

Action taken following the Fostering Inspection Report issued in June 2005

Statutory Requirements

No	Regulation /Standard	Statutory Requirements identified during this Inspection	Completion Date	Action Plan to the Statutory Requirements and Outcomes at September 2005
1	40/FS16	Herefordshire Council should ensure that Regulation 40.5 (d) and (f) are met in respect of agreements with independent agencies.	31 st May 2005	<p><u>Action Plan:</u> Additions will be made to the Individual Placement Agreement with Independent Fostering Agencies to ensure full compliance with the statutory requirements.</p> <p><u>Outcome:</u> All Individual Placement Agreements with independent agencies now address these requirements.</p>
2	34/FS8 and FS13	Herefordshire Council should ensure the current Foster Placement Agreement contains the information required by Regulation 34 (3) Schedule 6 and is made available at the point of placement, except in the case of an emergency placement when Regulation 38 (1) would apply.	31 st May 2005	<p><u>Action Plan:</u> We believe that the documentation and guidance issued by the fostering service covers this requirement as advised by the previous inspection report. We will take steps to ensure that practice fully complies with the guidance.</p> <p><u>Outcome:</u> Achieved through monitoring</p>
3	34,28/FS31	Herefordshire Council should work with the Short-term breaks Social Worker and Shared Carers to develop policies and procedures appropriate to them and the children placed. All shared care foster carers are given a profile prior to placement. Consideration should be given to developing this document in line with Regulation 34 (3) Schedule 6.	31 st August 2005	<p><u>Action Plan:</u> The Fostering Manager will work in partnership with the Disability Team Manager and the Shared Care Social Worker to develop appropriate policies and procedures. It is a current requirement that all shared carers receive a child profile prior to placement and are required to sign the standard foster care agreement following approval.</p> <p><u>Outcome:</u> Policy and Procedure development under way as agreed. The Shared Care Social Worker post is now vacant and is currently being advertised.</p>

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Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection

No	Standard	Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection	Action Plan to the Good Practice Recommendations and Outcomes at September 2005
1	FS17/FS15	Herefordshire Council should ensure that Family Placement Social Worker staff vacancies are recruited to within a reasonable timescale.	<p><u>Action Plan:</u> Efforts to recruit to vacancies are continuous both internally and externally.</p> <p><u>Outcome:</u> Additional recruitment for the Adoption Service has alleviated pressure on overall team workload. Full-time vacancy in Fostering Service remains</p>
2	FS30	Consideration should be given to confidential documents being sent out to Panel Members in tamper-proof envelopes.	<p><u>Action Plan:</u> Recommendation met. Confidential documents are now sent out to panel members in tamper proof envelopes.</p> <p><u>Outcome:</u> No further action</p>
3	FS9	The written Child Protection Procedure should be developed to include guidance on when a foster carer would be referred onto the POCA list.	<p><u>Action Plan:</u> Guidance on referral onto the POCAS list will be included in the relevant Child Protection Procedure.</p> <p><u>Outcome:</u> Process and procedure agreed and implemented following discussion with Fostering Panel members, Agency Decision Maker and legal adviser.</p>
4	FS19	The Fostering Team Manager and Training Officer should continue to develop and review the training available and time available to Family Placement Social Workers to ensure they are receiving training.	<p><u>Action Plan:</u> Development and review of training and time available to Family Placement Social Workers is ongoing in partnership with the Training Officer</p> <p><u>Outcome:</u> Training requirements for Family Placement Social Workers have been built into current annual Departmental Training Plan.</p>

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Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection (continued)

No.	Standard	Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection	Action Plan to the Good Practice Recommendations and Outcomes at September 2005
5	FS21	Systems for electronic communications between Family Placement Social Workers and Children's Social Workers should be reviewed to ensure there is evidence of contact on foster carers' and children's files.	<p><u>Action Plan:</u> Work on this recommendation will be incorporated into our development of the Electronic Social Care Record.</p> <p><u>Outcome:</u> Awareness of this recommendation has been raised throughout the Department.</p>
6	FS23	The Fostering Team Manager should review the timing of training events and foster carer forums for foster carers.	<p><u>Action Plan:</u> Additional weekend and evening training events are planned to broaden access to training by foster carers. Foster carers are reimbursed childcare costs and assisted with respite care to enable them to attend training courses.</p> <p><u>Outcome:</u> Timing and location of training needs are monitored at each foster carer's annual review and training provided modified accordingly</p>
7	FS 31	Herefordshire Council should ensure that specialised training is also available for Shared Care foster carers.	<p><u>Action Plan:</u> All post approval training is available to shared care foster carers. Additional training will be sought to address specialist training needs for these carers.</p> <p><u>Outcome:</u> Access to specialised training now available through Children With Disabilities Team Manager.</p>

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Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection (continued)

No.	Standard	Good Practice Recommendations from this Inspection (continued)	Action Plan to the Good Practice Recommendations and Outcomes at September 2005
8	FS15 / FS30	<p>Herefordshire Council would develop the written procedure for recruiting staff to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where checks undertaken in line with Regulation 20 Schedule 1 for agency staff are recorded on file. • where written evidence of explanations of any gaps in employment and telephone references are recorded on file. • the procedures for vetting Panel members, in line with Schedule 1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome: achieved • Outcome: achieved • Outcome: detailed procedures for fostering and adoption appointments of agency and Panel members are now being developed.