

Action Plan

This Action Plan has been completed by the Provider and the Authority has not made any amendments to the returned Action Plan.

Provider's response to Inspection Report No:	701
Name of Agency:	Orchard Children's Service
Date of inspection:	25/08/2014 – 28/08/2014
Date of response:	16 December 14

These requirements set out the actions that should be taken to meet the identified childcare regulations and *National Standards for Foster Care* as they pertain to the purpose and function of the agency.

Standard 3

Requires improvement

The provider is failing to comply with National Standards in the following respect:

The information booklet developed for children was not in a format suitable for all children nor in a format that took literacy difficulties into consideration.

Not all children had an awareness of their rights.

The provider did not actively promote the involvement of children in accessing information held about them.

Action required:

Under **Standard 3** you are required to ensure that:

Children and young people are treated with dignity, their privacy is respected, they make choices based on information provided to them in an age-appropriate manner, and have their views, including complaints, heard when decisions are made which affect them or the care they receive.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

1. The children's information booklet and children's complaint procedure will be redesigned to be more child friendly and include a section on children's rights

2. The Agency will seek agreement from Tusla social workers for carers to involve children in writing reports and to share with children the weekly/monthly reports provided by the foster carers for the children's case files

Proposed timescale:

1,2 to be completed by March 2015

Person responsible:

**Acting team
Manager**

Standard 25**Requires improvement**

The provider is failing to comply with National Standards in the following respect:

Not all children had an understanding of the complaints procedure.

Action required:

Under **Standard 25** you are required to ensure that:

Health boards (sic) have policies and procedures designed to ensure that children and young people, their families, foster carers and others with a bona fide interest in their welfare can make effective representations, including complaints, about any aspect of the fostering service, whether provided directly by a health board or by a non-statutory agency.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

1. The children's complaints procedure will be revised to create a more child friendly format
2. A children's log in with complaints form has now been devised for the web site and will be available from 1st January 2015. All children and carers will be informed and given instructions for use

1 to be completed by end of February 2015
2 to be completed by end of January 2015

Person responsible:
Acting Team
Manager

Theme 2: Safe and Effective Services

Standard 8

Requires improvement

The provider is failing to comply with National Standards in the following respect:

The matching process did not always consider the experience of the potential carer in caring for children with challenging behaviours.

Action required:

Under **Standard 8** you are required to ensure that:

Children and young people are placed with carers who are chosen for their capacity to meet the assessed needs of children or young people.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

- 1 The Agency will continue to carefully match children with carers in line with our matching policy and matching tool both in hours and out of hours when placements are made in order to maintain our low rate of placement breakdown in the future
- 2 The agency will analyse any placement disruptions and use this to inform strategy with regard to placement matching and support in order to maintain a low rate of placement disruption throughout 2015

Proposed timescale:

- 1 ongoing
2. to be implemented throughout 2015

Person responsible:

**Acting Team
Manager
CEO/PSW
Manager fostering
social work support**

Standard 10

Requires improvement

The provider is failing to comply with National Standards in the following respect:

Not all carers had completed training in Children First (2011): National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

The provider did not consistently record outcomes of investigations by the Child and Family Agency following reports of child protection and welfare concerns.

Not all children identified as being at risk when missing had an absence management plan in place as per the provider's policy.

Action required:

Under **Standard 10** you are required to ensure that:
Children in foster care are protected from abuse and neglect.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

1. All carers will be required to attend Children First training and carer preparation training will continue to include this guidance as part of the program
2. Completed absence management plan templates are placed on all files and carers will continue to be supported in reporting children missing on a 24/7 basis.
3. Outcomes of child referral forms under Children First will continue to be recorded on case files and also duplicated on the central file held by the team manager

Proposed timescale
1, throughout 2015
2,3 By end of March 2015

Person responsible:
Acting team
manager

Standard 14a**Requires improvement**

The provider is failing to comply with National Standards in the following respect:

Not all foster carer assessments from the provider to the Child and Family Agency foster care committees had all of the information required to inform decision making.

Action required:

Under **Standard 14(a)** you are required to ensure that:

Foster care applicants participate in a comprehensive assessment of their ability to carry out the fostering task and are formally approved by the health board prior to any child or young person being placed with them.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

1. The agency will continue to provide any additional information requested by the Foster Care Committees

Proposed timescale:

As soon as possible when requested by committees

Person responsible:

CEO/PSW

Standard 16**Requires improvement**

The provider is failing to comply with National Standards in the following respect:

Not all foster carers consistently attended training provided by the provider as required by their policy.

Action required:

Under **Standard 16** you are required to ensure that:

Foster carers participate in the training necessary to equip them with the skills and knowledge required to provide high quality care.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

1 The agency will continue to involve carers in planning training programs and consult them about best times so that maximum attendance is achieved.

2 The agency will continue to provide a children's group to support carers to attend training

3 The agency will continue to provide a comprehensive training program for carers including external trainers from community organisations

4 The agency will continue to fund carers to attend specific training in response to specific training needs identified in carer supervision

5 The agency will continue to address non attendance at training with carers at supervision and make more specific requirements at carer reviews regarding training attendance

6 The agency has introduced an award for best attendance at carer training this year in an effort to encourage carers to attend more training

7 The agency has developed a carer log in on the web site to enable carers to access training material

Proposed timescale:

1, 6 end of December 2014

2,3,4,5,7 Ongoing with the aim to improve overall carer attendance at training by June 2015

Person responsible:

Acting team manager

Standard 17**Requires improvement**

The provider is failing to comply with National Standards in the following respect:

Reviews were not carried out in accordance with the provider's own policies and procedures.

Action required:

Under **Standard 17** you are required to ensure that:

Foster carers participate in regular reviews of their continuing capacity to provide high quality care and to assist with the identification of gaps in the fostering service.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

1 Leading up to the inspection and since over 22 carer reviews have been completed and submitted to FCC for consideration.

2 Carer reviews still outstanding are being prioritised with a view to all reviews being up to date by March 2015

Proposed timescale:

All carer reviews to be up to date by March 2015

Person responsible:

**Manager fostering
social work support**

Theme 4: Leadership, Governance and Management

Standard 19

Requires improvement

The provider is failing to comply with National Standards in the following respect:

Not all children had Child in Family Agency care plans or care plan reviews on file. The process used by the provider to obtain these documents required improvement.

There were ineffective quality systems in place to ensure that placement plans were sufficiently detailed to inform the individualised care of children. Plans were not shared with children or carers.

Staff were not clear about the internal process that they should follow when the Child and Family Agency initiated the approval process for a long-term placement.

The provider had no formal quality assurance or monitoring process in place to monitor outcomes for children and drive improvements in the service.

There was no formal risk management process in place to identify and manage organisational risk.

There was no systemic approach to learning from the review of serious incidents including placement breakdowns to inform strategic planning.

There was no formal analysis of performance against key indicators to inform operational and strategic planning.

Record keeping needed to improve as a number of records were not signed or dated.

Records in some household files were not organised in a manner to aid efficient retrieval of key documents.

Action required:

Under **Standard 19** you are required to ensure that:

Health boards (sic) have effective structures in place for the management and monitoring of foster care services.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

1. The agency will continue to write to child and family social workers requesting copies of care plans and reviews. Where these are not provided within 14 days the fostering team manager will escalate the matter in writing to the chief operating officer of Tusla

2. The agency is taking steps to ensure quarterly file audits are performed quarterly on time and followed up more robustly to ensure all documents are signed and dated in accordance with requirements

3. Carer files will be reorganised to ensure ease of access to information
4. A risk management process has been implemented to identify, record and manage organisational risk more effectively
5. Detailed placement plans will be devised and shared with all children and carers in agreement with Tusla
6. The Agency will improve formal quality assurance and monitoring processes to monitor and record outcomes for children and drive improvements in the service. The agency is continuing to monitor quality of the service through staff supervision and carer supervision on a monthly basis
7. The agency will continue to identify trends from the review of serious incidents including placement breakdowns and evidence of this will be extracted from disruption reviews to demonstrate how this informs strategic planning.
8. Staff will be trained in the various committee processes to meet the requirements of the Child and Family Agency approval process when they request joint work to formally match a child for a long-term placement.

Proposed timescale:
Actions 1,2 by end of January 2015
4 by end of December 2014
3, 5 by end of February 2015
6, 7 with immediate effect and ongoing
8 by end of February 2015

Person responsible:
Acting team
manager
PSW

Standard 20

Requires improvement

The provider is failing to comply with National Standards in the following respect:

Some records of performance management appraisals were not completed, signed or dated.

There were no induction records in a number of personnel files.

Not all staff were familiar with the policy on protected disclosures.

There was no staff training record that contained up-to-date training details of all staff.

There was no overall staff training needs analysis completed by the provider.

Action required:

Under **Standard 20** you are required to ensure that:

Health Boards (sic.) ensure that the staff employed to work with children and young people, their families and foster carers are professionally qualified and suitably trained.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

Staff appraisals will be monitored by the HR manager and kept on HR files instead of supervision files in future

Induction records will be kept on HR files instead of maintained as part of supervision records going forward

Staff will be reminded to read their individual copy of the employee handbook and reminded about the whistle blowing policy and procedures contained within it.

Staff will be asked to provide a copy of their individual CPD log for their HR file Managers will continue to identify individual training needs for staff through supervision and appraisal and copy this plan to the HR manager so that this can be monitored and reported on to the team manager.

Proposed timescale:

All actions to be completed by end of March 2015

Person responsible:

**Acting team
manager
HR manager**