clear guidance for staff on record keeping, managing and assessing confidential information. The service has been pro-active in addressing the issues around the Freedom

of Information Act.

The records of complaints and allegations were clearly recorded on the relevant files with full details of investigation, conclusion reached and action taken with a separate record being kept centrally.

The registered providers have met all the elements of this standard and in addition have demonstrated high quality provision in this aspect.

| | | | |
|---|--------|------------------|--------|
| Number of current foster placements supported by the agency: | 16 | | |
| Number of placements made by the agency in the last 12 months: | 17 | | |
| Number of placements made by the agency which ended in the past 12 months: | 10 | | |
| Number of new foster carers approved during the last 12 months: | 6 | | |
| Number of foster carers who left the agency during the last 12 months: | 0 | | |
| Current weekly payments to foster parents: Minimum £ | 252.00 | Maximum £ | 335.00 |

Fitness of Premises for use as Fostering Service

The intended outcome for the following standard is:

- The premises used as offices by the fostering service are suitable for the purpose.

Standard 26 (26.1 - 26.5)

Premises used as offices by the fostering service are appropriate for the purpose.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

Financial Requirements

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- The agency fostering services are financially viable and appropriate and timely payments are made to foster carers.

Standard 27 (27.1 - 27.3)

The agency ensures it is financially viable at all times and has sufficient financial resources to fulfil its obligations.

| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? |
|---------------------------|---------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|

| | |
|--|---|
| | 0 |
|--|---|

This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

Standard 28 (28.1 - 28.7)

The financial processes/systems of the agency are properly operated and maintained in accordance with sound and appropriate accounting standards and practice.

| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? |
|---------------------------|---------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|

| | |
|--|---|
| | 0 |
|--|---|

This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

Standard 29 (29.1 - 29.2)

Each foster carer receives an allowance and agreed expenses, which cover the full cost of caring for each child or young person placed with him or her. Payments are made promptly and at the agreed time. Allowances and fees are reviewed annually.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

0

This standard was not assessed on this occasion. However, the standard was assessed and met in full at the last inspection and there are no outstanding requirements or recommendations.

Fostering Panels

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- **Fostering panels are organised efficiently and effectively so as to ensure that good quality decisions are made about the approval of foster carers, in line with the overriding objective to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in foster care.**

Standard 30 (30.1 - 30.9)

Fostering panels have clear written policies and procedures, which are implemented in practice, about the handling of their functions.

Key Findings and Evidence

Standard met?

4

The Inspector observed a panel and interviewed the panel chair as part of the inspection. The fostering panel have clear written policies and procedures, which are implemented in practice, about the handling of their functions.

The panel chair ensured that there was the required quorum for the panel to function.

The Inspector observed robust discussion of issues and appropriate facilitation by the chair. Detailed consideration is given to the Form F assessment, acknowledging strengths and identifying areas in need of development. Form F assessments were noted by the Inspector to be of a very high standard.

The prospective foster carer and the assessing social worker attend the panel together. This enhances the decision making process as panel members are able to question the prospective foster carer and the assessing social worker on points of clarification and affords the foster carer an opportunity to also ask questions.

Panel members have expertise in education, child health, child protection and medical expertise. There is a panel member who is a foster carer and another member who is a person who was in foster care as a young person.

The panel also has a role in providing a quality assurance function in relation to the assessment process. The Inspector was able to evidence this during observation of the panel and through discussion with the panel chair.

The panel ensure that there is a consistency of approach and standard of assessment across the service and that the assessment is completed in a thorough and rigorous way.

The Inspector observed that foster carer annual reviews are also brought to the panel.

The registered providers have met all the elements of this standard and in addition have demonstrated high quality provision in this aspect.

Short-Term Breaks

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- When foster care is provided as a short-term break for a child, the arrangement recognises that the parents remain the main carers for the child.

Standard 31 (31.1 - 31.2)

Where a fostering service provides short-term breaks for children in foster care, they have policies and procedures, implemented in practice, to meet the particular needs of children receiving short-term breaks.

| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? | 9 |
|---------------------------|---------------|---|
|---------------------------|---------------|---|

Ryancare fostering service does not provide short-term placements within the meaning of the Fostering Services Regulation 37.

Family and Friends as Carers

The intended outcome for the following set of standards is:

- Local authority fostering services' policies and procedures for assessing, approving, supporting and training foster carers recognise the particular contribution that can be made by and the particular needs of family and friends as carers.

Standard 32 (32.1 - 32.4)

These standards are all relevant to carers who are family and friends of the child, but there is recognition of the particular relationship and position of family and friend carers.

| Key Findings and Evidence | Standard met? |
|---------------------------|---------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|

| | |
|--|--|
| This standard is not relevant to Ryancare fostering service. | |
|--|--|

PART C

LAY ASSESSOR'S SUMMARY

(where applicable)

Lay Assessor _____ **Signature** _____
Date _____

D.1 Registered Person's or Responsible Local Authority Manager's comments/confirmation relating to the content and accuracy of the report for the above inspection.

We would welcome comments on the content of this report relating to the Inspection conducted on 12th January 2005 of Ryancare Fostering Ltd and any factual inaccuracies:

Please limit your comments to one side of A4 if possible

Action taken by the CSCI in response to the provider's comments:

Amendments to the report were necessary

YES

Comments were received from the provider

YES

Provider factual amendments were incorporated into the final inspection report

YES

Provider comments are available on file at the Area Office but have not been incorporated into the final inspection report. The inspector believes the report to be factually accurate

YES

Note:

In instances where there is a major difference of view between the Inspector and the Registered Provider responsible Local Authority fostering service Manager both views will be made available on request to the Area Office.

D.2 Please provide the Commission with a written Action Plan by which indicates how statutory requirements and recommendations are to be addressed and stating a clear timescale for completion. This will be kept on file and made available on request.

Status of the Provider's Action Plan at time of publication of the final inspection report:

Action plan was required

YES

Action plan was received at the point of publication

YES

Action plan covers all the statutory requirements in a timely fashion

YES

Action plan did not cover all the statutory requirements and required further discussion

NO

Provider has declined to provide an action plan

NO

Other: <enter details here>

Public reports

It should be noted that all CSCI inspection reports are public documents. Reports on children's homes are only obtainable on personal application to CSCI offices.

D.3 PROVIDER'S AGREEMENT

Registered Person's or responsible Local Authority Manager's statement of agreement/comments: Please complete the relevant section that applies.

D.3.1 I _____ of _____ confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) and that I agree with the statutory requirements made and will seek to comply with these.

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

Or

D.3.2 I _____ of _____ am unable to confirm that the contents of this report are a fair and accurate representation of the facts relating to the inspection conducted on the above date(s) for the following reasons:

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Designation _____
Date _____

Note: In instance where there is a profound difference of view between the Inspector and the Registered Provider both views will be reported. Please attach any extra pages, as applicable.

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