

Care service inspection report

Full inspection

Intensive Fostering Services Fostering Service

Goudie Street
Paisley



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

Service provided by: Kibble Education and Care Centre

Service provider number: SP2004007042

Care service number: CS2004082220

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.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

Contact Us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

www.careinspectorate.com

 [@careinspect](https://twitter.com/careinspect)

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

The service continues to have a variety of excellent initiatives and projects in place to encourage and support children and young people' involvement in all aspects of their care. Foster carers are provided with a range of opportunities to learn and develop their role through important training, and the service supports them to reflect and share experiences. This helps improve the provision of direct services to children and young people.

Staff within the service were motivated and enthusiastic and it was clear that they are very well respected by foster carers who value their expertise, skills and knowledge. Staff are very well supported by a strong management team, who ensure that children and young people remain central to the decision making process.

What the service could do better

The service is currently evaluating their foster carer review procedure in line with the expansion of the service. This will enable the fostering panel to extend their role in terms of approving potential foster carers.

The service acknowledged if a placement ends suddenly, the meeting to look at learning from this is not always recorded. It was agreed that the Intensive Fostering Service will take on responsibility to minute these meetings, so that any learning can be more clearly identified and any action points progressed.

During the inspection we highlighted some issues that needed attention in relation to the services' quality assurance processes. Please see quality theme 4, statement 4 for areas for improvement.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The service had identified a service manager to oversee the recruitment and assessment of potential foster carers. This has had a positive impact on the service, with three new foster carers being approved since the last inspection.

At the last inspection, an area for development was the introduction of panel member appraisals. This has been taken forward and is now embedded in practice. As a result panel members have been given the opportunity to develop their personal development within the service.

The service recently celebrated their tenth year anniversary. Carers, children and young people were actively involved in the planning and preparations for this. The event was exceptionally well attended, and included young people who had previously left the service returning as adults to participate on the day. The involvement of these care leavers gave them the opportunity to input their unique experiences, and once again demonstrated Kibble's long standing commitment to providing ongoing care and support to children and young people.

Kibbles adult placement service provided a seamless transition for young people who used the intensive fostering service. This had enabled continuity of care for one young person, alongside enabling them to remain in a nurturing and caring environment to meet their individual need.

Staff and carers have accessed important and relevant training to ensure that the safety, health and wellbeing of children and young people are maintained.

Conclusion

The service continues to demonstrate an inclusive and engaging approach to their very high standard of practice, resulting in very good grades during this inspection. The commitment and motivation shown by managers supports practitioners to improve the service to children and young people who are the most vulnerable.

1 About the service we inspected

The Intensive Fostering Service (IFS) provides a fostering service to young people aged from 5 to 21 years who have a connection with Kibble Education and Care Centre. The service recruits and supports foster carers to provide foster care, respite services and adult placements for young people, who at this point in their lives cannot remain with their birth family.

The stated aims and objectives of the service are to recruit, train and support carers to provide quality life experiences to children and young people within a family setting. The intensive fostering service has close links with the residential and specialist intervention services that are based in the same campus, and with the primary education provision off campus.

The service also provides access to further education and work placements within the KibbleWorks campus, which is part of the service's social enterprise scheme.

The service regards foster carers as an integrated part of the professional team who strive to provide positive outcomes for children and young people.

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

We completed this report following a short notice announced inspection which took place between Tuesday 10 December 2015 and Monday 11 January 2016, when we provided formal feedback to the operations manager and head of service. We informed the service a few days before our visit about the timing of the inspection to ensure the availability of the manager.

As part of the inspection, we took account of the completed annual return and self-assessment forms that we asked the provider to complete and submit to us in advance.

During the inspection we spoke with a number of key individuals including:

- the operations manager
- the head of service
- three service managers
- four key workers for young people
- one volunteer for the service
- we met with a group of seven foster carers, and spoke individually to foster carers
- four young people
- two social workers and one team manager
- one local authority support worker
- two administrators
- one family member of a child placed with the service.

We looked at:

- four foster carers' files and those of the children and young people placed with them
- the participation strategy
- the development plan and action plan 2015
- team meeting minutes
- end of placement review records
- feedback from placing social workers, young people and family members
- training records for staff and foster carers
- staff supervision records
- group supervision minutes
- managers' team meeting minutes
- annual review report 2014
- annual panel chair report 2014 - 2015
- form F assessments for potential foster carers and associated paperwork
- minutes of Kibble panel business meetings
- young person's guide for Intensive Fostering Service (5-18 years)
- monitoring tools and records
- unplanned end of placement minutes and associated paperwork
- young people communication audit 2015
- registration certificate.

We observed/attended:

- fostering service team meeting
- one foster panel to approve two foster carers
- a christmas lunch for carers, children and young people and staff

We visited:

Three foster carers in their own homes in which a total of three children were placed. We spoke briefly with two of the children.

In addition:

We sent out six care service staff questionnaires to the manager to distribute prior to inspection. We received two returns.

We asked fostering panel members to complete a questionnaire and received five returns.

We asked foster carers to complete a questionnaire and received three returns.

We asked four local authority social workers to complete a questionnaire and had no returns. This was followed up by telephone calls; contact was made with two social workers and one team manager.

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 Care Inspectorate received a completed self-assessment document from the service provider. We were very satisfied with the way the service responded to this and with the information supplied under each relevant quality statement. The service had taken positive action to involve foster carers and staff in completing the self-assessment which we considered best practice.

The service identified information about what they thought they did well, a number of areas for improvement, and any changes they had planned.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

Foster carers and young people we met with all spoke very highly of the support provided.

Young people told us they enjoyed living with their carers, and confirmed their involvement in service developments and recruitment.

Foster carers told us they had excellent opportunities to engage with the service and that training was of a high standard. They appreciated the contact and support from staff and senior management, and stated this was meaningful and worthwhile.

Some of their comments were:

"We are continually updated by our manager and key worker of any changes to the young person's support plan"

"We have weekly team meetings where you can share your opinion, or if prefer to do it in private they are always willing to listen"

"IFS is the best fostering service in the business, they ensure all their foster carers are well vetted and trained to a very high standard"

"They are always just a phone call away, and we can drop in anytime and speak to a member of staff, they are very efficient and responsive to any crisis"

"We have very good access to services like play therapy and psychology services; they have really helped us look at strategies to help the child"

"Because we all know each other, and the children really well there are no issues with respite; the children know where they are going and who will be caring for them well in advance."

Taking carers' views into account

A relative who was attending a meeting at the service held the following views:

"The key worker is amazing with my child, they go the extra mile and I won't hear a bad thing said against them"

"It is clear that my child is being looked after, and I can only thank them for their care and attention"

"They help me to say what I think, and are very kind to me."

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

Based on our findings during this inspection, we found performance of the service was excellent for this statement. There was a participation strategy which pursued vigorously the views of stakeholders and individuals to ensure their involvement in service development and quality assurance. This was embedded throughout the organisation and took account of individual and group responses.

Foster carers confirmed that there was a range of excellent opportunities for them to talk about their individual care and support, and to influence how the service developed.

Annual development and training days, weekly meetings, foster carer reviews and very positive individual relationships with workers were put forward as some of the ways in which foster carers could keep up to date with developments in the service, and express their views about a range of issues. Foster carers told us that they felt very well informed about what was happening within the service and told us that their views were listened to on a regular basis.

Foster carers told us:

"We are like a community, we all know the children and each other very well and feel very able to express our views or make suggestions"

"Changes have been made to several areas following discussion with managers. Panel waiting times and layout was changed, also changes to respite payments. They take what we say on board, and take action if they can"

"The good thing is, if they can't make changes suggested they get back to us to explain, and that's respectful."

An excellent example of foster carers being able to improve the quality of care and support offered by the service was through their weekly meetings. These meetings were chaired by the operations manager who clearly had valuable and sound insight of the needs of all the children placed within the service. We observed purposeful exchange of information, and a particularly helpful set agenda item was an update on service development and opportunity to take any views or suggestions for positive change. An example of this was a discussion that was held regarding a young person who had suggested appropriate changes to the way in which electronic feedback was gathered. We noted that this had been discussed at team meeting level and changes were being actively pursued alongside the young person.

Some carers informed us that they were involved in 'skills to care' preparation groups for prospective carers alongside young people in foster care. They also contributed to recruitment events and information evenings. This type of involvement brought about a service user perspective and helped applicants make well informed decisions.

Young people and foster carers were further involved, by providing their views on applicant's ability and aptitude to carry out the fostering task following preparation groups. We were impressed to discover that foster carers we spoke with were of the view that this was 'normal practice' and they would always expect this high level of involvement.

The service offered a variety of relevant opportunities for young people to be consulted about the care and support being provided. This included being involved in their three monthly progress meetings, Looked After and Accommodated (LAAC) reviews, weekly meeting with their key workers and foster carer reviews. The service had very well developed systems in place to gain the opinions of young people, including online questionnaires as well as pictorial and written methods of communication.

Young people's views were central in agreeing to support needs and how these would be met. We found sound examples of young people being involved in agreeing how risk would be managed, for example by making a contract regarding the use of mobile phones and use of the internet. These arrangements were signed by the young people, foster carers and staff to confirm the agreement. This approach is likely to help young people reach their goals successfully as they feel included when important decisions are being made about them.

Progress meetings were held every three months, when care plans were reviewed. These meetings involved young people, foster carers, placing social workers and staff, and where appropriate birth family members. As evidenced in the files we examined, young people were fully supported to express their views at a pace that suited them and they agreed and signed their care plans.

Young people contributed to the foster carers review, and reports sampled during the inspection, confirmed that young people were extremely happy with the level of care provided. Some changes had been made to the template used by children and young people to make this more child-friendly however this is still under review. Please see area for development.

Children and young people's weekly meetings had been changed as suggested by young people and there were new arrangements in place. Smaller groups of children and young people of similar age and interests now meet on a regular basis to engage in activities, outings and residential weekends. There was reliable evidence that children were fully involved in planning social activities, and that their views were listened to.

One young person told us:

"I am really excited to be involved in the event, I gave them lots of ideas about how they could make it better"

"They care so much about me, if I feel I want to do something new they help me work towards it."

We also saw that young people were involved in planning, designing and decorating the services accommodation, including the refurbishment of the main room used for meetings and activities. There was evidence that children were consulted about changes to the service in a meaningful way, and it was clear that their suggestions had been followed through. This helped young people take pride in their environment and ensured that their achievements were celebrated.

The strong ethos and clear values within the service, and those who are part of the team, encouraged and promoted a culture that facilitates strong professional bonds to be established. During the inspection we observed interaction between young people and staff to be warm and engaging with positive communication noted. A clear element of trust and respect had been established within these relationships, allowing children to express their views and opinions freely and in an appropriate way.

One foster carer commented:

"We can ask any questions at our meetings, no-one judges you or makes you feel silly. Support here both formal and from our fellow foster carers is invaluable, and we are all here to do our best for the children."

The service gave careful consideration to matching the needs of children alongside the individual skills of foster carers and what they would be able to offer. Linking meetings held prior to placement ensured that all relevant views were heard and children were provided with important, appealing and child friendly information telling them what they could expect from the service. This included contact details for a number of relevant agencies such as Who Cares?

Scotland a children's rights organisation who help children have their say and express their opinions. Foster carers told us, and records confirmed that the worker was well known within the organisation, doing excellent work with individual young people. This involved, for example attending important meetings with, or on behalf of the young people to ensure their participation.

Young people were also able to view DVD's made by the foster carers about their home and family before completing a short questionnaire which they could then discuss with their social worker. This gave children and young people the opportunity to have their say in the qualities they would wish the carers and placement to have. This high level of preparation allowed young people to form an understanding of the foster carers, their environment and local community. As a result, children and young people experience less stress and anxiety when moving to their placement. This is an excellent example of children and young people being given the opportunity to influence the care and support they receive.

Birth families views were reflected in the files we examined; we noted discussions about matching young people with foster carers. There was evidence that birth family members were routinely supported to attend progress meetings by staff members, enabling them to express their preferences and views. It was clear that the service worked exceptionally hard to build positive relationships with birth family members, and we noted very good outcomes as a result. Sensitive work had been undertaken with birth families' where appropriate, to enhance partnership working and actively involve them in decision making.

A good example of this was purposeful channels of communication being established which enabled family contact to be hosted and sustained at the service accommodation. In addition, we noted that the impact of contact was formally and informally evaluated by gathering the views of all those involved. This is an example of the exceptional work the service carries out with birth families and we saw very positive feedback from family members as highlighted above.

There was outstanding communication between all levels of staff within the organisation. Examples included senior managers and board of directors attending organised social events, and development days to gather foster carer and young people's views. The organisation placed high value on disseminating information with young people and foster carers, such as their newsletter, annual action plan and numerous development forums.

Young people were actively encouraged by staff to take part in the inspection, and were supported to participate in the services self-assessment. Copies of inspection reports were available within the services' accommodation and on their website.

Overall there were excellent structures in place which ensured the active participation of foster carers, children and young people and stakeholders.

Areas for improvement

The service aims to hold a consultation with young people to enhance their written contribution to carer reviews. This will enable a more engaging and age appropriate template to be developed, and will allow children and young people to comment more effectively on the care and support they receive.

Grade

6 - Excellent

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

We found the service's performance in relation to this Quality Statement was very good. There were collaborative approaches in place to meet the needs of children and young people in foster care. We found that the service was fully committed to supporting foster carers and young people to make individual choices and reach their potential.

'My Kibble Journey' is an innovative and child centred approach to care planning that ensured young people could express their views about the service and agree their care plan. Young people review and complete their care plan alongside their key worker in a meaningful way that was age appropriate and identified individual need. The plans were linked to the Scottish Government's 'Getting it right for Every Child' (GIRFEC) eight wellbeing indicators. These eight indicators are intended to provide a common language for practitioners, children and families, and this meant that a holistic view was taken of the young person's needs and abilities and focus was made on improving outcomes.

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Young-People/gettingitright>

There was a clear link to positive outcomes within the children's files we sampled, with excellent supporting evidence to demonstrate progress in areas such as keeping safe, healthy and achieving academically.

At the start of their placement children and young people were registered with a local GP and other health care services including a dentist and optician. The service had good links with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), LAAC (Looked After and Accommodated Children) nurses, and other specialist health services. When required, referrals for additional resources from Kibble's Specialist Intervention Service (SIS) could be accessed. SIS had a range

of highly specialised professionals who provide a range of individual interventions and carer consultations to support young people with their day to day living.

Foster carer's told us that children and young people had benefited from individual tailored therapeutic intervention to support areas of need identified in the young person's plan. This covered areas such as emotional regulation and anxiety management. The core aim of these interventions is to help children re-establish as close to an ordinary developmental pathway as possible and we saw positive outcomes through this work. The children and young people we tracked and observed during this inspection were noted to be healthy and meeting developmental milestones.

The service had a system in place that ensured that all recordings including care planning for children and key time with young people are informed by the Scottish Governments (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators. We found some very good examples of children and young people being supported to reach their potential using this framework. For example, children were excelling at music and sport and one young person had written work published.

We found that LAAC reviews for children were being held regularly, with children being supported to express their views. The operations manager tracked LAAC reviews for children through the services three monthly progress meetings to ensure these were held timeously.

Progress meetings were regularly held in conjunction with LAAC meetings, which reduced duplication of information sharing for young people, and delay when important decisions were being made. We found a number of young people within the service were subject to permanency orders or proceedings, and that they were fully consulted about this. This meant that children were given the best possible chance to reach their potential within safe, secure and permanent families.

We found very good examples of reports submitted by foster carers and key workers to inform statutory meetings. These provided relevant and detailed information and ensured all views, were taken into account to support the child to reach their potential and improve their life chances.

It was evident that very good working relationships had been established with education and local authority partners, which promoted good quality care planning and ensured any decisions were progressed as required.

One placing social worker commented:

"I find there is very good communication between all staff, their written reports are of a high calibre and I find the staff team to be positive and constructive"

"The foster carers are warm and caring individuals and very good ambassadors for Kibble IFS."

Young people on arrival at their foster care placements had often experienced multiple moves, had poor attachments to adults and had missed key developmental milestones. There was clear evidence that the emotional support and secure environments provided by carers contributed to positive outcomes and in these and other areas. We found children were generally very settled in placement and were forming very good attachments to their carers.

Foster carers encouraged young people to reach their potential in all areas; they took an active part in the education of the children and young people by supporting them with homework and advocating on their behalf when required. We saw evidence of children and young people being intensely supported to attend school by their outreach key workers, and the majority of children placed within the service were now in mainstream school placements. The impact of this was not only greater potential for educational attainment, but also improved socialisation and development of peer relationships within their local community.

Young people were further supported to achieve by transitioning from school to 'KibbleWorks' when required. When young people were not attending Kibbleworks, they had the opportunity to attend the 'yes project' at the experience. These schemes offered very good opportunities for a range of work experience which prepared them for employment and independent living. It was evident that even when children were not particularly motivated, staff and foster carers supported and persevered with young people to explore

opportunities for further education and training with considerable success.

There were comprehensive child protection policies and procedures, and all carers and staff undertook relevant training including the protection of children and child sexual exploitation. To help ensure young people's wellbeing, carers completed detailed safer caring family policies and health and safety checklists that were reviewed regularly with their supervising social worker. To maintain safety, and to ensure all young people have the best chance to reach their potential, young people with demanding behaviour or complex needs were supported in single placements.

Risk assessments were completed using a multidisciplinary approach, and were sufficiently detailed with behaviour support plans to reduce potential harm. We found young people, many of whom had a history of complex behaviours responded well to this approach and we could see that the majority of young people were stable and secure.

The very detailed placement agreements for individual children and young people were also comprehensive and identified short, medium and long term goals in relation to a number of areas including health, self-care skills, and emotional and behavioural development.

We saw a very good example of workers and foster carers advocating strongly on a young person's behalf to have a legal meeting held within the familiar surroundings of the services' building. The purpose of this was to reduce stress and anxiety for the child and family members, and support individuals to make important decisions about the planning process. Approval was obtained, and as a consequence of this, decisions could be made in a more relaxed atmosphere and in a consensual manner, which was clearly in the best interests of the child.

All staff completed training in safe crisis management (SCM); an approach used to manage distressed behaviour exhibited by young people through non-physical and physical (when necessary) intervention techniques, and they attended regular refreshers. Carers also undertook the course during the initial preparation groups, which is best practice. Records we looked at involving incidents of SCM were detailed and included signed reports of subsequent interviews with the young people involved. This meant that young people were

supported to reflect on particular incidents and encouraged to make more positive behaviour choices.

We were very impressed at how well children remained at the centre of decision-making in this service. This ensured that high quality nurturing care was provided by foster carers.

Areas for improvement

The service aims to further develop its social pedagogic approach to promote more proficient management of risk assessments with foster carers and staff. This was in order to take forward the work of the Fostering Networks 'Head, Heart, Hands Programme' which provides a different way of engaging with children, young people and foster carers.

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.

We found that all work undertaken by the service was evaluated and collated to ensure they could provide a high quality service. We found all evaluations of training and analysis of recruitment events to be extremely positive and enabled the service to improve the quality of staffing.

When recruiting staff to the fostering service, a young person and foster carer were invited to be part of the interviewing process. The service experience limited turnover of staff and have very good retention of both staff and foster carers. However, they are pro-active in recruiting when required so that there is little gap between staff leaving and new staff starting, for example the service will soon be recruiting for a new service manager. This approach helps to maintain continuity of staff within the service.

We were told that active members of the fostering panel, had experience of being foster carers or had experienced involvement in the looked after system. This specialist knowledge was useful, and assisted these individuals when they reported on the quality of staffing in the service.

Areas for improvement

Please refer to quality theme 1, statement 1.

Grade

6 - Excellent

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

From discussion with members of staff, foster carers, placing social workers and meetings we attended we found that the service had a very knowledgeable, skilled and committed staff group who work to National Care Standards legislation and best practice. All the work undertaken is child centred. We found feedback from evaluation about staff was all extremely positive.

Staff had relevant qualifications for their roles and were all registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

We found a robust supervision policy in place and staff reported receiving high quality supervision that was undertaken formally but ad hoc supervision was available when required. In practice we observed an open door policy where the manager of the service was responsive to immediate requests for discussion.

We found very good recordings of staff supervision, where tasks and actions were agreed and signed by all parties. Staff were also supported through the services' continuous learning framework to develop and review their personal learning and development. This system was also used with foster carers and indicated a reflective and forward thinking approach.

There was a very good induction programme in place, and newly appointed staff told us they were provided with information and opportunities to develop their role that verified this. Probation reviews were also held, three and six monthly for newly appointed staff which confirmed their suitability for continued employment. The final review was countersigned by head of service and human resources. This resulted in a robust level of scrutiny into the functioning of the skills and abilities of staff.

Placing social workers confirmed the professional approach as follows:

"The support from the intensive fostering service has been fantastic; I wish other services could replicate what they do"

"There is a high professional standard of practice with a highly motivated staff team. There is very good practice and knowledge on issues of discrimination and racism."

Staff described very good team working and being well supported by the management. Staff we spoke with clearly enjoyed their work and felt they had very good opportunities to access applicable internal and external training courses and conferences which offered very good opportunities to share best practice and learn with colleagues from different organisations.

Conferences included well-known speakers who were highly regarded from the field of child development, psychology and foster care. These events complement staff and carer training, and enhance parenting skills tailored to the particular needs of looked after children, and should help carers improve their specialist parenting skills.

To promote and share best practice within the service, there were a number of development groups involving management, staff and carers focusing on areas such as the curriculum for excellence, safer caring in a digital world and carer recruitment. Staff and foster carers clearly valued these opportunities to come together, and in discussion impressed us as motivated to improve areas of practice.

Staff members commented:

"Morale is very good; we have a strong staff team and a manageable caseload"

"I really enjoy my job the staff here are all very supportive and have helped me to learn my role and I have regular supervision"

"I feel very valued, the managers give me autonomy and my confidence has

grown"

"We (administrative staff) complete child protection training and are fully involved in development days. Staff and managers are very approachable and friendly."

The service told us that all approved foster carers and staff were provided with a subscription to the Fostering Network which is a national organisation for foster care who:

'lobby, campaign and influence policy in order to develop, improve and champion fostering'

(<http://www.fostering.net/contact-us>)

Access to this type of independent organisation enabled carers and staff to receive a wide range of publications and to attend additional training events. This initiative also helped to ensure that carers' rights were preserved.

The overwhelming feedback from foster carers was that staff members were extremely supportive, professional and easy to contact. Comments from foster carers included:

"During my time with Kibble I have achieved my HNC and SVQ3 in childcare as well as completing a lot of other essential training; they really supported me to develop professionally"

"The organisation has changed, as all places do but a lot of staff have remained the same. We have always had great support, foster carers and young people can talk to staff at any time"

"Staff are helpful and knowledgeable and do their very best to help with anything."

The intensive fostering service had invested in high quality training for foster carers, and other adult family members of the fostering household, to equip them with the skills to provide safe and very good quality support to the

children and young people in their care. As well as mandatory training, a raft of training had been provided for example, attachment, childhood trauma and social pedagogy approaches. For children and young people this meant foster carers were insightful into the impact of early disadvantage and the possible behaviours which might be exhibited as a result.

Foster carers we met and spoke with, presented as being very able to relate areas of their training to practice and used appropriate techniques and strategies to support children during difficult times. Examples of this included understanding the child's experience, remaining patient and validating children's feelings.

Placing social workers commented:

"The foster carers have a strong and appropriate bond with the young person, he has grown in confidence to the point he now attends legal meetings and wants to make decisions for himself"

"There is a holistic approach, and children have the entire Kibble service wrapped around them and they clearly benefit from this."

Following publication of reports on a significant case review and a fatal accident inquiry in relation to a case which reached national prominence, the service went to considerable lengths to study the emerging findings. Learning was identified where possible and where necessary action was taken. As a result the service made several amendments to improve procedures and practice. These important changes, and the reasons for them, were presented to foster carers alongside all members of staff including the board of directors. This is a very good example of the service adopting a professional and proactive response to ensure best practice is sustained and promoted.

There were numerous opportunities for regular communication between team members regarding the progress of young people and support for carers. We found the service to be proactive with well managed and established collaborative working practices.

Areas for improvement

To ensure that external assessors are aware of the quality and monitoring arrangements when completing assessments for potential foster carers, the service intend to hold a training day to share the values and expectations of the organisation. We will look at this area during the next service inspection.

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

The strengths highlighted in quality theme 1, statement 1 and quality theme 3, statement 1 are also relevant to this statement.

As evidenced during the inspection, management promote a culture that encourages and welcomes feedback about service provision and how young people's experiences could be further improved.

The service hold an annual young people's communication audit and we examined the results for 2015. We noted a very good return in responses to questions and these confirmed that children and young people felt listened to and know how to make comments and complaints. 100% of young people answered 'yes' when asked if the service listens to their comments about them and their foster placement.

Areas for improvement

Please refer to quality theme 1, statement 1 and quality theme 3, statement 1.

Grade

6 - Excellent

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 service had well established systems for involving young people, carers, staff and external agencies in evaluating how the service performed and how it could be improved. Based on our findings, we found the service performance was of a very good standard for this statement.

Young people, foster carers and staff were actively encouraged to participate in the development of the service through their continued involvement in contributing to the formation and design of the annual development plan. It was evident from the 2015 - 2016 document that the service had taken forward suggestions from children and young people such as, ensuring continuity of key workers and requests to attend less formal meetings. The services' action plan had clearly set out these suggestions alongside other areas for improvement. As a result we observed positive changes being made to practice which verified children and young people had been listened to.

We found the development plan to be thoughtful and informative with quotes written in a personalised way which was engaging. Contributions from young people and foster carers clearly stated what the service was doing well, while at the same time giving updates on service developments and suggesting ways people could put ideas forward. It was evident from the contents of the service development plan that an inclusive approach had been taken to the improvement agenda of the service.

We found that the majority of assessments of new foster carers were robust and mandatory checks were carried out to ensure suitability of caring for vulnerable children. New applicants were discussed appropriately and assessments were progressed in keeping with timescales set down in the National Care Standards (please see area for improvement).

Members of the fostering panel presented to us as skilled and confident. We found if areas of uncertainty were identified in assessment reports then the panel would defer making a recommendation until issues were clarified. The agency decision maker carried out a further role in quality assurance prior to decision making. The panel was independently chaired which brought an objective view of quality issues within the service. We were impressed by individual panel members' knowledge and expertise. They clearly understood the importance of remaining child focused, and demonstrated thoughtful and sound decision making.

The fostering panel held quarterly business meetings to discuss practice; this included any training required and identified areas for improvement within the service. A typical example of this was relevant discussion taking place with regard to changes to carers returning to panel on an annual basis, and also consideration of feedback from outgoing panel members.

Self-evaluation and performance appraisals for panel members, was now embedded in practice as a result of this being an area for improvement during the previous inspection. The panel provided feedback about the quality of reports being presented to panel, and all attendees to panel also evaluated their experience. Findings were included within the panel chairs annual report.

Panel members commented:

"I bring decades of experience of working with children and young people and making decisions to ensure their needs are met"

"Having wide experience in training and support, I am extremely impressed by the professional manner in which Kibble operate in relation to training and support."

To avoid conflict of interest, potential foster carers attending panel were provided with a list of panel members names. This helped to avoid any unnecessary delays or postponement of recommendations being made to the agency decision maker.

We found there were effective approaches to quality assurance within the service that were both internal and external. For example, unannounced internal audits were a regular feature of the organisation, and focused on foster carer files. Service managers and administration workers carried out regular checks of children's files. These include audits relating to statutory checks, and the quality of all recordings. This ensured that areas such as behaviour support plans and risk assessments were regularly reviewed.

To help maintain objectivity, service managers did not audit their own teams' case files. This enabled any gaps identified to be fed back to the case worker by an independent manager to allow action to be taken. The high standard of these quality assurance procedures helped to give a general assurance about the continuing competence of foster carers.

Foster carers received two unannounced visits each year, and these were clearly outcomes focused and linked to GIRFEC wellbeing indicators. These visits included a review of the placement environment to ensure it was safe and fit for purpose. We noted that supervising social workers visited at a time when foster children were at home to allow them to record their views and comment on their presentation. Planned visits were more frequent and continued to be used to review outcomes, ensure support arrangements were effective and to gather views on key issues.

Second opinion visits were in place to provide an important quality assurance mechanism for all reports being presented to panel. This allowed prospective foster carers to provide their views on the assessment process directly to the management and leadership within the service.

The service was a member of several external agencies including the National Independent and Voluntary Providers Fostering Forum and the Scottish Through care and Aftercare Forum. The operations manager attended these meetings on a regular basis. This helped the service to participate in the development of best practice for this type of service and maintain positive professional working relationships.

Areas for improvement

In a small number of cases, we noted some significant discrepancies in the quality and content of form F assessments. This had impacted on the panel decision making process, and caused delays in the panel reaching a decision. When we discussed this with management, they recognised our concerns and took immediate action to address these quality assurance issues. The inspector was presented with a clear plan of action to address the areas identified prior to this report being written. We will follow up on this area during next year's inspection.

During the course of the inspection, we noted that a serious practice concern had not been included within a foster carer review report presented to the fostering panel for their consideration. We discussed this with management who acknowledged this was not in accordance with their procedures. The service has shared this issue as a lessons learned exercise with staff through their team meeting to ensure policy is adhered to in future. We will follow up on this area during next year's inspection.

The service is currently carrying out a review of all its child care policies and procedures, and managers confirmed that foster carers and staff will be kept updated on any proposed changes or developments.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

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

Previous requirements

1. none

This requirement was made on

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

Previous recommendations

1. None

This recommendation was made on

6 Complaints

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

7 Enforcements

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

8 Additional Information

There is no additional information.

9 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
31 Jan 2014	Announced (Short Notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	6 - Excellent Not Assessed 6 - Excellent 5 - Very Good
22 Feb 2013	Announced (Short Notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent
21 Sep 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed Not Assessed 6 - Excellent
2 Dec 2009	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	6 - Excellent Not Assessed 5 - Very Good Not Assessed
22 Sep 2008	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	4 - Good Not Assessed 5 - Very Good 4 - Good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

You can also read more about our work online.

Contact Us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

www.careinspectorate.com

 [@careinspect](https://twitter.com/careinspect)

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

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।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.