

## Action Plan

<b>Provider's response to Inspection Report No.</b>	669
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<b>Name of Service Area:</b>	Dublin South Central
<b>Service ID:</b>	100-207-312
<b>Date of inspection: DAY/MONTH/YEAR</b>	28 / 01 / 2014
<b>Date of response: DAY/MONTH/YEAR</b>	18 / 03 / 2014

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

# Action Plan

## Requirements

**Action 1:** Put in place a plan which addresses all deficits identified in this report including those relating to minor non-compliances not described in requirements below, taking into account the significance of the non compliances, the risks involved in them, when identifying timeframes and individuals responsible for actions.

**Action 2:** Review the plan at regular intervals to ensure that progress is being made to address all non compliances.

### Reference:

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Child Care Act, 1991

Child Care (Placement of Children in Foster Care) Regulations, 1995

Child Care (Placement of Children with Relatives) Regulations, 1995

National Standards for Foster Care 2003

*Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2011)*

### CFA Response:

#### Action 1:

The plan to address all the deficits raised in this report including minor non compliances is to monitor the Action Plan on a bi monthly basis at management meetings in order to ensure that all non compliances are continually monitored and addressed. All actions in regard to non compliances have specific timelines that will be carefully monitored by the management team on a regular basis.

#### Action 2:

The Area Manager will review the plan on a quarterly basis to ensure compliance. All minor non compliances will be resolved in the next 12 month period.

# Action Plan

## Requirements

These requirements set out the actions that should be taken to meet the identified child care regulations and *National Standards for Foster Care 2003*.

## Theme 1: Individualised Supports and Care

### Moderate non-compliance with Standard 3

#### The provider is failing to comply with standards in the following respect:

Children were not fully aware of their rights and were unsure of how to make a complaint about the service.

Written information in an appropriate format regarding rights and complaints was not provided to all children.

The complaints log did not record sufficient detail regarding the handling and outcome of complaints.

#### Action 3 required:

The CFA DSC should support children to understand and exercise their rights at all times, including their right to be protected from abuse and neglect and their right to complain.

#### Action 4 required:

The CFA DSC should provide children with appropriate written information in an accessible format on their rights, the complaints procedure, freedom of information procedures and available services.

#### Action 5 required:

Put in place a robust complaints procedure so that all concerns or complaints are listened to and issues raised are addressed in a timely and effective manner in accordance with the policy.

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

#### Timescale and person responsible:

Actions to be taken by the provider:

#### Action 3 –

Ensure every child in care is given the Speak up Speak out leaflet – these leaflets will be explained and distributed by the child/ young person's allocated Social Worker.

The allocated social worker will discuss and explain the complaints

Principal Social Workers Children in Care  
July 2014

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<p>procedure to each child in foster care in an age appropriate and comprehensive manner. The social worker will facilitate feedback from the child in order to ensure that the young person fully understands their rights and also the situations, behaviour and treatment that warrant a complaint and to whom and how they should complain. The social worker should discuss the general satisfaction of the child with their placement during regular visits and any issues warranting a complaint should be identified and addressed. A record of the content of these discussions should be kept and supervisors should actively check that these discussions have taken place. The satisfaction of children with the complaints procedure should be regularly checked by supervisors through the use of focus groups and audits.</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker Children in Care July 2014</p>
<p>Social workers should conduct focus groups for children in foster care in order to elicit any issues arising that they may be prepared to identify in a group situation and with the support of their peers.</p>	<p>Principal Social Workers Children in Care March 2014</p>
<p>To raise the issue of children's rights regularly at team meetings in order to ensure staff are fully aware of and actively promoting children's rights in their work.</p>	<p>Principal Social Workers Children in Care March 2014</p>
<p>The Children's Book about Foster Care will be distributed to all children and young people by their allocated Social Worker. The receipt of this book will be recorded on the child/ young person's file by the Social Worker.</p>	<p>Completed: Principal Social Worker Fostering September 2014</p>
<p>Each child coming into care for the first time will be given the book by their allocated Social Worker on admission to care over the age of 7 years.</p>	<p>Foster Care Coordinator May 2014</p>
<p>Each younger child in foster care will receive a copy of the Speak up Speak out and Children's Book about Foster Care in the year they reach age 7 years from their allocated Social Worker.</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker Quality Assurance &amp; Principal Social Workers Children in Care</p>
<p>All Foster Carers received the Speak up Speak Out leaflet by post last September.</p>	<p>May 2014</p>
<p>New Foster Carers will receive the Speak up Speak out leaflet in their information packs on approval from the Foster Care co-ordinator.</p>	

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<p><b>Action 4</b></p> <p>The children's complaints form will be completed and ready for distribution. There will be reference to how children can access their file and records contained in the complaints form. The complaint forms will be distributed to all children and young people by their allocated Social Worker.</p> <p><b>Action 5</b></p> <p>There will be a central log held by the Area Manager that will contain all complaints. This will be managed locally by HSE Complaints Officer and Area Manager.</p> <p>The Principal Social Worker will investigate complaints and report to Area Manager. All complaints, low level issues/concerns from whatever source will be on this log.</p> <p>This log will be subjected to regular quarterly analysis to identify patterns and trends emerging.</p> <p>The analysis will be discussed at Management Team Meetings.</p>	<p>Area Manager Principal Social Worker Quality Assurance May 2014</p> <p>Area Manager May 2014</p> <p>Area Manager May 2014 and quarterly thereafter</p>
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# Action Plan

Theme 2: Effective Services	
<b>Moderate non- compliance with Standards 7/8/13</b> <b>The provider is failing to comply with standards in the following respect:</b>  <p>Not all children were matched with long-term placements.</p> <p>Preparation for leaving care and access to aftercare services was not timely and effective for all young people.</p> <p>Some children's care plans were not reviewed in a timely manner.</p>	
<b>Action 6 required:</b> <p>The CFA DSC should put an effective matching system in place a system so that children are placed with suitable Foster Carers who are able to meet their needs within their approval status.</p>	
<b>Action 7 required:</b> <p>The CFA DSC should provide the necessary supports for children to prepare for leaving care and moving towards more independent living in a planned way.</p>	
<b>Action 8 required:</b> <p>Put in place a well managed, effective system of care planning and review, carried out by the child's Social Worker, which complies with Standards and Regulations.</p>	
Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take with timescales:	Timescale and person responsible:
<p>Actions to be taken by the provider:</p> <p><b>Action 6</b></p> <p>In regard to short term matching there is a checklist for matching children with Foster Carers. Matching of children to carers is managed using the professional judgement of the Fostering Team Leader (Fostering Team Leader) in line with TUSLA, Child &amp; Family Agency policy Child Care Act Regulations and Foster Care Committee Requirements</p> <p>The Regional Service Director is currently overseeing an initiative the aim of which is to reconfigure the fostering services in the region in order to regenerate the statutory fostering capacity and increase the supply of suitable foster parents. The aim is to significantly increase the stock of statutory fostering placements over an 18 month period between June 2014 and year end 2015.</p>	<p>Fostering Team Leader February 2014</p> <p>Area Manager,</p>

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<p>This initiative will be reviewed in December 2014. This initiative involves the following components:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The establishment of a regional steering committee to oversee the project. Membership consists of the Regional Service Director, Area Managers, fostering committee coordinators and representatives from the regional adoption services.</li> <li>• The review of current adoption service provision within the region and the development of a strategic plan for future provision</li> <li>• The development of a regional assessment team headed by a team leader with expertise in fostering. The aim of the team is to bring a focused approach to the assessment process and to ensure that assessments are conducted within the 16 week timeframe as outlined in standard.</li> <li>• Collaboration with the adoption service in order to identify potential foster parents from within the cohort of those deemed eligible to adopt. The assessment process can be expedited in relation to this group.</li> <li>• The National unaccompanied minors service comes within the remit of the Regional Service Director and it is the intention to use the expertise of the fostering staff within this service to identify foster parents from diverse multicultural backgrounds to facilitate the matching process for non-national children in care.</li> <li>• Development of a comprehensive training programme for foster parents which will harness the expertise of the unaccompanied minors service and the I.F.C.A.</li> </ul> <p>In regard to long-term matching:</p> <p>For matching Long Term, Child in Care review will trigger the process for gathering necessary information for Fostering Placement Committee. Progress to be reviewed at every child in care review thereafter. Written minutes of reviews will track progress. Placements will be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure risks are acted upon and identified. Checks on Foster Carers to be done through the Duty System as per Action 13.</p> <p>The risks associated with children in placements that have not been matched through Fostering Committee will be discussed between Service Director of Operations and Area Manager in monthly meetings.</p>	<p>Regional Service Director Operations Pilot Project April-December 2015 Review December 2014</p> <p>Fostering Team Leader Children in Care Team Leader April 2014</p>
<p></p>	<p>Regional Service Director Operations Area Manager July 2014 Monthly thereafter</p> <p>Principal Social Workers Children in Care Completed March 2014.</p> <p>Principal Social</p>

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<p><b>Action 7</b></p> <p>This action will be addressed through the care planning process beginning at age 16. Every Social Worker will start aftercare planning when the young person reaches the age 16. The dedicated aftercare staff will be resource to other staff members but the responsibility to develop aftercare plans within the appropriate timeframes as outlined by standard will be the responsibility of all social workers.</p> <p>There will be a quarterly audit to ensure that aftercare plans are completed in a timely fashion and to a high quality.</p> <p>There will be a presentation to long-term teams in regard to aftercare. We will use expertise on the team to hold a workshop on Aftercare planning and training for all Social Workers on the long-term teams. This training will emphasise the role of the Social Worker in aftercare planning. It will be provided to the teams on an annual basis.</p> <p>There is a Service Level Agreement with Focus Ireland to provide aftercare and this resource is fully utilised.</p> <p>A regional steering committee is being formed to support after care services through interagency collaboration with local housing authorities, the Departments of Social Protection and Education as well as relevant private and voluntary agencies.</p> <p>The Pathways book on Aftercare will be distributed to all young people on reaching the age of 16 years by their allocated Social Worker.</p> <p><b>Action 8</b></p> <p>All out of date child care reviews at the time of inspection have been completed.</p> <p>There is a plan in place to monitor that child care reviews take place in a timely fashion through the PI system already in place. All outstanding reviews and care plans are addressed within one month.</p>	<p>Worker Quality Assurance September 2014</p> <p>Principal Social Worker Aftercare November 2014</p> <p>Principal Social Worker Aftercare</p> <p>Service Director Operations June 2014</p> <p>Team Leader children in Care May 2014</p> <p>Principal Social Worker. Children in Care Team Leader, Children in Care July 2014</p>
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# Action Plan

Moderate non –compliance with Standards 14a/14b	
<p><b>The provider is failing to comply with standards in the following respect:</b></p> <p>Assessments of Foster Carers were not timely and several carers were awaiting assessment. The rate of approval of Foster Carers was not timely and the majority of Foster Carers had not been reviewed. A number of Foster Carers were not appropriately vetted.</p> <p>Some Foster Carers had not undertaken foundation training and Foster Carers had not received specific cultural awareness training. Not all Foster Carers had an allocated fostering link Social Worker.</p> <p>The inter area transfer policy was not effective.</p>	
<p><b>Action 9 required:</b> The CFA DSC should carry out timely assessments to ensure that children live in safe environments.</p>	
<p><b>Action 10 required:</b> The CFA DSC should carry out appropriate vetting for all Foster Carers including those with whom children are placed on an emergency basis.</p>	
<p><b>Action 11 required:</b> The CFA DSC should put in place system to review all Foster Carers and communicate the findings of the reviews to the foster care committee.</p>	
<p><b>Action 12 required:</b> The CFA DSC should put in place high quality supports and training for foster parents and relative carers.</p>	
<p><b>Action 13 required:</b> The CFA DSC should ensure that they provide a link Social Worker for Foster Carers, information on roles, responsibilities and expectations in relation to contracts between all parties.</p>	
<p><b>Action 14 required:</b> The CFA DSC should put in place and implement an inter-area transfer policy.</p>	
Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take with timescales:	Timescale and person responsible:
<p>Action 9 See response to action 6 re: Regional initiative.</p>	<p>Fostering Team</p>

## Action Plan

<p>Additional Social Workers are returning from long-term leave and will be taking fostering assessments (15 cases) from the waiting list.</p>	<p>Leaders &amp; Social Workers July 2014</p>
<p>It is anticipated that the Regional Review will also generate more placements.</p>	<p>Area Manager, Regional Fostering Review. November 2014</p>
<p>In regard to Section 36(Relative Care) assessments, emergency approvals for Section 36 assessments are prioritised and completed at the time of referral. The completion of Section 36 assessments are often driven by court demands. The Fostering Team Leader monitors the waiting list of Section 36 assessments.</p>	<p>Fostering Team Leader February 2014 Monthly thereafter</p>
<p>Duty Fostering Service will keep in touch with unallocated carers as per Action 13. The Regional Assessment Team will allow some capacity at area level to complete Section 36 assessments. Plan to assess 34 carers in 2014.</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker, Fostering December 2014</p>
<p>Vulnerable placements to be placed on Risk Register and reviewed at monthly management meetings.</p>	<p>Area Manager June 2014 Monthly thereafter</p>
<p>The waiting list will be reviewed at Management Team Meeting and in supervision with Principal Social Worker</p>	<p>Area Manager Principal Social Worker Fostering October 2014 And quarterly thereafter</p>
<p><b>Action 10</b></p>	<p>Principal Social Worker Fostering. February 2014 3 monthly thereafter and May 2014</p>
<p>All Foster Carers who have not been vetted are submitting their Garda Vetting forms at present. They will be returned to the fostering clerical section for processing.</p>	
<p>The Garda clearance of all Foster Carers is now managed centrally by the fostering team, the date they were last Garda vetted is now recorded. Within 3 months of the renewal date the Social Worker will be alerted to send a new Garda Vetting form to the Foster Carers for completion. Follow up form will be triggered one month later by administrative staff and audited by Team Leader</p>	

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<p><b>Action 11</b></p> <p>There is now a plan to increase the number of foster care reviews and complete 40 reviews this year. The findings of these reviews will be communicated to the fostering committee. Foster care reviews will be prioritised according to concerns/allegations or complaints against Foster Carers by the Fostering Team Leader. Foster Carers without Fostering Reviews are being monitored by the Fostering Team Leader on an ongoing basis and escalated to Fostering Principal Social Worker if necessary.</p> <p><b>Action 12</b></p> <p>Dates have been set for two training courses for relative carers by the Fostering Team.</p> <p>Training for general Foster Carers will be organised this year.</p> <p>The expertise of National Unaccompanied Minors Team will be used as resource to address specific cultural awareness training in the region.</p> <p>There will also be training workshops for to support Foster Carers on talking to children about being in care and using the children's book about Foster Care.</p> <p>Child Care Leaders (Child Care Leader) will run Incredible Years training for Foster Carers in the next six months.</p> <p>Support groups for Foster Carers to be set up as per Action 13</p> <p><b>Action 13</b></p> <p>To manage the risk of unallocated carers the fostering team will provide a group support system for unallocated Foster Carers. This will involve two groups with unallocated carers this year.</p> <p>The fostering duty system will be enhanced to ensure all unallocated Foster Carers are contacted on a regular basis – approx 10 per week.</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker Fostering and Fostering Team Leaders. December 2014</p> <p>Principal Social Worker Fostering &amp; Fostering Team Leaders March 2014 July 2014</p> <p>Fostering Team Leaders September 2014 October 2014 November 2014</p> <p>Child Care Leaders October 2014</p> <p>December 2014</p> <p>June 2014 November 2014</p> <p>Fostering Team Leaders June 2014 November 2014</p> <p>Fostering Team Leade</p>
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## Action Plan

<p>The list of unallocated carers is under constant review and being monitored. 15 carers to be allocated to returning staff over the summer.</p>	<p>Fostering Team Leaders September 2014</p>
<p>We will liaise with Irish Foster Carer's Association to access any additional supports for Foster Carers they may be able to offer.</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker Fostering April 2014</p>
<p>The issue of unallocated carers will also be considered by the Regional Review of Foster Care service.</p>	<p>Area Manager, Regional Fostering Review. June 2014</p>
<p><b>Action 14</b> A national inter area transfer policy is in place. In order to ensure compliance with policy all cases that are proving difficult to transfer will be escalated to the regional service director who will bring them to the immediate attention of the National Chief Operations Officer for resolution.</p>	<p>Area Manager Regional Service Director Operations Principal Social Workers Long-term May 2014</p>
<p>We will compile a list of all cases requiring transfer; these cases will continue to be worked while on the transfer list. There is a process to be followed in order to prepare cases for transfer.</p>	<p>Principal Social Workers Long-term June 2014 Principal Social Workers Long-term December 2014</p>
<p>Those cases currently processed and ready for transfer will be sent. 45 cases at different levels of completion will be prioritised.</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker Fostering Principal Social Worker, Children in Care November 2014</p>

# Action Plan

## Theme 5: Leadership, Governance and Management

### Moderate non-compliance Standards 18/19

#### The provider is failing to comply with standards in the following respect:

There were no service level agreements or monitoring in place with private foster care agencies used by the area.

#### Action 15 required:

Put in place formalised arrangements for the provision of private foster care services funded by the Child and Family Agency.

#### Action 16 required:

The CFA DSC should put in place a mechanism to effectively monitor private foster care services funded by the Child and Family Agency.

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

#### Timescale and person responsible:

Actions to be taken by the provider:

#### Action 15

The ISA keeps individual placement agreements with private providers on file for each child.

It is the intention of the Regional Office to agree and sign a corporate Service Level Agreement with each of the private fostering agencies with which we currently do business. This S.L.A. will address in detail the package of care expected, the assessment, vetting, training and monitoring of foster carers with particular reference to the quality and standard of care expected. The Regional Office will address the issue of Service Level agreements with all private foster care providers.

#### Action 16

The Service Level Agreements with private providers will include measures to ensure compliance with fostering standards, quality of care, supervision and visits etc.

The Regional Service Director will address the issue of creating a post for a fostering monitoring officer for the Dublin Mid-Leinster Region with the National Chief Operations Officer.

Principal Social Workers Long-term Currently in place

Regional Service Director Operations June 2014

Area Manager Regional Service Director Operations April 2014

## Action Plan

<b>Moderate non-compliance with Standard 19</b>	
<b>The provider is failing to comply with standards in the following respect:</b>	
The area did not have a robust risk management system in place.	
<b>Action 17 required:</b>	
The CFA DSC should ensure that there are systems and processes in place to identify, analyse, prioritise and eliminate or minimise organisational risk relating to the service.	
<b>Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take with timescales:</b>	<b>Timescale and person responsible:</b>
<p>Actions to be taken by the provider:</p> <p><b>Action 17</b></p> <p>The child and family service within the Dublin Mid-Leinster region will be developing a dedicated risk assessment process for childcare services in 2014. This register will be distinct to children's services and will include risk monitoring in relation to fostering services. The register will be incremental with risk being addressed at Principal Social Worker, Area Manager, Regional and National level depending on the seriousness of risk and the capacity of the various tiers of management to address same. A policy and protocol for escalation will be agreed. It is envisaged that a risk register will be maintained at the three levels of management within the region and a risk management committee will be established at area and regional level to manage and monitor risk.</p> <p>Two posts have been created in the region to assist with this process and to address quality assurance in general i.e. the post of professional support officer and that of quality assurance officer. Included in the remit of both these appointees is the monitoring of risk management and responses and the identification of patterns. It is envisaged that the regional risk management committee will meet monthly to discuss the risk register and alert the regional director to emerging patterns or risks requiring escalation to National Office. This process will be supplemented by quarterly reports provided to the Service director by the Quality Assurance and Professional Support officers.</p> <p>The Risk Register already in place will be further modified and developed by the Area Manager and Management team. The Area</p>	<p>Service Director Operations May 2014</p> <p>Area Management Team May 2014</p>

## Action Plan

Manager will ensure that all relevant risks are on the risk register.	
The risk register will be discussed monthly at management meetings.	Area Management Team May 2014
The analysis, prioritisation and management of risks is implemented in line with Dublin Mid Leinster Risk Management Policy	Area Manager Monthly May 2014

### Moderate non-compliance with Standard 19

#### The provider is failing to comply with standards in the following respect:

The area did not have effective systems in place to manage performance and quality assure the service being provided to protect children and promote their welfare.

#### Action 18 required:

The CFA DSC should carry out regular reviews of the quality and safety of care and support in the service and ensure that services are provided in accordance with the standards.

#### Action 19 required:

The CFA DSC consults with children and their families so that they may contribute to regular reviews of the quality and safety of the service.

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

#### Timescale and person responsible:

Actions to be taken by the provider:

#### Action 18

The quality assurance and professional support officers will in liaison with the regional management team develop a quality assurance framework for the region that will include the regular auditing of care plans, reviews, fostering assessments, complaints and risk registers; and provide information, training and evidence based learning opportunities for childcare staff to improve the quality, efficiency and standard of service.

The detailed review and strategies emerging from the fostering pilot initiative and the subcommittee review of aftercare planning will also inform practice standards and quality in these areas.

Area Manager  
Principal Social Worker Quality Assurance  
March 2014.  
Quarterly thereafter

## Action Plan

<p>In Dublin South Central the Child Protection Pillar contains a dedicated Quality Assurance function under the remit of a Principal Social Worker. The Quality agenda within the Child Protection Hub includes adherence to standardised Business Processed, National Standards, Child Care Act Regulations and implementation of National Policy.</p>	
<p>There will be a quarterly audit of social work files, examining statutory requirements and quality of care including Fostering and Children in Care files.</p>	<p>All Principal Social Workers June 2014 Quarterly thereafter</p>
<p>There will be a review of the structure of files with the social work team by the end of May 2014 in order to put in place systems that will ensure optimum file management.</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker Children in Care &amp; Data Manager. May 2014. Thereafter on a monthly basis</p>
<p>There will be ongoing education and training of staff in regard to systems and processes provided through sub team meetings on a quarterly basis by Social Work Team Leaders assisted by the Quality Assurance Team.</p>	<p>Area Manager &amp; Management Team. May 2014. Thereafter on a quarterly basis</p>
<p>There has been a review of data collection. The Principal Social Workers are going to take responsibility for the accuracy of data collection with the assistance of the Data Manager. A system will be put in place to ensure the collection of robust and accurate data.</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker Quality Assurance June 2014 Thereafter on a six monthly basis for 2 years.</p>
<p>Data will be reviewed on a quarterly basis at management meetings and any identified risks will be escalated to the Regional/ National Office as required.</p>	
<p><b>Action 19</b></p>	
<p>Child Care Leaders (Child Care Leaders) will run two focus groups with children in care in the next year to ascertain their views or wishes in regard to the services.</p>	<p>Child Care Leaders June 2014 September 2014  Principal Social</p>



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<p>The quality assurance officer will also seek feedback from children's advocacy groups and ensure that the recommendations of relevant reports i.e. findings of the Office of the Ombudsman for Children, child death reviews and H.I.Q.A. reports are incorporated in the quality assurance framework for the area in the form of training courses, staff meetings and seminars.</p>	<p>Worker Quality Assurance May 2014</p>
<p>An evaluation sheet for children and for parents will be devised and sent to a sample group of 20 children and 20 parents. The results from this sample group will be used to inform the evaluation process. It is anticipated that this will be repeated for different sample groups to refine the process into the future.</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker Quality Assurance October 2014</p>
<p>Evaluation sheets are currently being developed for parents following Child Protection Conferences (CPCs). These will be ready for trial in May 2014.</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker Quality Assurance May 2014</p>

# Action Plan

## Theme 6: Use of resources

### Moderate non-compliance with Standards 19/21

#### The provider is failing to comply with standards in the following respect:

There was no service plan in place.

There were insufficient placements to meet the demands of the service.

There was an insufficient staff resource in place to meet the needs of the service.

#### Action 20 required:

The CFA DSC should put in place a sufficiently resourced service plan, informed by a needs analysis and a clear understanding of the demands for service.

#### Action 21 required:

The CFA DSC should put in place effective recruitment and retention strategies to maintain an appropriate range of Foster Carers.

#### Action 22 required:

The CFA DSC should put in place a robust system in order to deploy and monitor the use of resources, with sufficient flexibility to reallocate resources if required.

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

#### Timescale and person responsible:

Actions to be taken by the provider:

#### Action 20

The Fostering Initiative currently underway in the region includes a review of fostering services that includes:-

- a needs analysis including quantity and diversity of placements required ( multicultural, specialist fostering)
- Current supply of placements versus need
- Current service pressures including backlog of reviews, waiting list for assessments,
- resource and workforce analysis required to provide a quality service and sufficient supply of statutory foster placement. This analysis will look at current resource issues including deficits in allocated social workers and link workers.

This review will result in a service plan for fostering services in the region over a 3 year period that will include:

- Reconfiguration of current service provision and workforce

Area Manager  
Regional Service  
Director Operations  
May 2014

Regional Service  
Direction  
Operations April  
2014

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<p>with a view to streamlining assessments in line with business processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of collaborative partnerships with the adoption services and the I.F.C.A. with a view to increasing the supply and range of placements and enhancing support and training to foster parents.</li> <li>• Development of a workforce plan to be progressed as part of national discussions in relation to the staffing complement for the children and family service.</li> <li>• The introduction of an effective quality assurance framework for fostering services.</li> </ul> <p>The Area Manager is currently drawing up the local service plan and analysis of needs. This plan will inform in regard to the resources required to run the service effectively. The Management team locally prioritises on a daily basis in regard to the risk based needs of children and Foster Carers. There are deficits in staffing that need to be addressed and will continue to be escalated to Regional/ National Office.</p>	<p>Area Manager April 2014</p> <p>Principal Social Worker, Fostering</p> <p>Principal social Worker, Fostering Team Leader Fostering June, September 2014</p>
<p><b>Action 21</b></p> <p>The Fostering Team carry out monthly information meetings for potential fostering applicants. All interested parties receive a social work visit within two months of that request.</p> <p>There will be two groups held for unallocated Foster Carers during this year by the Fostering Team.</p> <p>The Fostering Team will liaise with Irish Foster Carer's Association in regard to any training which would be accessible to our Foster Carers.</p>	<p>Principal Social Worker Fostering May 2014</p> <p>Regional Service Director Operations</p> <p>June 2014</p>
<p><b>Action 22</b></p> <p>As stated in Action 20 a workforce analysis is currently underway as part of the review of fostering services being conducted in the region. Reconfiguration of staffing is currently being progressed as part of an initiative to develop a dedicated regional fostering assessment team. The regional H.R. function monitors all vacancies arising on a monthly basis and applications to fill all vacancies in the social work service have been signed off by the regional director and are currently being progressed with the National H.R. office. Twenty seven vacancies for the region are currently approved and in the recruitment process.</p>	<p>Area Manager Management Team</p> <p>September 2014</p>

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<p>There is a system in place for the deployment and monitoring of staff resources which is regularly reviewed by the management team, this is based on the Child and Family Agency's priorities and low, medium, high risks and resources are analysed accordingly. The Area Management Team prioritises in response to service needs which includes the deployment of staff resources on an ongoing basis Risk management and quality of service always influences the deployment of resources. An example of this is Fostering Team Leaders prioritising Foster Care Reviews or the allocation of link workers according to assessed risk in placements.</p> <p>The Child &amp; Family Agency nationally has committed to providing staff cover for long-term leave, particularly maternity leave. When this is in place it will address current deficits to a significant extent.</p>	<p>National Office December 2014</p>
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