

ISP Enfield

Inspection report for Independent Fostering Agency

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Inspector	Muhammed Harunur Rashid / Angela Hunt
Type of inspection	Key

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About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

Integrated Services Programme (ISP) Enfield is an independent fostering agency as part of a limited company. Their other centres are based in Buckinghamshire, Sussex and throughout Kent. The head office is based at Sittingbourne in Kent.

ISP Enfield office is based in Church Street in Enfield and is accessible by public transport. The centre provides staff offices and also has rooms available for therapy sessions, educational input, meetings, contact arrangements and training.

ISP Enfield provides a wide range of services including social work support for foster carers and the young people, a range of therapeutic services, educational support and assistance with transport. ISP Enfield foster carers provide short, emergency, long term and respite care. ISP Enfield and Chesham centres share a joint fostering panel.

Summary

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

This full announced inspection looked at the progress ISP has made with the recommendations made at the last inspection. These related to the review of the Statement of Purpose, supporting foster carers to update their first aid training, addressing shortfalls in health care and implementing the foster carer's supervision record. The inspection also looked at how the service was meeting the National Minimum Standards (NMS) and associated regulations.

ISP has updated the Statement of Purpose which has included all necessary information required by regulation. Health care needs of each child are identified and there is a system in place to update health care records of young people. ISP ensures that foster carers are supported through various training and individual supervision in order to meet young people's holistic needs.

Improvements since the last inspection

A strong feature of ISP Enfield continues to be its willingness to develop and improve its knowledge and practice. There is a strong leadership at all levels within the service and the staff team is committed to continual development of the service.

ISP Enfield has appointed a new manager and a senior practitioner. A new health record form has been developed in which to keep all health care information about each individual foster child. ISP has also developed a pilot scheme to assess

independent living skills of young people at the age of 15 and to assist placing authorities in Pathway Planning.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Foster children's individual health care needs are well met. ISP has comprehensive policies and procedures in place to promote the health of young people in foster care. ISP has a designated health care advisor to promote the health of young people. Information about an individual child's health care is in the process of being transferred to the recently developed health care document. Foster carers are provided with a copy of this and are responsible for making sure it is kept up to date. ISP maintains a good link with health professionals, for example, Looked After Children's (LAC) nurses in order to meet young people's health care needs. LAC nurses have input into health care training for foster carers. Foster carers are well supported and encouraged through the provision of health care courses to develop their knowledge and skills to meet young people's needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

ISP ensures that robust checks on all staff, foster carers, panel members and others involved with children are carried out prior to their appointments. Such checks ensure young people's safety and protect them from potential abuse. Information regarding all relevant checks are kept in the individual files.

Appropriate child protection policies and procedures are in place to protect young people. Staff and foster carers are provided with child protection training and they have a good awareness of child protection issues.

There is a system in place for foster carers to seek help if an allegation of abuse is made against a foster carer.

ISP has an appropriate behavioural management policy in place. Foster carers are given guidelines on behaviour management. Foster carers apply restraint or impose sanctions as a last resort.

ISP has not received any complaints since the last inspection.

There is a clear system in place to review and approve the policies and procedures of the agency. This provides staff and foster carers with an opportunity to develop their practice.

The fostering panel is jointly shared with another ISP branch. The last three panel meeting minutes demonstrated the correct composition as required by regulation. There are clear decision making processes in place to support the effective

functioning of the fostering panel. Panel members come from a variety of professions and have a range of experiences. This further underpins the good work of the agency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

ISP promotes the values of diversity and equality through various training for staff and foster carers, for example, cultural awareness and diversity training. Skills to foster training provides opportunities for foster carers to develop various skills in the areas of matching needs, sex and sexuality, behavioural management and health and safety.

ISP actively promotes education for children and young people with foster carers. Foster carers encourage and support children and young people to attend mainstream schools. Where a child is excluded from a school the dedicated Education Team within ISP offers an individual educational package for the child until the right school is found. They also offer an individual package to children within mainstream schools. ISP provides additional resources to help an individual child at school which enable meeting an individual's educational needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

ISP encourage young people to maintain and develop family contacts. Foster carers understand the importance of maintaining these relationships and are positive about the arrangements made for contact. ISP arrange transport facilities for children and young people to visit their family members where appropriate.

There is a system in place to seek children and young people's views about their lives and futures through regular participation groups. ISP encourage prospective foster carers to take their children to meet with existing foster carer's own children. These arrangements provide opportunities for prospective foster carers and their own children to explore what it is like to have fostered children as a part of a family unit.

ISP ensures that children and young people are listened to and encourage them to read and be aware of their complaint policy and procedure. ISP has not received any complaint since the last inspection. The complaint procedure needs to include contact details and the telephone number of National Business Unit (NBU) of Ofsted.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

ISP worked hard to prepare young people for adulthood. This includes conducting assessments of the independent living skills of the young people at the age of 15.

This information is then passed on to the placing authorities to assist in the implementation of the Pathway Plan. In addition the sexual health, smoking policies and preparing for leaving care provide information and encourage young people to prepare for independent or semi-independent living. Foster carers encourage and support young people to develop living skills, for example, travelling, budgeting and shopping.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Overall excellent systems and support for staff, foster carers and young people are in place. ISP has a clear Statement of Purpose which was revised recently. This outlines that ISP provides childcare in family settings, education and therapy for children and young people whose development has been impaired by abuse, trauma and deprivation. ISP has two Children's Guides, one for younger children and one for older children.

ISP is well managed with an effective management structure in place. Staff are well supported through the provision of training, regular supervision and annual appraisals. Young people are supported by a good mixture of skilled and experienced foster carers and staff. Appropriate out of hours support is in place for foster carers. In order to support foster carers and young people a fostering advisor visits foster carers every two months and attend meetings involving foster carers. A supervising social worker conducts bi-monthly visits to foster carers. The supervising social worker and the fostering advisor alternate the months they visit. This ensures that foster carers receive a visit at least once monthly. Annual reviews of foster carers are completed by the independent social worker and the first review is presented to the ISP panel. Thereafter foster carers are reviewed annually and attend a review meeting chaired by the ISP Head of Family placements. Any significant changes following initial approval are presented to the ISP panel as and when necessary.

ISP arranges transport facilities where needed for foster children to attend therapies, contact meetings and schools. The support services manager has established good links with local media resources which assist in being effective in recruiting prospective foster carers.

Foster families case records are well maintained. The terms of approval and foster carers agreements are kept in the files. However, ISP should ensure that the details of the CSCI information is deleted and contact details and telephone number of Ofsted is included. Foster carers are clear about what information is required to be kept of the young people's file, for example significant events. A daily diary system is in place which is checked by the supervising social worker and foster carer support worker.

Children and foster carers' records are maintained manually but are moving towards an electronic system. The centre manager oversees the quality of record keeping.

What must be done to secure future improvement?



Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Fostering Services Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Std.	Action	Due date
11	include the contact telephone number of Ofsted on the complaint procedure (Regulation 18).	31/01/2008