

Care service inspection report

C.E.C. Adoption Service

Adoption Service

City of Edinburgh Council

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City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:

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Care service number:

CS2004083245

If you wish to contact the Care Inspectorate about this inspection report, please call us on 0845 600 9527 or email us at enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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	4	Good

What the service does well

Adopters told us about the good quality of support they received from their Family Based Care (FBC) Social Worker.

Staff told us and we confirmed that all staff had regular supervision and were given appropriate time to reflect on their practice. Staff had good access to training.

We thought the adoption agency gave appropriate attention to detail when linking and matching children. This meant that adopters were better able to meet children's needs.

What the service could do better

We assessed that the agency could do more to provide life history information for children and adoptive families in a more child friendly way.

The agency need to review their policies and procedures and make sure that these remained up to date and relevant. We thought that the agency should identify core, mandatory training for staff and training aimed at the continuing development of skills and knowledge

The agency could further develop systematic quality assurance systems including file auditing procedures for children, young people and adopters and developing a whole systems approach around the tracking and progressing of permanence plans for children.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The agency has continued to actively recruit a diverse range of families for children.

New staff have joined the agency and plans to develop post adoption support are continuing.

There has been a move of accommodation and the permanence team and the after adoption team are now co-located with the family based care fostering teams.

At the time of the inspection, some changes had taken place at management level. The manager who previously had responsibility for the adoption agency, was now managing the fostering service and a new temporary manager is now managing the adoption agency.

Conclusion

The City of Edinburgh Council continues to provide a valuable resource for children in need of adoption in the Edinburgh area. The staff team and the team leaders were knowledgeable, skilled and motivated to achieve positive outcomes for all service users. The agency was committed to continued improvement and development.

1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Prior to 1 April 2011, this function was carried out by the Care Commission. Information in relation to all care services is available on our website at www.scswis.com.

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

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Requirements and recommendations

If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it needs to do more to improve, we may make a recommendation or requirement.

A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service based on best practice or the National Care Standards.

A requirement is a statement which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 ("the Act") and secondary legislation made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of Regulations, Orders or Conditions, a requirement may be made. Requirements are legally enforceable to the discretion of the Care Inspectorate.

The City of Edinburgh council provides an adoption agency for children, young people, aged from birth to 18 years, and their families, who are assessed in need of this service. The agency recruits and supports adoptive parents to provide families for those children who cannot live with their birth parents, or extended family members, and whose needs have been assessed in relation to adoption.

The agency is based in Edinburgh and offers services in relation to permanent fostering and adoption. At the time of the inspection there had been a number of changes within the agency in relation to geography, staffing and management. This report should be read in the context of these changes.

At the time of the most recent annual return (January 2014), the agency had 35 approved adopters, 23 of whom had been approved within the year. Seventy four children had been registered as in need of adoption and 21 children had been placed with an adoptive family within the year. Thirty three children were approved for adoption and were awaiting an adoptive family being identified

The aims and objectives of the agency are stated within the context of the City of Edinburgh Council's duties towards children and families.

The overall aim is:

- to enable children to be raised within a safe and nurturing family and have the opportunity to develop secure relationships.

Adoptive families are assessed, approved and supported to achieve this aim.

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 4 - 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 0845 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

We wrote this report after an announced, short notice inspection which took place between Tuesday 28 October 2014 and Thursday 20 November 2014. The inspection was carried out by an inspector and a locum inspector. An inspection of the fostering service took place at the same time.

As requested by us, the Adoption service sent us an annual return. They also completed a self-assessment of their service prior to the inspection starting.

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

- evidence from the services most recent self-evaluation
- evaluations of the service collected by the service
- staff supervision records
- staff training records
- adopters' files
- children's files
- staff supervision records
- surveys completed by panel members and panel chairpersons for the Care Inspectorate
- annual reports of the panel and the agency and action plans produced by the agency.

We had discussion with:

- the management team of the adoption agency
- team leaders of the adoption agency
- staff within the permanence and after adoption teams
- children's social workers
- adopters.

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.firelawscotland.org

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

The requirement

The service provider must make sure that for all applications, including inter country kinship adoptions have the following:

- Clear written guidance, so that all those involved are clear about the process and their role in that process.
- Assessments include analysis and evaluation of the information leading to a clear conclusion and recommendation to the panel.
- Assessments have been appropriately scrutinised by management before they are presented to panel.
- Panel minutes reflect a clear summary of the discussion leading to the recommendation made to the Agency Decision Maker.
- Consideration is given to the legal and medical advisors attending panels which are complex in nature to support the panel to make appropriate recommendations.

This is in order to comply with SSI 1011/210 - regulation 4 - a requirement to safeguard the welfare of service users.

Timescales for meeting this requirement - within six months from receipt of this report.

What the service did to meet the requirement

We assessed that all parts of this requirement had been met.

The requirement is: Met - Outwith Timescales

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

The agency had taken action in respect of most of the recommendations made.

Two recommendations in respect of information for children and file auditing remain outstanding.

(See recommendations within the body of the report).

The agency gave us an appropriate action plan which detailed how they intended to address the recommendations made.

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 self assessment was completed to a satisfactory standard. The agency told us what they did well and areas they intended to develop further.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

A number of adopters emailed us and we spoke with some adopters individually. Their comments are contained within the main body of the report.

Taking carers' views into account

We did not speak with birth families as part of this inspection.

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

We looked at this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that there were very good opportunities for adopters to make comments about the quality of support within the agency. During this inspection, we confirmed that many of these opportunities continued.

We looked at the website which could be accessed for people who wished to adopt in the City of Edinburgh Council area. This had been updated and now provided opportunities to register their interest in becoming adopters and to provide feedback on the helpfulness of the website. The website provided information about the Adoption Agency, the range of families they were seeking, information about the children in need of adoption and financial supports for adoption.

The participation strategy continued to support a culture of engagement with people who used the agency. There were formal and informal opportunities for people to be involved with the agency.

On a formal basis, adopters told us of a range of areas where they were asked for feedback. This included at each stage of their assessment process, and following attendance at the adoption panel. A manager from the agency visited each applicant towards the end of the assessment process. This supported prospective adopters to express any views about the assessment process.

We saw that feedback supported the development of training and of the service more widely. For example, friends and family sessions had been added to the assessment process to ensure good quality support networks for adoptive families. In addition after adoption services were currently being developed in recognition of the good quality relationships which adoptive families had with their family based care social worker.

All the adopters we spoke with confirmed that they had been actively involved in their assessment. Many Form F reports contained direct comments by the adopters. The Form F is a proforma developed by the British Association of Adoption and Fostering and is widely used to assess the capacity of prospective adopters to provide good quality homes for children. This ensured that the final report being considered by panel formed an accurate account of the adoptive family including any specific areas in relation to meeting children's needs.

Informally, adopters told us of the good quality relationships they enjoyed with their family based care social worker. They felt able to talk to their family based care social worker about a range of issues.

One adopter told us:

- "We found our social worker to be very supportive. They have always responded to questions very quickly and comes for visits at a time to suit us and our child".

Another commented:

- "We have never felt alone during the last couple of years, and support has always been according to our demands."

We also saw that fun days supported adoptive families to meet each other and stay in touch with the agency. Adopters confirmed that they received copies of newsletters. We saw that the newsletter supported adopters to maintain links with the agency and supported ongoing participation opportunities.

We saw some evidence of single adopters being able to attend support groups co-facilitated by some independent agencies in the City of Edinburgh Council area. Support groups provided a safe environment for discussing particular issues which may be around for single adopters.

All the Adopters we spoke with knew that they could contact the service at any time. All confirmed that they had received a subscription to Adoption UK for the first year after approval, and all had heard about the Adoption Support Groups which had been organised dealing with a range of subject areas chosen by adopters.

We saw evidence of children, where they were of an age to do so, write reports for their Looked After Child Review. In addition, we saw evidence of children's social workers engaging older children in discussions about adoption and preparing them for a move to their "forever family".

We saw that birth parents were routinely invited to meetings considering their children's future and could contribute to planning decisions for their children's future.

The service presented evidence of their complaints procedure which detailed the role the Care Inspectorate had in investigating complaints.

In conclusion we saw that City of Edinburgh Council Adoption service continued to support an adoption community where people could maintain some links with the service - and participatory opportunities were available for those families who wished to get involved.

Areas for improvement

The service told us that they would continue to seek support from adopters on the effectiveness of individual support programmes, to inform future development within the service, in respect of after adoption support services.

The service also planned to improve opportunities for children and young people who had been adopted to express their views about adoption as part of their participation strategy.

At the last inspection, we made a recommendation in relation to providing information on adoption, and possible future issues in a format and language suitable for children and young people, to refer to at the time and in later years.

In conclusion we assessed that in relation to care and support issues, adopters had opportunities to raise issues individually and collectively and the Agency was likely to take action in respect of these.

This has informed the grade of very good for this statement.

We assessed that the service should continue to develop formal feedback opportunities for adopters. Asking adopters to reflect on their journey at the end of the adoption process may support adopters to give a candid view of what has worked well and what areas could be improved.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 1

Recommendations

1. The agency should provide written information on adoption and possible future issues in a format and language suitable for children and young people to refer to at the time and in later year.

National Care Standards, Adoption Agencies, Standard 1: Choosing Adoption.

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

We noted that City of Edinburgh Council was committed to finding families for children in need of adoption. Family based care social workers were assigned key responsibilities for family finding on a geographical basis. Social workers and adopters were supported to attend Adoption Exchange days. This meant that the task of finding families for children remained very important.

Family Group Decision Making meetings were effective in identifying possible kinship options for children, and maximising opportunities for children to remain within their extended family of support the assessment of the need for adoption.

Form F assessments were generally well written and contained relevant information about the capacity of the family to meet children's needs. The Form F is a proforma produced by the British Association of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) which is widely used by Adoption Agencies when assessing the suitability of adoptive families.

Adopters told us that the quality of preparatory training they received, supported them to meet the needs of the children they were adopting. Opportunities were in place for adopters to meet with other adopters who had been through a similar situation. For example, in adopting a sibling group.

The Form E Assessments we considered as part of this inspection generally provided clear information about the child's history and an analysis of why adoption was needed. The Form E is a proforma produced by the British Association of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) which is widely used by local authorities when assessing a child's needs for permanence.

We considered that very good procedures were in place in respect of planning for children in need of permanent alternative care. This meant that planning for children was timely and regularly reviewed and aimed at reducing drift and delay. We saw evidence of social workers and foster carers engaging in discussion with children about adoption. This supported children to be involved in planning for their future.

At the last inspection, we made a recommendation about chronologies in children's files. During this inspection, we noted that the chronologies we saw as part of the adoption assessment in the files were of a satisfactory quality.

Matching and linking of children with families was of a very good quality. Adopters found the information given to them from the Agency Medical Advisor, foster carers, education staff and social workers extremely helpful.

Good levels of information supported adopters to make informed decisions about being able to provide good quality care for children. Where siblings were not placed together, full assessments had been undertaken as part of the decision making process. The transparency afforded by these assessments would help children in the future, know why specific decisions had been made.

The co-ordination process was the process by which the transition from foster carers to the adoptive family was planned. We saw that this was child centred and saw evidence of information being passed between the adoptive family and the fostering family. This included photographs and momentos which could be kept by the adoptive family for the child.

Ongoing training programmes supported stability within placements. For example, recently training had been arranged with Adoption UK on managing the festive period.

Some after adoption support was delivered as part of a Service Level Agreement with Scottish Adoption. For example, the Chance4 Change project was funded by City of Edinburgh Council to offer individually tailored support, and counselling to women whose children have recently been adopted or were in the process of being adopted. Chance4Change aimed to help women to make positive changes to their lives and to reduce the chances of them having a further child adopted.

At the time of the inspection, the service was in the process of developing their own after adoption support services. As part of this, some staff had attended training in therapeutic approaches to supporting families.

Areas for improvement

The agency told us they planned to continue to develop after adoption services.

We assessed that the agency needed to consider developing post adoption support plans for families which could be reviewed where necessary.

Some adopters told us that they would welcome more information about the process of adoption and the roles and responsibilities of the people involved. For example, clarification of what reports needed to be lodged in court, the role of the Curator Ad Litem. One adopter suggested an adoption handbook could be developed by adopters for adopters.

At the time of the last inspection we made a recommendation in relation to later life letters being available for children. The Later Life letter gives the child an explanation of why he/she was adopted and the reasons and actions that led up the decision being made. It is a first hand account by a central figure in the plan for adoption.

During this inspection we could not evidence that any of the children had life story books or later life letters. Life story work supports the child to make sense of their journey into adoption at the time of the move, or subsequently. Such work also supports the adopters to have a coherent sense of the child's journey such that they can answer questions and support the child in developing a sense of identity. The task for these pieces of work usually rest with the practice team social worker.

We noted that action had been taken as detailed in the inspection action plan and that both these issues were raised during the co-ordination process. However, the outcome for children was that this work which supported a sense of identity and ongoing discussion about adoption, was missing. The service should consider how to take this forward to evidence good outcomes for children.

(See recommendation 1 made under Quality Theme 1, Quality Statement 2).

In conclusion, we thought many of the strengths associated with this statement were of a very good standard and supported very positive outcomes for children. However, to maintain these positive outcomes, we assessed that the service should take action to address areas of improvement particularly around life story/history work for children.

We thought that the lack of this work was a gap in supporting children who were being adopted, develop a strong sense of identity.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 1

Recommendations

1. The agency should ensure that children and their adoptive families have access to information to support children's journey into adoption in manner that can be shared with them as children and also as adults.

National Care Standards, Adoption Agencies, Standard 9: Getting help.

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

We considered this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that there were very good opportunities for adopters to make comments about the quality of staffing within the agency.

Strengths highlighted in Quality Theme 1, Quality Statement 1 are also relevant to this statement.

Some adopters had been involved in sharing their experiences of adoption with other adopters during preparation training.

One adopter had who had been involved in an intense parenting programme had discussed the experience within the staff team. This raised professional understanding of the programme.

This adopter told us:

- "We received support through parent mentor programme which was amazing and transformational."

As panel members, adopters could make comment about the quality of the work of the agency including the quality of assessment and planning by staff in the service.

Second opinion visits and co-ordination meetings offered prospective adopters an opportunity to speak directly with a manager within the agency, and to make comments about the quality of work undertaken by the family based care social worker.

Areas for improvement

The agency advised that they planned to develop increased opportunities for adopters to comment specifically on staffing issues and for this feedback to be linked to improvements in staff performance. It is anticipated that this may form part of the appraisal scheme when it is fully implemented.

In conclusion we assessed that in relation to staffing issues, adopters had some opportunities to raise issues individually and collectively through the adoption panel and the Agency was likely to take action in respect of these.

Grade awarded for this statement: 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

We looked at this statement at the time of the last inspection and at that time we assessed that the staff were operating at a very good level. During this inspection we noted that many of the strengths of the staff continued to be in evidence.

Staff were professional and all staff who required to be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) were registered. The SSSC is the regulatory body for workers working in social care settings (www.sssc.com). We noted a number of changes of staff with the ongoing development of the after adoption service.

All staff told us they regularly received supervision and this supported them to feel confident in their work. Some staff told us they were adjusting to new supervisory relationships. Generally staff thought the quality of supervision was of a good quality and this supported them to discuss case management and some opportunities to reflect on their practice.

All staff had a Professional Development Plan (PDP) in place and this identified development goals for the year. We sampled some staff supervision records and PDPs and agreed that these were of a satisfactory quality. Supervision processes were well established within the Agency.

Staff described a culture of innovation and inclusion. They thought their views were valued and they were supported to try new ideas.

All staff told us that they had very good access to training both internally and externally and we confirmed that there was a wide range of training available. Staff told us they had recently attended a range of training appropriate to their role. Practice Development Fora took place at intervals to discuss different practice issues. We assessed that staff were confident in their work.

Following the move of office, we were aware that discussions were ongoing in relation to where the Agency's resource library would be sited. However, from previous inspections we were confident that staff had access to a well established and well used resource library. This supported staff in their work and assisted to keep up to date with emerging research and good practice.

Regular team meetings were viewed very positively by the staff and provided additional opportunities for practice discussions.

Good links had been established with a number of agencies such as BAAF, the Fostering Network and Adoption UK.

All the adopters we spoke with told us that they thought their supervising social workers were knowledgeable, and skilled in their work, and as a result they felt well supported.

Areas for improvement

Although policies and procedures were accessible for staff, we noted that not all policies and procedures were there and many that were, were due for review. We assessed there needed to be a systematic review of policies and procedures and that the ORB (staff intranet system), should be updated to reflect the most recent policies and procedures.

(See recommendation 1 made under Quality Theme 3, Quality Statement 3).

Staff would welcome a more systematic approach to training. For example, what training might be useful for their post and what training would support more advanced learning.

(See recommendation 2 made under Quality Theme 3, Quality Statement 3).

In conclusion, we noted that there were major strengths in staffing and the areas identified for improvement did not call into question the knowledge, skills or motivation of the staff group. We saw a cohesive staff group who were well supported by managers through formal supervision and having opportunities to meet together to discuss whole service issues. As such there was a clear sense of "ownership" within the Agency.

The recommendations made should enhance this already good practice and ensure continued good practice. This has informed the grade of very good for this statement.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 2

Recommendations

1. The agency should systematically review their policies and procedures to ensure that those available to staff are complete and up to date.

National Care Standards, Adoption Agencies, Standard 32: Management and Staffing.

2. The service should develop a more systematic approach to staff training identifying core or mandatory training for staff as well as more advanced training for further developing skills.

National Care Standards, Adoption Agencies, Standard 32: Management and Staffing.

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - 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

We considered this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that there were very good opportunities for adopters to make comments about the quality of the service.

Strengths highlighted in Quality Theme 1, Quality Statement 1 and Quality Theme 3, Quality Statement 1 are also relevant to this statement.

Panel membership included people who had adopted. This meant that comments could be made about a range of issues including the quality of management and leadership, the quality of assessment and the quality of decision making. Regular panel business meetings afforded panel members the opportunity to discuss wider aspects of the agency and how these might be improved.

We saw evidence of adopters being involved in the self assessment process which informed this inspection.

Areas for improvement

We assessed that it may be useful for adopters to be given the opportunity to reflect on their own journey to adoption and that of their child following the completion of the adoption process.

In conclusion we assessed that in relation to management and leadership issues, adopters had opportunities to raise issues individually and collectively through the adoption panel and working groups and the Agency was likely to take action in respect of these.

Grade awarded for this statement: 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

We looked at this statement at the time of the last inspection and assessed that the Agency had good systems in place to support the quality of work they did. During this inspection we noted that many of these systems remained.

We noted a number of key systems aimed at providing a management overview and which could indicate the quality of the service.

The service monitored planning for children in need of permanence and regularly reported on the effectiveness of planning procedures. Drift was identified quickly and issues were directed to the legal advisor or the appropriate manager.

Staff confirmed they could access guidance which supported their work. Policies and procedures are important as they guide staff in their practice and provide consistency of decision making. Regular staff supervision and appraisal processes monitored staff practice and performance.

The service regularly collected and reported on performance indicators which supported the agency in identifying where there were issues or where they were doing well.

The permanence panel provided an important quality assurance measure for the service. We attended a permanence panel and found the members were well prepared, thorough, knowledgeable and respectful of the people attending, including a child, their birth parent and workers. The chairperson ensured good preparation for the meeting and clarity of the agenda for discussion and summarised the situation and recommendations.

The panel co-ordinator provided an effective overview of the panel and reported annually. A system of panel business meetings, panel chairs meetings and development days had been established and members also had the chance to attend relevant input from external organisations such as BAAF.

The panel co-ordinator oversaw the recruitment and induction of panel members. At the time of the inspection, efforts were being made to ensure recruitment of panel members targeted people with relevant experience, including people who had used adoption services.

We were told by most panel members that there was now much greater conformity in the constitution of panel membership which gave members the chance to work together in a more consistent way. There were good links between the Chair of the panel and the Agency Decision Maker.

An annual report and action plan was developed in respect of the adoption service and included in the Annual Review of Services for Children and Young People Who Are Looked After and Accommodated by the City of Edinburgh Council which was considered by the Education, Children and Families Committee within the council. This was made available on the Council's website providing transparency of reporting.

Unfortunately at times, adoptions break down. In these rare instances, the agency considered the circumstances of the breakdown and highlighted any learning or changes needed to practice.

Regular attendance at BAAF, NEC and ADSW provided opportunities to share practice and benchmark the agency.

Quality Assurance systems involved a range of key people. Adopters were asked about the quality of the service they received during their preparation, through membership of the adoption panel and more informally through their relationship with their resource worker.

Staff raised issues at team meetings and development days. Regular monitoring meetings with stakeholders offered opportunities to raise any issues.

At the time of the last inspection, we made a requirement in relation to an Inter Country Adoption assessment. We noted that the service were taking appropriate action in respect of this

Areas for improvement

We could not confirm that systematic file audits took place within the adoption agency. File audits carried out at regular intervals can ensure that all appropriate information is held and filed consistently.

(See recommendation 1 made under Quality Theme 4, Quality Statement 4).

We found that there was no formal opportunity for panel members to receive supervision and to have an appraisal of the work they undertook as a panel member. Formal supervision would help identify areas for future training and/or development.

(See recommendation 2 made under Quality Theme 4, Quality Statement 4).

We noted very good practice in relation to monitoring planning for children. However, the service did not maintain an effective whole system overview of permanence planning. This could provide additional information where there were delays in other parts of the process.

(See recommendation 3 made under Quality Theme 4, Quality Statement 4).

Managers within the agency advised that the electronic systems were currently being developed to provide more real-time management information in relation to timescales.

In conclusion, we assessed that there were important strengths in this area and that the agency used a range of methods to ensure and check on quality. The areas of improvement identified above do not call into question the positive impact of the measures in place rather that addressing the areas identified will enhance quality assurance within the agency. This has informed the grade of good for this statement.

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 3

Recommendations

1. The agency should undertake regular audits of files to ensure consistency in the quality and content of files.

National Care Standards, Adoption Agencies, Standard 32: Management and Staffing.

2. The agency should develop a system to supervise and appraise panel members.

National Care Standards, Adoption Agencies, Standard 32: Management and Staffing.

3. The agency should develop a whole system approach to monitoring permanence planning.

National Care Standards, Adoption Agencies, Standard 32: Management and Staffing.

4 Other information

Complaints

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

Enforcements

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

Additional Information

Action Plan

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in the Care Inspectorate re-grading a Quality Statement within the Quality of Management and Leadership Theme (or for childminders, Quality of Staffing Theme) as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme being re-graded as unsatisfactory (1).

5 Summary of grades

Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 2	5 - Very Good
Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 3	5 - Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - 4 - Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 4	4 - Good

6 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
4 Nov 2013	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 4 - Good
30 Jul 2012	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
10 Sep 2010	Announced	Care and support 4 - Good Staffing Not Assessed Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
24 Nov 2009	Announced	Care and support 4 - Good Staffing 5 - Very Good Management and Leadership 5 - Very Good
12 Dec 2008	Announced	Care and support 4 - Good Staffing 3 - Adequate

Inspection report continued

		Management and Leadership 3 - Adequate
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All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.

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ہے بایتسرد می ونابز رگی دی روا ولکش رگی دی رپ شرازگ تعاشا ہی

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

ی.رخأ تاغل بو تا قیسن تب بل طلا دن ع رفاو تم روشنم ا اذه

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