

Care service inspection report

Full inspection

Quarriers Fostering Service Fostering Service

Quarriers Village
Bridge of Weir

Service provided by: Quarriers

Service provider number: SP2003000264

Care service number: CS2004085352

Inspection Visit Type: Announced (Short Notice)

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and set out improvements that must be made. We also investigate complaints about care services and take action when things aren't good enough.

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Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

Quality of care and support	5	Very Good
Quality of staffing	5	Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5	Very Good

What the service does well

We found the service to be a very open and inclusive organisation that is very good at supporting their staff group and the people who use their services.

Staff and foster carers demonstrate good communication with families which clearly benefits the quality of children's experiences.

What the service could do better

The service needs to continue to streamline support planning documentation to promote consistent practice which holds central the needs of the children and young people.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The specialist fostering service and short breaks service have continued to develop and become more established within the wider organisation. Staff and carers across the service have been involved in annual development days which had good attendance and positive feedback.

As the number of approved carers has increased the service has developed a

dedicated carer support group for the Glasgow based foster carers. The service had also employed another supervising social worker in recognition of the expansion of the service. This will ensure that carers and children continue to receive the same high level of support.

Conclusion

Both the short breaks service and the permanent fostering service are extremely valued by the families and children who use them.

We found children's needs were being met and they were enjoying new experiences. Workers are highly motivated to provide a quality service to children and young people. We found that Quarriers remain very committed to developing and improving their service wherever possible.

1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com

This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Quarriers have a long experience of supporting children and adults with disabilities and their mission is to transform lives. The service provides a person centred model of care to meet the needs of children and young people. The principle aim of the service is to "improve the lives of children and young people with complex needs and disabilities through the provision of short breaks and permanent placements".

Quarriers offer two distinctive strands to their fostering service. They have a specialised fostering service for children and young people with complex needs and disabilities based in Glasgow. This service recruits foster carers who want to care permanently for children and young people into adulthood.

They also have the family support service which offers short breaks to children with complex needs and disabilities to support families in Dumfries and Galloway. This service is very well established and has been running since late 1990.

At the time of the inspection the specialist fostering service reported that they had seven approved foster carers providing permanent care to six children. The short break service in Dumfries was reported to have fifteen foster carers providing short breaks to twenty one children. Three of these children are currently on pre placement introductions.

The registered manager for the service is the operational manager who has direct managerial responsibility for both the Glasgow and Dumfries areas.

Recommendations

A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions that a care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service, but where

failure to do so would not directly result in enforcement.

Recommendations are based on the National Care Standards, SSSC codes of practice and recognised good practice. These must also be outcomes-based and if the provider meets the recommendation this would improve outcomes for people receiving the service.

Requirements

A requirement is a statement which sets out what a care service must do to improve outcomes for people who use services and must be linked to a breach in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (the "Act"), its regulations, or orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Requirements are enforceable in law.

We make requirements where (a) there is evidence of poor outcomes for people using the service or (b) there is the potential for poor outcomes which would affect people's health, safety or welfare.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of care and support - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of management and leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0345 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

We wrote this report following a short notice announced inspection which took place between Thursday 28 May 2015 and Thursday 25 June 2015. We informed the service a few days before our visit to ensure the availability of the manager. Feedback was given to the Operational Manager, Service co-ordinator and Service Manager on Wednesday 1 July 2015. The inspection was undertaken by two inspectors.

In this inspection we gathered evidence from various sources, including the relevant sections of policies, procedures, records and other documents including:

- Six children's case files
- Six foster carers case files
- Medication policy and procedures
- Minute of development day
- Auditing tools and records
- Training records
- Supervision records for staff and carers
- Minutes of support group meetings
- Minutes of team meetings
- 2014 Annual Report
- Participation Strategy, this is the service's plan for how they will involve service users
- Induction document and guidance for staff

- Guidance paper and practice note for panel members
- Feedback from a global survey of Quarriers services carried out in September 2014.

We spoke with:

- Three children
- Two parents
- Fourteen foster carers
- Three Managers of the service
- Four supervising social workers
- One student social worker
- One administrator.

We also asked the manager to issue six questionnaires to staff and we received five completed questionnaires.

Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at www.firescotland.gov.uk

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The service provided a self-assessment which identified strengths and areas for improvement, which helped inform the inspection.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

Prior to the inspection we asked the manager to send out foster carer questionnaires, children questionnaires and questionnaires for panel members. We received email responses from six foster carers, five children and two panel members. We also received email communication from one family member.

During the inspection we visited four foster homes and met with seven foster carers and four children living in foster care. We visited one birth parent and their child. We also attended a support group and spoke with a group of six foster carers.

We observed a fostering panel in Dumfries on 23 June 2015.

We also considered some of the views gathered by the service from foster carers and children.

These are some of the comments we received about the service:

Comments from foster children:

One foster child spoke excitedly about going on holiday with her carers, and spoke positively about the extended family.

"I like doing things together as a family, I get to try out new things and we are going on holiday soon I can't wait".

Pictorial questionnaires sent out to foster children highlighted that they felt listened to, safe and respected. Within these responses it was also noted that children engaged positively in a range of age appropriate outings and activities. Examples given included horse riding, going to the beach and visiting family.

Comments from foster carers:

"Open communication with Quarriers is key to ensure that our views are taken into account regarding the quality of the service"

"As a carer group we are actively involved in helping to shape the information and training that we receive. It makes us feel valued and part of the team"

"We have outstanding help and support from Quarriers, we had been provided with sufficient and accurate information which had helped contribute to this being an extremely successful and rewarding placement"

"The development day in Dumfries was an excellent opportunity to share experiences and meet other foster carers. We had different workshops, and gave feedback on the day on how we felt things could improve"

"The service provides a personal, human touch very well. All staff from admin to manager are friendly, welcoming and knowledgeable. I am reassured every time I phone".

Taking carers' views into account

Family members told us:

"I feel that everything is taken into account to make sure the service

promotes my child's health and wellbeing"

"At first I was hesitant, but we had a great introduction and was reassured. The staff are fantastic and really take their time getting the right carer to match the child"

"I am delighted with this service. It has made a huge difference to our lives".

Further comments from Placing social workers, Supervising social workers (SSW) and foster carers are contained within the body of the report.

3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service."

Service strengths

The service had maintained and strengthened its grade of 'very good' for this statement.

A particular strength of the service was the very good partnership working with children's families across both services. We found families were kept informed about any health issues for children in placement, what activities children were involved and any other significant information. Partnership working included seeking and recording the views of birth families, alongside supporting regular contact within the foster home. We found encouraging evidence that some outings and activities involved parents, foster carers and extended family members where appropriate.

It was clear that this partnership working resulted in consistency of care for children and young people and at times brought about improvements in children's behaviour at home. We found that foster carers were very supportive of birth families and understood the anxieties associated with being separated from their child. For example, pre placement meetings between the carer and parents had taken place alongside visits to the home.

We found a clear commitment to careful planning and making sure children were matched with the right carers. The service gave careful consideration to matching the specific needs of children alongside the individual skills of foster carers and what they would be able to offer.

A foster carer we spoke with described a very good introduction process which included visits to the foster carer home for lunch and to meet other family members prior to progressing gradually to overnights. This level of planning ensured that introductions were done at a pace that suited the child. As a result the child experienced less uncertainty and anxiety when moving to placement.

A placing social worker told us:

"The link worker ensured everyone participated in Quarriers fun activities and enabled the introductory meetings in the "getting to know each other" period to be very smooth and comfortable for folks'.

The organisations Participation Strategy, 'Involving Everyone' provided good quality information and ideas about how to involve people who use the service. This included the development of forums where people can have their say about the services Quarriers offer.

We noted that sound progress had been made in this area with joint development days having taken place for staff and foster carers across both services. The agenda included headings such as 'what could we do that's completely new' and 'what do we currently do which we could improve on'. This provided opportunities for purposeful discussion to take place so that better outcomes for children could be considered.

Carers we spoke to said they found the forum interesting and told us they felt their views were listened to and acted upon.

Foster carers told us:

"It's good to meet foster carers from the short break service and hear about their experiences. I know Quarriers wants to help us join up more"

"As the two services are quite far apart, to make it fair we are planning the

next one in Glasgow"

"We know from the development day that the profile of the service needs to be raised and we looked at ways to do this".

We confirmed that foster carers gave formal feedback from the development day, and this has helped inform the Agenda for September 2015.

We found very good communication at all levels within the organisation. An example included senior management attending support groups to gather carer's views and ideas.

Foster carers told us that they would have no hesitation approaching management if they wanted to make suggestions or come forward with any concerns. This open and inclusive approach will undoubtedly help the service identify areas where they can continue to develop and improve.

Support groups took place regularly and we were told by foster carers that they valued the opportunity to come together to discuss common themes and provide each other with support in an informal setting.

At the support group we observed that the service listened carefully to the views of foster carers and took action when needed. For example carers wanted more focus on a Children's event at Christmas, and this was being acted upon.

One foster carer told us that she had been involved in the development of a new foster carer handbook alongside a student social worker on placement with the service. This was discussed at the support group we attended. We noted that feedback was requested from all carers and that the document had been emailed to carers for consultation prior to the final draft being completed.

During the course of the inspection we asked the service to amend some of the wording within the carer handbook as we believed several statements required clarification. The service acknowledged changes needed to be made and took steps to resolve this immediately. We felt this was a good example of the services ability to work in partnership to improve on the quality of information provided to carers.

Children and their families are invited to Looked After and Accommodated (LAC) reviews, which are held within regulatory timescales. We saw evidence of young people and children using 'having you say' forms with positive comments being made about their time in foster care.

Children and young people were also involved in developing 'personal passports'. These are person centred and make it clear how to meet the needs of the child. We saw that children and young people were given the opportunity to contribute to the passport, taking into account their ability to communicate and engage. We found that the passports gave carers a clear indication of the child's preferred method of communication, health needs, interests and hobbies.

The passport also reflected the expectations of the Scottish Government in regard to 'Getting it Right for Every Child' principles and included wellbeing indicators. These eight indicators are intended to provide a common language for practitioners, children and families, as well as ensuring that a holistic view of the child or young person's life and progress is being considered.
www.gov.scot/Topics/Young-People/gettingitright

An area of development at the last inspection was for the passport to be used across both services. There were signs that progress had been made in this area, as one passport had been completed within the Glasgow service. There were also other signs of improvement in the service recognising the need for passports to be reviewed and updated regularly.

We were told that a young person was involved in the development of a new welcome booklet for children and young people. We noted that this was almost at completion with improvements and suggestions being acted upon. It was also evident from case notes we looked at that meaningful discussion had taken place with the young person involved. We were told that this work had resulted in the young person feeling valued and had raised confidence.

Foster carers gave feedback following training and were able to make suggestions about any further input needed to help enhance their skills. Foster carers told us that the service had responded to requests for further training in autism to improve their learning and development. There was evidence that the service had responded helpfully to bespoke training requested by carers, to

enhance the wellbeing of the child.

Annual foster care reviews also gave foster carers the opportunity to comment on the quality of support and training they had received. Foster carers we spoke with told us the service was very supportive and worked in partnership with them. This was confirmed within the case files we read.

Experienced foster carers were invited to co present the skills to foster training to those applying to become foster carers. Where appropriate foster carers children are also invited to talk to applicants at the preparation stage. We were told that this was a valued input as it gave applicants insight into the rewards and challenges of fostering.

We were told that materials used in the preparation stage for potential foster carers were being reviewed and developed, following feedback being given from workers and foster carers. This development will ensure that information provided to potential foster carers will have more focus on issues affecting children and young people with disabilities. This will provide potential foster carers the opportunity to improve their understanding of the fostering task.

Areas for improvement

The service aimed to further refine ways to obtain children and young people's views on the care and support they receive.

We discussed with the management the opportunity to link the feedback from foster carers to staff appraisal. This would ensure complete 360 degree feedback for staff.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 2

"We enable service users to make individual choices and ensure that every service user can be supported to achieve their potential."

Service strengths

Feedback we received from children and young people during the inspection indicated that they enjoyed very good relationships with their foster carers.

Some of the children placed with the service had difficulty verbalising their needs. We observed foster carers communicating with children using other methods, for example Makaton (signs and symbols to help people communicate) and children responding well to this. Foster carers told us they had the opportunity to attend Makaton training which enhanced their ability to understand children's needs.

Foster carers had requested an increased use in board symbols and graphics to further aid communication with the children and young people they care for. These suggestions had been taken forward by the service as a result. These resources support children to express their views and make individual choices. Foster carers were attuned to safety issues and we saw evidence that children were included and nurtured in their placements.

Children and young people were registered with General Practitioners and other health care services including opticians and dentists. The service had good links with Child Adolescent Mental health Services (CAMHS), Looked After Children Nurses (LAAC) and other specialist health services. We could see there was an emphasis on keeping young children safe and well, and that any health care needs were being addressed.

We saw evidence of completed safer caring plans and risk assessments within the files we looked at. We found foster carers worked extremely well with supervising social workers and placing social workers in tailoring support appropriately. An example of this would be arrangements being made to maintain links with the child's birth family.

Individual placement agreements were detailed and provided clarity and assurance about roles and responsibilities. They also provided a good level of detail regarding why the children required the placement and of their individual need.

The service had a joint protocol with the NHS Community Nursing Team who train carers on procedures such as gastronomy care. We were advised that there was also a joint protocol with the NHS/Council Occupational Service which carers had access to. There was very good evidence of joint working to support young people with complex physical needs and learning disabilities.

We found that regular Looked After Child Reviews were held and plans were progressed effectively to meet the current and future needs of the child. Foster carers told us that placing social workers visited the child on placement regularly and that good relationships had been established. We were told that permanency planning was in line with current good practice, this helps children feel more secure and gives them a sense of belonging.

We found evidence of very good partnership working between the supervising social workers and placing social workers. For example, regular telephone contact, email updates and regular planning meetings held in the carer home. We noted that all forms of communication were recorded appropriately and involved discussion for example around the child's education support or family contact. Any achievements or progress was noted for the child, shared and recorded in a positive manner. This resulted in children benefiting from a cohesive approach to their care plan, and enabled any additional support to be provided.

A foster carer told us:

"Our social worker arranges meetings that are held in our home prior to the child's LAAC review. Everyone is involved and has a say, from school to health people. The child's family also attend, it keeps everyone up to date and look at progress".

We were told that all children and young people were currently in education either specialist support or college. One foster carer told us that arrangements had been made for a child to remain at the same school prior to placement to ensure continuity.

We found that foster carers worked hard to overcome any problems in relation to the child's education or health needs. Foster carers were noted to advocate well on the child's behalf if any additional support was required, and this in turn provided good outcomes for children.

Feedback we received from children and young people highlighted that the majority of children were involved in activities and interests. These activities helped children to increase their social skills and develop self-esteem.

We found foster carers used imaginative ways to contribute to children's memory boxes by taking photographs and keeping mementos of significant times and events. Foster carers understood the importance of supporting children to value their identity and promote self-esteem.

Areas for improvement

In discussion, we found that staff and foster carers were aware of individual needs of the children and young people and managed risk appropriately. However the good practice we found was not always reflected in the documentation held on children's files. The management were aware of this and were progressing the introduction of child friendly risk assessments. This will be looked at during the next inspection of the service.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service."

Service strengths

The evidence in Quality Theme 1 - Statement 1 in relation to consultation and participation is relevant to this statement.

Areas for improvement

The evidence in Quality Theme 1 - Statement 1 in relation to consultation and participation is relevant to this statement.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 3

"We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice."

Service strengths

All staff members were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). There were regular checks to ensure registration was maintained. Staff were clearly supported to meet the training and development requirements of the SSSC. Staff told us they had good access to internal and external training opportunities.

One member of staff had attended - 'The Fostering Network Conference' which is a national organisation for foster care who:

"Lobby, campaign and influence policy in order to develop, improve and champion fostering".

The service offered a range of training such as permanence and disability and the role of the supervising social worker.

Staff confirmed they had good links with a range of partner agencies including the Fostering Network, The Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) and British Association of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF). In turn this meant that foster carers and the children in their care benefited from good advice about practice, all of which supported the stability of foster placements for children.

We saw the workforce as professional, knowledgeable and skilled in the work they undertook. This reinforced the views of foster carers they worked with and by the local authority social workers who had placed children with the service.

One foster carer told us:

"My supervising social worker is very knowledgeable and experienced; she

helped prepare us for the challenges ahead".

A panel member told us:

"The feedback I have heard directly from carers at reviews indicates that the service supports them extremely well and this is a consistent theme".

A placing social confirmed the professional approach by staff:

"The supervising social worker has frequent contact and is very thorough. He is always up to date in his information and knows what is going on. He keeps me updated. He gathers extensive amounts of information through meetings and visits and is extremely thorough".

Staff worked effectively in partnership with other agencies to ensure children and young people's needs were met. Placing social workers told us that they were confident that issues they raised were addressed. They also saw that foster carers had a good understanding of key issues such as disability, attachment and loss and working in partnership. This gave further evidence to the competence of staff.

All staff we spoke to reported very good levels of support from managers within the service and they also valued the opportunity for informal supervision from managers and colleagues.

Supervision and appraisal processes were given appropriate priority and were valued by managers and staff.

Generally staff felt well supported in their roles, and believed that any issues or ideas for improvement could be discussed openly and acted upon. Staff told us that frequent team meetings took place and advised that these were worthwhile providing opportunities to discuss exchange and reflect on practice and plan ahead. As a result, morale was described as being good.

Staff told us:

"I feel the staff team in the project are very mutually supportive and strive to

meet the identified needs of the children and young people".

"I am delighted with the time allowed to provide real/active support to carers and those being cared for. I find my post very rewarding".

We saw reassuring evidence of the assessing social workers continuing as the allocated supervising social workers for carers following approval. Foster carers appreciated this continuity of worker and felt that this was favourable in terms of the worker understanding their skills, knowledge and circumstances.

One foster carer told us that having the same social worker allocated was greatly beneficial to planning for the child in placement. The foster carer told us 'the matching process was just perfect'.

It was clear the service welcomed the contribution that could be made by students and had very good links with universities. We spoke with a practice teacher who was also a supervising social worker within the Glasgow service, and regularly supported students on placement. She described the service as providing very good quality placements for students.

We spoke with one student who also provided written feedback for the inspection. She spoke highly of the service and commented on the opportunities it provided for her to develop child centred practice.

There was a comprehensive Child protection policy and all staff and carers undertook relevant training. The policy also identified indicators of risk and concern that apply to children who may be vulnerable to child sexual exploitation. To help ensure children and young people's wellbeing, carers completed very detailed health and safety checklists that were reviewed by their supervising social workers. The service had also developed a household safe caring policy template to be adapted to each foster carer household.

Foster carers had been provided with on-going training to continue to develop their knowledge and skills in caring for vulnerable children. We saw evidence of training records for carers that included mandatory first aid as well as specialist training in safe handling and medication.

Areas for improvement

The service has had a significant re-structure in terms of management. This has resulted in staff promotion and additional responsibilities. It is important that support arrangements remain consistent, and that training opportunities are made available to enhance the development of managerial skills. This will ensure that staff have the professional training and expertise they need to provide an effective service.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service."

Service strengths

Information recorded under Quality Theme 1 - Statement 1 in relation to consultation and participation is relevant to this statement.

We found that people who used the agency had very good opportunities to influence service development including the quality of management and leadership.

We were informed that a foster carer was a full member of the interview panel for the service manager position. In addition we saw evidence that the self-assessment carried out as part of this inspection had been informed by service users.

Areas for improvement

The service should continue to develop very good practice in this area.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 4

"We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide"

Service strengths

The agency had effective and efficient systems in place to make sure that the quality of the work they carried out was consistent, and that any necessary improvements were identified.

The fostering panel provided an important quality assurance function within the fostering service. For example they were rigorous in ensuring all panel reports contained relevant and good quality information prior to them making a recommendation. We observed the panel seek clarity in relation to information provided.

One panel member commented:

"The quality of assessment reports I have seen presented to panel is generally very good, as is the input from the assessing social workers".

We were impressed by individual panel members knowledge and understanding of the importance of remaining child focused. The panel was formed by members who had knowledge of the needs and challenges facing vulnerable families and experience of looked after children and fostering. The panel had an independent chair and there was representation from external organisations. The agency decision maker carried out a further role in quality assurance prior to decision making.

The panel manager ensured that attendees were asked to feedback their views about the panel. This information was collated and recorded and discussed at business meetings. These meetings were held regularly and provided opportunities for panel members and the management within the agency to reflect on the work of the panel and consider what improvements could be made.

A complaints procedure was in place and foster carers were aware of how to access this. This was clearly advertised within the foster carer handbook and children's welcome book (adapted appropriately for children with communication difficulties). Foster carers told us that they knew how to make a complaint if necessary although we noted that no complaints had been made since the last inspection.

The operations manager carried out monthly file audits in relation to case recording and content. This was undertaken to ensure that information contained within files was consistent and up to date. The audit also ensured that any statutory checks were updated which gave reassurance of the continued suitability of foster carers. In order to ensure quality assurance was carried out objectively, managers undertook audits of each other's services. There was clear evidence that quality assurance procedures had picked out issues in terms of gaps in information. This had allowed the necessary remedial action to be taken and ensured important information was managed appropriately.

Central to the services quality assurance approach was making sure the service got feedback from different groups including foster carers and the children and families who the service supported. As discussed, the service demonstrated very good participation arrangements which meant it monitored the outcomes for children and families.

We found evidence that stakeholders were regularly consulted about service quality and performance. For example, the service manager and supervising social workers regularly met with the placing Commissioning Authority to discuss arrangements in place to support children and examine outcomes for them. This open and accountable approach led to regular feedback about the quality of support provided by the service. We noted that management and staff were open to learning from this and acted upon suggestions made.

Foster carers, staff and panel members spoke highly of the way the service was managed. The service manager was clearly familiar with the children and families who used the service. He knew about their support needs and monitored effectively how these were being responded to.

The service demonstrated effective monitoring of foster carers development and performance.

Foster carers were visited regularly and full discussion of the outcomes for the children they looked after. We found carers received annual unannounced visits as well as regular planned visits. Annual reviews were held for foster carers with contributions from placing social workers, and where possible children and young people and birth families.

Managers continue work with CELCIS to look at research into permanent foster care for children with disabilities and how this can be improved upon. In addition the service manager regularly attends the Professional Development Forum facilitated by BAAF. We felt this was another good opportunity to learn and share good practice with other professionals.

The service has rolled out the use of Q star an outcomes monitoring system for children and young people, and this is a promising initiative. The use of the eight wellbeing indicators (SHANARRI) within the system will allow children and young people, along with the support of their foster carers to set realistic personalised targets with regular review. We saw that considerable progress had been made in this area, and it is expected that this will become embedded into practice. We will look at this area at our next inspection.

Areas for improvement

Management are exploring ways to recruit to the fostering panel to bring additional skills and experience to add to the panel decision making processes. This will also ensure the level of professional independence is further strengthened.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

5 What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at our last inspection

Previous requirements

1. No recommendations or requirements were made during the last inspection.

This requirement was made on

6 What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

7 Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

8 Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

9 Additional Information

No additional information recorded.

10 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
19 Mar 2014	Announced (Short Notice)	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment Not Assessed Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
14 Jan 2013	Announced (Short Notice)	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment Not Assessed Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
21 Dec 2010	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment Not Assessed Staffing Not Assessed Management and Leadership Not Assessed
19 Mar 2010	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment Not Assessed Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
17 Feb 2009	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Environment Not Assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and Leadership 4 - Good

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Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is c?nain eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

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