



Health Information and Quality Authority Regulation Directorate monitoring inspection of Non-Statutory Foster Care Services

Name of service provider:	Origins Foster Care Service
Type of inspection:	Announced
Date of inspection:	11-14 of April 2023
Fieldwork ID:	MON_0039407
Lead Inspector:	Rachel Kane
Support Inspector(s):	Lorraine O'Reilly Adekunle Oladejo Grace Lynam

About this inspection

HIQA monitors services used by some of the most vulnerable children in the State. Monitoring provides assurance to the public that children are receiving a service that meets the requirements of quality standards. This process also seeks to ensure that the wellbeing, welfare and safety of children is promoted and protected. Monitoring also has an important role in driving continual improvement so that children have better, safer services.

HIQA is authorised by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth under Section 69 of the Child Care Act, 1991 as amended by Section 26 of the Child Care (Amendment) Act 2011 to inspect services taking care of a child on behalf of the Child and Family Agency (Tusla)¹, including non-statutory providers of foster care.

This inspection was a focused inspection of Origins Foster Care to assess eight of the national standards

¹ Tusla was established 1 January 2014 under the *Child and Family Agency Act 2013*.

How we inspect

As part of this inspection, inspectors met with the relevant professionals involved with Origins Foster Care Service and with foster carers. Inspectors observed practices and reviewed documentation such as foster carers' files, children's files and relevant documentation relating to the areas covered by the specific standards against which the service provider was inspected.

The key activities of this inspection involved:

- the analysis of data submitted by the service provider
- interviews with:
 - the two directors/principal social workers of the company
 - the social work team leaders
 - three child in care social workers
 - one guardian ad litem²
 - one external advocacy representative
- focus groups with:
 - four link workers
 - five foster carers
- the review of:
 - policies and procedures, minutes of various meetings, staff supervision files, audits and service plans
 - a sample of 18 children's and foster carer files
- conversations or visits with:
 - a sample of two children and two foster carers.

Acknowledgements

HIQA wishes to thank children and foster carers that spoke with inspectors during the course of this inspection in addition to staff and managers of the service for their cooperation.

² A guardian ad litem is an individual appointed by the court to represent the best interests of a child in legal proceedings.

Profile of the foster care service

The Service Provider

Origins Foster Care was established in 2018. Origins Foster Care provides a range of fostering services including emergency, respite, short term, medium term and long term placements. The aim of the service is to provide a professional range of foster care services which are tailored to meet the range of needs of children placed in foster care.

Origins Foster Care is managed by two company directors who also hold principal social worker roles and are the company owners. They are directly involved in the management of the service, and hold the roles of head of operations and head of fostering respectively. The head of operations is also the principal social worker for recruitment and assessment. The head of fostering is also the principal social worker for fostering. With regards to governance and oversight, the head of operations has overall responsibility. The service provider has a social work team leader for fostering with responsibility for two link workers and three sessional link workers. There is also a social work team leader, with responsibility for a panel of sessional social workers who complete assessments of foster carers. The provider also employs a recruitment and marketing co-ordinator. The provider recently hired a peer mentor with the role of coordinating foster carer support groups. The provider has six further staff members who provide business, administration and accounts support. The provider contracts a compliance consultant and an external social work supervisor. The compliance consultant completes audits on specific areas of practice every three months. The external supervisor provides support to the directors in relation to practice and the development of a specific model of practice across the service, while also providing monthly clinical mentoring sessions to the social work team and additional support on specific cases as needed. The social work team includes; the principal social worker, the social worker team leader and link workers.

Data provided by Origins Foster Care prior to the inspection showed that the service had 21 foster care households and provided foster care placements for 33 children. These foster care households were located across Ireland in various geographical areas.

Placements in Origins Foster Care are commissioned by the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) service area teams. Tusla retain their statutory responsibilities to children placed with this service and approve the foster carers through their foster care committees. The foster care agency is required to adhere to relevant standards and regulations when providing a service on behalf of Tusla. Both providers are accountable for the care and wellbeing of children.

Private foster care services are monitored by Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. Origins Foster Care was last audited by the Tusla Alternative Care Inspection and Monitoring Service (ACIMS) in November 2021. The report was finalised in December 2021. The purpose of the audit was to ascertain if Origins Foster Care's management of serious concerns and allegations of abuse or neglect against foster carers was in accordance with the 2017 Tusla Interim Protocol and to determine whether effective systems were in place to ensure appropriate governance and oversight of the process. The audit identified some areas for improvement for Origins Foster Care to be operating fully in line with the Interim Protocol 2017. The action plan to address these required improvements included; tracking the receipt and subsequent circulation of fully signed appendix forms and establishing a procedure to ensure that formal signed categorisation and strategy meeting minutes are maintained on the foster carer file. This action plan had been implemented before this inspection.

Compliance classifications

HIQA will judge whether the foster care service has been found to be **compliant**, **substantially compliant** or **not compliant** with the regulations and or standards associated with them.

The compliance descriptors are defined as follows:

Compliant: a judgment of compliant means the service is meeting or exceeding the standard and or regulation and is delivering a high-quality service which is responsive to the needs of children.

Substantially compliant: a judgment of substantially compliant means that the service is mostly compliant with the standard and or regulation but some additional action is required to be fully compliant. However, the service is one that protects children.

Not compliant: a judgment of not compliant means the service has not complied with a regulation and or standard and that considerable action is required to come into compliance. Continued non-compliance or where the non-compliance poses a significant risk to the safety, health and welfare of children using the service will be risk-rated red (high risk), and the inspector will identify the date by which the service must comply. Where the non-compliance does not pose a significant risk to the safety, health and welfare of children using the service, it is risk-rated orange (moderate risk) and the service must take action *within a reasonable time frame* to come into compliance.

This inspection report sets out the findings of a monitoring inspection against the following standards:

National Standards for Foster Care		Judgment
Standard 8	Matching carers with children and young people	Compliant
Standard 10	Safeguarding and child protection	Compliant
Standard 15	Supervision and support	Compliant
Standard 16	Training	Compliant
Standard 18	Effective policies	Compliant
Standard 19	Management and monitoring of foster care services	Compliant
Standard 21	Recruitment and retention of an appropriate range of foster carers	Compliant
Standard 25	Representations and complaints	Compliant

This inspection was carried out during the following times:

Date	Times of inspection	Inspector	Role
11 April 2023	09:00hrs to 17:00hrs	Rachel Kane	Lead Inspector
	11:00hrs to 17:00hrs	Lorraine O'Reilly	Support Inspector
	09:00hrs to 17:00hrs	Adekunle Oladejo	Support Inspector
12 April 2023	09:00hrs to 17:00hrs	Rachel Kane	Lead Inspector
	12:00hrs to 17:00hrs	Grace Lynam	Support Inspector
	13:00hrs to 17:00hrs	Adekunle Oladejo	Support Inspector
13 April 2023	09:00hrs to 17:00hrs	Rachel Kane	Lead Inspector
	09:00hrs to 17:00hrs	Lorraine O'Reilly	Support Inspector
	09:00hrs to 17:00hrs	Adekunle Oladejo	Support Inspector
14 April 2023	09:00hrs to 16:30hrs	Rachel Kane	Lead Inspector
	09:00hrs to 14:30hrs	Lorraine O'Reilly	Support Inspector
	09:00hrs to 16:00hrs	Adekunle Oladejo	Support Inspector
18 April 2023	11:15hrs to 12:15 hrs	Rachel Kane	Lead Inspector
	11:15hrs to 12:15 hrs	Adekunle Oladejo	Support Inspector
19 April 2023	12:30hrs to 13:30hrs	Rachel Kane	Lead Inspector
21 April 2023	09:30hrs to 12:30hrs	Rachel Kane	Lead Inspector

Children's experience of the foster care service

Children's experiences were established through speaking with a sample of children, parents, foster carers, external advocates and professionals. The review of case files, complaints and feedback also provided evidence on their experience.

The inspectors sought to establish the experiences of children that were placed in foster care. Inspectors reviewed documentation on case files and spoke with a sample of children, link workers, foster carers and external advocates to get their views about the service.

Inspectors spoke with two children, three child in care social workers, six foster carers, one external advocacy representative and one guardian ad litem.

Origins Foster Care promoted a rights based approach and provided a high level of support to each child within their service. This approach promoted and protected the child's rights and the service they received was tailored to the individual needs of the child.

Link workers, management and foster carers actively promoted children's rights. The provider placed a strong emphasis on children's rights such as; access to education, health needs and rights to participation. For example, Origins Foster Care had devised a child participation strategy which was in the early stage of implementation at the time of inspection. There was a children's consultation process in place and participation plans were on file for some of the children; this was to seek input from children and it outlined how children would like to express their views and wishes. Link workers told inspectors that they planned to have a participation plan in place for all children placed with Origins Foster Care in the coming months. Inspectors saw some of these participation plans in children's files. These plans gave the children the opportunity to say how they would like to be involved in the service and voice their opinions. Origins Foster Care also had a children's consultation policy, policy on human rights and the rights of the child. This indicated that Origins Foster Care were striving to improve children's participation in the service and ensure that their rights were promoted.

Children told inspectors that they had a positive experience of the service they received. They told inspectors that they liked living with their foster carers and had opportunities to participate in decision-making and engage in activities and hobbies of their choice. For example, the children told inspectors that Origins Foster Care organised recreational social activities to encourage their participation and engagement with the service. Inspectors were further told that the young people liked their foster homes and their foster families.

Children said that they felt listened to and knew who to talk to if they had any worries or complaints. Children were familiar with Origins Foster Care link workers and told inspectors that they had met them when they did home visits. From file reviews and what the children told the inspectors, it was evident that children were supported and facilitated in maintaining contact with their families and friends where appropriate. Examples of children's comments included:

"I do feel listened to, everyone's opinion matters"

"Origins listens to my opinion a lot"

"If I have any worries, I would talk to my parents [foster carers], my teacher or my friends".

Overall, the majority of foster carers expressed positive experiences of Origins Foster Care and the staff that worked with them. Foster carers told inspectors that they enjoyed a good level of support and "always look forward to supervision". Staff were described as "absolutely fabulous" and "fantastic". Foster carers said that they had regular contact with their link workers and they found them to be a "great advocate for the children". Where there had been a change of link worker, foster carers told inspectors that the handover was comprehensive and the new staff knew "what I was talking about from the get go". Foster carers spoke about events that they attended where they did group activities and therapeutic exercises which they found helpful. Foster carers said that the good level of support provided by Origins Foster Care kept them "motivated".

Foster carers reported that they were provided with training to improve their knowledge and understanding of the needs of children in their care and how to best meet them. They said that they were able to avail of additional support such as counselling and could request additional training to better equip them to meet the presenting needs of children in their care.

Professionals such as guardian ad litem and child in care social workers that spoke with inspectors reported a child-centred, collaborative approach of working with the staff and management. Social workers said that the placement of children with Origins Foster Care had brought positive changes to the life of the children. External advocates told inspectors that the link workers were very committed in supporting foster carers, promoting children's rights and were proactive in managing issues or concerns as they arose.

Summary of inspection findings

Placements with Origins Foster Care are commissioned by Tusla service area teams. Tusla retain their statutory responsibilities to children placed with this service and approve the foster carers through their foster care committees. The foster care agency is required to adhere to relevant standards and regulations when providing a service on behalf of Tusla. Both services are accountable for the care and wellbeing of children.

Children in foster care require a high-quality service which is safe and well supported by Tusla social workers. Foster carers must be able to provide children with warm and nurturing relationships in order for them to achieve positive outcomes. The service provider must be well governed in order to produce these outcomes consistently.

This report reflects the findings of the focused inspection, which looked at standards including; matching carers with children and young people, supervision and support, recruitment and retention of an appropriate range of foster carers, training, safeguarding and child protection, effective policies, management and monitoring of foster care services, and representations and complaints.

On the previous HIQA inspection in November 2021, eight national standards were assessed, and of these, seven standards were compliant and one standard was substantially compliant.

In this inspection, HIQA found that, of the eight national standards assessed:

- Eight standards were compliant.

The inspection found that Origins Foster Care had a number of areas of good practice. The areas of good practice were matching carers with children and young people, supervision and support of foster carers, management and monitoring of foster care services, effective policies, training and safeguarding and child protection. Children's rights were at the core of service development, for example, a number of policies, forms and templates were reviewed in the first quarter of 2023 to ensure that a model of best practice in the area of child participation was followed through in all policies and documents and in day to day practice.

There were strong governance arrangements and structures to ensure the delivery of a high-quality foster care service. The management team had implemented effective systems to manage and monitor the service and to ensure the service was safe and effective. The service was adequately resourced, well led and organised. There was

comprehensive monitoring and oversight systems in place. Origins Foster Care had a culture of learning and continuous improvements were implemented on an on-going basis across all aspects of the service.

The provider had effective policies and procedures in place to promote the provision of a high-quality foster care service. The provider's policies and procedures for the delivery of foster care services were aligned to relevant legislation, regulations and national standards. The provider had a comprehensive business and service development plan in place for 2021-2023 and had developed a new business plan for 2023, both of which outlined objectives to improve the quality of the service. Origins Foster Care also pro-actively sought to work collaboratively with foster carers, children and external agencies to continuously improve service delivery.

Origins Foster Care had a matching policy and procedure in place that promoted a human rights based approach and the best interests of children were central to decision making. Foster carers were selected based on their capacity to meet the assessed needs of children. The matching considerations forms were completed and signed off by the team leader. Senior management had good oversight of matching. Matching was discussed in team meetings and supervision with the team leader.

All foster carers had a link worker and received regular supervision. There was high levels of support provided to foster carers. Overall, there were clear records pertaining to supervision on file and all supervisions were taking place in line with policy. The majority of foster carers who spoke with inspectors were positive about their experience of the service.

Origins Foster Care had a foster carer learning and development policy in place which was aligned to the service's business and service improvement plan. Origins Foster Care supported foster carer participation and made training accessible for them. Mandatory training was completed as required in addition to other training sessions to meet the individual needs of foster carers to best support them in their journey of fostering. It was clear that learning and training was promoted within the service.

Origins Foster Care had policies and procedures in place which were clear and responsive to managing representations and complaints made by children, their families and foster carers. Origins Foster Care had a complaints form which outlined the appeals process. Children's right to have their voices heard and their opinions valued was promoted and supported by the service. Foster carers and children were aware of how to make a complaint and felt listened to by the service. The provider had not recorded any complaints in the 12 months previous to the inspection. The provider responded to expressions of dissatisfaction that were recorded in the foster carer feedback surveys in a timely and appropriate manner.

The service had clear and robust systems in place to promote the safety of children in all aspects of service provision. Critical incidents such as child protection concerns and serious concerns were responded to and reported in a timely manner. Both staff and foster carers understood how to respond appropriately to child protection concerns and were aware of their role as mandated persons. The majority of child protection and welfare reports were made jointly by the link worker and foster carers, however, this was not clear from the records reviewed by inspectors. Therefore, an area that requires attention is for the provider to review how they document joint child protection and welfare reports and reflect this in their child protection policy.

Origins Foster Care had recruitment and retention strategies in place that proved effective. Foster carers were involved in recruitment campaigns, which offered prospective foster carers a realistic view of what it was like to be a foster carer. Foster carers told inspectors that there were high levels of support, advice and information provided, which led to good retention of foster carers. Origins Foster Care had three new foster carer households join the service through the transfer process in the twelve months prior to the inspection.

Standard 8: Matching carers with children and young people

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

Origins Foster Care had a formal process in place for matching children with foster carers, this process was underpinned by human rights principles. The provider's approach to matching children with foster carers had a human rights focus. Matching was based on a comprehensive assessment of both children's needs and of the carer's ability to meet those needs.

Origins Foster Care worked collaboratively with Tusla to ensure they received all the necessary information to help them make a decision that was in the best interests of the child. Children were given the opportunity to visit proposed foster care households prior to their placement. Where appropriate, children were consulted to get their view about the proposed move. The children were provided with a book to give them information about the foster care household. Relevant information about the children was also provided to the foster carer to allow them to make an informed decision about the match before accepting the placement.

Foster carers were selected based on their capacity to meet the assessed needs of children. Matching took account of current supports being provided to meet these needs and identified future provision required. Matching consideration reflected the

background and cultural heritage of children being placed and the foster carer's capacity to meet these needs. Matching meetings took place with relevant professionals where information was shared prior to the placement of children in foster care households.

Transition plans were implemented following completion of matching, plans were clear and outlined key tasks and responsible professionals to enable the smooth transition of children into their foster homes. Where required, additional support such as mentoring sessions for foster carers was explored and provided. Consideration was given to the distance between the foster care home and the social work office of the children being placed. The ability of the foster carer to facilitate family access was discussed as part of the matching process. The impact of placing an additional child with the foster carers was also considered in terms of their capacity to meet the assessed needs of the new child and that of the existing children in placement.

There was a good system of information sharing and collaborative work between the Child and Family Agency (TUSLA) social worker and the Origins Foster Care link workers. Information kept was generally up to date and reflected any changes in the circumstances of children and foster carers.

There was oversight arrangements in place, matching records were present on the foster carer's files that the inspectors reviewed, and these were signed off by the team leader. Senior management had good oversight of matching. Matching was discussed in team meetings and supervision with the team leader. There was also evidence of good oversight and management structures in place when children were placed in foster care households from out of state.

Foster carers were matched in line with their approval status. Approval status letters were on file that outlined the number of children foster carers were approved for. There were signed service specification agreements on file for cases that inspectors reviewed. This provided information about the level of service that the foster care service provided. From the data provided by Origins Foster Care prior to the inspection, it was noted that 14 children would remain in their foster care placement rather than returning home to their own families. The children were awaiting approval of long term placements, two of these had been submitted to the foster care committee for approval and discussion had taken place with relevant professionals to progress long term matches for case files that the inspectors reviewed. There were three approvals of long term placements in the 12 months prior to this inspection which provided stability for those children. One short-term match had taken place in the 12 months prior to this inspection.

One foster care household were in receipt of an enhanced payment to support a child with complex needs. This ensured that the child's needs were being appropriately met in the placement.

Overall the matching process was implemented to a high standard by the provider and children and foster carers were appropriately matched. Origins Foster Care had a comprehensive matching policy in place that was reviewed regularly and followed by staff. It was clear from interviews with staff that they understood the importance of finding the right match for children and carers to ensure that placements met the child's needs effectively. It was clear that children's best interests were at the core of decision making throughout the matching process. Foster carers supported children to maintain their links with their birth family and community. Therefore, Origins Foster Care were deemed to be compliant with this standard.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 10: Safeguarding and child protection

Children and young people in foster care are protected from abuse and neglect.

The provider had a child protection policy which set out how all employees and foster carers in Origins Foster Care work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in accordance with the statutory guidelines and standards. The policy identified one of the company directors as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and the second company director as the deputy DLP in accordance with *the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)*. Child protection and welfare concerns were reported in a timely and appropriate manner.

Origins Foster Care had a Child Safeguarding Statement in line with national policies, standards and legislation. The statement was reviewed in November 2022. It contained all required information and a comprehensive risk assessment identifying areas of risk and the list of procedures in place for managing these risks. The list of principles within the safeguarding statement included the service's commitment to upholding the rights of every child and young person who attends their service. This meant that the provider promoted children's right to safety and their right to protection.

Following the implementation of Tusla Child Abuse Substantiation Procedure (CASP) 2022 policy and the Tusla Interim Protocol for managing concerns and allegations of abuse or neglect against foster carers and section 36 (relative) foster carers (2017) being stood down, Origins Foster Care reviewed and updated their policies on child protection, management of serious concerns against foster carers and management

of allegations against foster carers. Training on the CASP policy had been provided to staff and foster carers.

Origins Foster Care had a comprehensive risk management framework in place. The administration staff maintained a child protection register of all allegations against foster carers, serious concerns, child protection welfare reports and missing children from care reports. The principal social workers had oversight of this tracker. There had been no allegations made against foster carers in the 12 months prior to the inspection. There was one serious concern recorded on the tracker which inspectors reviewed and found it was categorised correctly and received an appropriate response to ensure the safety and welfare of children. The serious concern was addressed in a timely manner and managed in line with policy. There was evidence of good communication and collaboration between Origins Foster Care staff and the children's social workers. The serious concern reviewed by inspectors was appropriately responded to and reported to Tulsa by Origins Foster Care. The provider implemented their procedure for managing serious concerns. The relevant foster care committee was notified about this serious concern and the outcome of the assessment.

The principal social worker informed inspectors of the challenges in regard to the stepping down of the Tusla Interim Protocol for managing concerns and allegations of abuse or neglect against foster carers and section 36 (relative) foster carers (2017). However, from the serious concern reviewed, inspectors found that the service continued to implement their own policies and procedures and managed the serious concern appropriately.

The directors maintained good oversight of all allegations and serious concerns on a tracker. Inspectors viewed regular discussions of significant events in management and directors meeting minutes.

Data provided to inspectors showed that there were no households who had placements exceeding the standards in the last 12 months. This meant that foster carers only cared for children whom they were approved to care for, prioritising children's right to safe care and protection.

There were five incidents of children placed with the service going missing from care in the previous twelve months. Inspectors reviewed a sample of these reports and found that the incidents were managed appropriately by the foster carers and the service adhering to their missing children policy and by following the national policy, HSE (Tusla) An Garda Síochána joint protocol Children Missing from Care (2012).

There were 49 significant event reports recorded on the tracker in the previous 12 months. Inspectors reviewed a sample of significant event reports and found that foster carers were clear on their responsibility to report any incidents. There was prompt follow up by the service when foster carers reported incidents. There were 17

child protection and welfare reports recorded on the tracker in the previous 12 months. Inspectors reviewed a sample of child protection and welfare notification reports and found that concerns were reported in a timely manner. However, from the files sampled and the child protection register reviewed, inspectors found that it was not clear when these reports were made jointly by the foster carers and the link worker. Inspectors were told by the principal social worker that the majority of the child protection and welfare reports were made jointly by the foster carers and the link workers. Therefore, an area that requires attention is for Origins Foster Care to review how joint reporting is recorded and reflected in their child protection policy.

There was good oversight of incidents at management level and there was effective communication with Tusla regarding any subsequent actions arising from incidents. It was clear that children's safety was a priority across the service and that foster carers were aware of their responsibility to inform the service of any significant event affecting the child. It was clear from file reviews and interviews and focus groups with foster carers that they were aware of their role as mandated persons.

There were good safeguarding practices in place for foster carers. Origins Foster Care had a comprehensive safe care policy and procedure in place. All children had a safe care plan which was completed at the beginning of the placement. Inspectors reviewed a sample of files and found, that there were safety plans in place for each child and they were updated following significant events.

Furthermore, as part of the provider's supporting and supervising foster carers policy and procedure, at least one visit to the foster care household per year was unannounced in order to ensure safeguarding of the child. This policy also stipulated that the link worker meets with the child in the foster home at least annually. Both the case files reviewed by inspectors and the interviews with foster carers and children confirmed that this was happening in practice.

There was a complex case review structure in place within Origins Foster Care whereby the management team, including both directors, met on at least a quarterly basis to provide oversight and higher level management regarding any cases identified as meeting the criteria for a complex case. Inspectors reviewed a sample of these meeting minutes and found in-depth discussions took place and a clear action plan was put in place for each case after each meeting. This forum gave both of the directors good oversight of issues coming up for children and foster carers.

The foster carers received the mandatory Children First (2017) training and the provider had systems in place in order to track when refresher training was required and took appropriate steps to ensure this was completed.

The provider had an effective system in place for updating An Garda Síochána (police) vetting for foster carers and other relevant persons every three years.

Inspectors reviewed the provider's tracker and foster carer files which showed that foster carers and relevant others had up-to-date Garda vetting.

The provider had clear and robust systems in place to promote the safety of children in all aspects of service provision. Origins Foster Care had a child protection policy in place that promoted the safety and welfare of children. Unannounced visits were carried out as per the provider's supervision of foster carers policy. Both staff and foster carers received the necessary training in relation to child protection. Any incidents such as child protection concerns or serious concerns were responded to and reported in a timely manner in line with Origins Foster Care policy. It is for these reasons that Origins Foster Care were deemed to be compliant with this standard.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 15: Supervision and support

Approved foster carers are supervised by a professionally qualified social worker. This person, known as the link worker, ensures that foster carers have access to the information, advice and professional support necessary to enable them to provide high quality care.

All foster carer households with Origins Foster Care had a link worker allocated to them who provided information, advice and support to the foster carer and their family. The fostering team comprised of five link workers and one social work team leader. The team provided support to foster carers across the country. From a review of foster carer's files and through focus groups with foster carers and link workers, it was clear that all link workers were in regular contact with the foster carers allocated to them. Foster carers were visited in line with the regulations. Link workers also met with birth children and the fostered children in the placement. Overall, feedback from foster carers through the focus group and interviews was very positive about the support they received from their link worker. External professionals also commented on the high quality of support and supervision provided to foster carers.

From reviews of case files and feedback from foster carers, it was clear that there was effective communication between link workers and foster carers. As part of their induction, foster carers were provided with a handbook containing information on all the policies and procedures. Policies and procedures such as, child protection, safe caring and allegations were explained to foster carers by the link workers. Foster carers told inspectors that they were updated when relevant changes were made to policies, for example, they had recent training on the CASP policy which meant they understood how this could impact them.

Children were provided with a booklet that contained information about the service, including how to make a complaint, and link workers met with them to explain the process. Both children and foster carers were also provided with information on independent advocacy services. The provider's information recording system had a foster carers section for foster carers to record information and updates about the child in placement. Inspectors saw that foster carers were provided with updates about service developments as well as upcoming events through emails.

Inspectors found clear and comprehensive evidence of formal supervision in all of the files that were sampled. The supervision records reviewed were in line with the provider's policy and procedures for support and supervision of foster carers. The supervision policy stated that a minimum of monthly supervision was to be provided to foster carers by link workers in the first three months in the case of a new placement. Following the first three months the fostering link worker visits to the home and formal supervision sessions are completed at least once every three months, with a minimum of four home visits and four formal supervision sessions taking place a year. From the sample of files reviewed by inspectors, supervision and home visits were in line with Origins Foster Care's policy.

A formal supervision template was used to record supervision visits. The template was comprehensive incorporating the needs of foster carers, the needs of their family and the needs of the children in their care. It was also part of the provider's policy that link workers meet with the children in placement at least annually to get their views and to give the child the opportunity to get to know them. The files reviewed by inspectors showed that this was happening in practice. The files reviewed by inspectors showed that good levels of support were provided to foster carers that addressed a variety of issues and challenges for foster carers and children.

A system of cross cover was in place for when link workers were not working. This was organised and overseen by the team leader and principal social worker. This ensured that families continued to receive support when their link worker was not at work.

A range of other supports were provided to foster carers including access to therapeutic staff to support them regarding the children placed with them. Link workers actively promoted and supported learning and development through a variety of training courses. As well as training in relation to safer caring, training was provided in areas such as trauma, attachment and reflective practice.

Regional foster carer groups were facilitated where foster carers could share their experiences and build up a support network. Origins Foster Care had recently taken on board feedback from foster carers in relation to wanting to have these groups without the presence of link workers. A peer mentor had recently started in the company and part of this new role was to facilitate these meetings and further

develop the foster carer support groups. In the past, link workers facilitated these groups and so would feed back issues to the management team, however, going forward this will be the role of the peer mentor.

Origins Foster Care operated an out-of-hours service to support foster carers to deal with emergencies that may arise outside of office hours and at weekends. Although the majority of foster carers who spoke to inspectors said they had not accessed this service, they were aware of it and knew how to avail of this support. Foster carers could also avail of respite as a means of supporting them and the child in placement.

Link workers met with birth children during routine home visits and birth children were invited to events put on by Origins Foster Care throughout the year. Link workers sought feedback from birth children. Some foster carers told inspectors that their birth children had commented on the high level of visits from the link workers. It was clear that the link workers developed good relationships with foster carers and the family as a whole.

All foster carers had a link worker and received regular formal supervision. Any actions arising from supervisions were followed up promptly. Additional supports were provided to foster carers when required. Support groups as well as an out-of-hours service were in place. The link workers and managers in the service ensured that foster carers had access to the information, advice and professional support necessary to enable them to provide high quality care to children. Link workers met with both birth children and the children placed with the foster carer to listen to their views. It is for these reasons that the provider was judged to be compliant with this standard.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 16: Training

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

Origins Foster Care had a clear and effective training and development policy in place for foster carers. There were opportunities for joint training for foster carers and link social workers. The learning and development policy placed value on active learning as part of the development of foster carers which promoted better outcomes for children placed in their care. For example, it detailed the training required at applicant phase, for newly approved foster carers, for carers who had transferred to the service and when refresher training was required.

Mandatory training was required to be completed prior to being approved as a foster carer. The policy also placed an emphasis on additional training specific to the needs of foster carers and of the children in their care.

All applicants undertook the foundation for fostering training course. The purpose of the training was to provide applicants with information on what fostering is, the profiles of children carers care for, an understanding of the care system in which foster carers operate and an understanding of the role of a foster carer. The training prepared applicants for fostering and provided them with opportunities to speak to experienced foster carers.

It was clear that learning and training were promoted within Origins Foster Care with staff being supported to participate and complete various training programs. All staff received training in children's participation in early 2023 and were putting this into practice to promote children's right to participate. All staff had completed specific therapeutic training which they then in turn rolled out to foster carers. In the 12 months prior to the inspection, there were 18 joint training events for link workers and foster carers. This meant that children placed in foster care were provided with a consistent approach to care which both the foster carers and the link workers were familiar with. Overall there was good attendance at trainings. Link workers encouraged and supported foster carers to attend training.

Ongoing training areas included; attachment and developmental trauma, child safeguarding, safe care, record keeping and understanding the protocols for responding when a child goes missing in care. Through foster carer's attendance at these trainings, the children's right to safety was promoted. Origins Foster Care provided training to foster carers on cultural diversity. This helped to promote children's right to have their culture respected.

Origins Foster Care had developed a training schedule for 2023 that responded to the needs of the foster carers and equipped them to provide safe and high quality care to children. The training calendar was based on a review of foster carer's learning and development plans, review of training evaluations conducted throughout 2022 and aimed to support the development of the provider's model of support.

The provider completed training evaluations after every training session. A member of the Origins Foster Care staff attended each training event as a means of evaluating the quality of training provided. All training completed was recorded in foster carer records. The provider maintained a register of training completed by foster carers which identified the training they had completed, and the modules that were outstanding. The service directors had oversight of the training required and delivered through the training register, monthly training meetings, team and management meetings.

Origins Foster Care had a foster carer learning and development policy in place which was aligned to the provider's business and service improvement plan 2021-2023. The policy identified the various training requirements at the different stages of development of foster carers. Origins Foster Care supported foster carers participation and made training accessible for them. Mandatory training was completed as required in addition to other training sessions to meet the individual needs of foster carers to best support them in their journey of fostering. It was clear that the training provided by Origins Foster Care aimed to meet the needs of foster carers to enable them to effectively meet the needs of the children in their care. Origins Foster Care was deemed to be compliant with this standard.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 18 : Effective Policies

Health boards³ have up-to-date effective policies and plans in place to promote the provision of high quality foster care for children and young people who require it.

Origins Foster Care had effective policies and procedures in place to promote the provision of a high-quality foster care service. The provider's policies, procedures and frameworks for the delivery of foster care services were aligned to relevant legislation, regulations and national standards.

The provider had a comprehensive business plan in place for 2023 which outlined objectives to improve the quality of the service. This was a continuation of their business plan for 2021-2023. Overall, Origins Foster Care had achieved the majority of their goals in the last 12 months. On-going reviews of the business plan were clear across a range of meetings including team meetings for front line workers and service development meetings. The management team ensured policies and procedures supported the delivery of safe, child-centred services. Regular team meetings ensured timely communication about changes in policy. Foster carers were also kept up to date and informed about relevant developments through regular contact and supervision with their link worker as well as through email updates.

Origins Foster Care had systems in place to review policies and procedures. The management team were responsible for updating policies. Policies were updated in a timely manner and there were review dates recorded. Policies and procedures in the service were underpinned by a human rights based approach. The provider had in place the following policies to ensure that children's rights were central to service

³ These services were provided by former health boards at the time the standards were produced in 2003. These services are now provided by the Child and Family Agency (Tusla).

provision; children's consultation policy, human rights and rights of the child policy. Multiple policies had recently been reviewed to ensure that they promoted child participation. For example, the significant event reporting policy was updated outlining that a section on the views of the child relating to significant events will be included on the significant event form from January 2023.

The escalation policy gave clear guidance to all staff on the types of issues that should be subject to escalation and on how and when escalation should proceed. Link workers and team leaders that inspectors spoke to were aware of the escalation policy and explained how team leaders and principal social workers escalate issues such as unallocated cases and delays in care plans being sent. Escalations were clear on the files sampled as well as recorded on an escalation tracker.

The provider had policies and procedures for managing representations and complaints made by children, their families and foster carers. The policies and procedures were provided to children, families and foster carers who were made aware of how to make a representation, complaint or provide feedback to the provider by the link workers. Information on complaints was accessible and explained verbally to all parties. It was clear from the focus groups with link workers and the interviews with team leaders that staff were knowledgeable about the complaints policy and procedure and that they supported foster carers and children to voice their opinions and give feedback about the service.

It was the responsibility of the management team to ensure adherence to Origins Foster Care's policies and procedures. All staff were required to familiarise themselves with the policies and adhere to them. Managers were satisfied that staff had a good understanding of policies, procedural and practice requirements. Frontline staff reported good governance in implementation of policies to ensure they were both responsive and appropriate. Social work practices were consistent with the policies and procedures, this meant that foster carers and children received an overall good quality and consistent service.

There was good practice in how Origins Foster Care involved foster carers in quality improvement relating to procedures in the service. For example, the provider reviewed the paperwork involved in the assessment process on foot of feedback from foster carers who informed Origins Foster Care that the process was too complicated. Following this review, Origins Foster Care streamlined the paperwork into a simpler format. Foster Carers were involved in the review process.

Children were provided with a forum to give their feedback through the children's participation days, consultation visits and participation plans. Children contributed to the development of the service's information booklet which helped children to understand their rights and how to get help when they need it. The child's right to information was valued and promoted with efforts made to produce a child-friendly

booklet. Children had recently given feedback on the booklet and on the new model of support being developed by the provider.

The provider recognised it's duties to children and families from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The service provided training to foster carers on cultural diversity. This indicated to inspectors that Origins Foster Care promoted anti-discriminatory practices in order to create a safe and inclusive environment for all foster carers and children. From the data provided to inspectors, five percent of foster care households were from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Origins Foster Care had up-to-date effective policies and procedures in place to promote the provision of high quality foster care for children. Policies and procedures were clear, accessible and child-centred. Policies and procedures were reviewed in light of changing needs and were in line with operational and strategic plans. It was clear that front line staff understood policies and procedures and implemented them fully in practice. Origins Foster Care implemented a comprehensive business plan in order to effectively improve service delivery. Origins Foster Care also pro-actively sought to work collaboratively with foster carers, children and external agencies to continuously improve service delivery. It is for these reasons that Origins Foster Care were deemed to be compliant with this standard.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 19 : Management and monitoring of foster care services

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

Origins Foster Care had strong governance arrangements and structures in place to ensure the delivery of a high quality service. The management team had implemented effective systems to manage and monitor the service and to ensure the service was safe and effective.

The service was well led and organised. The management team consisted of two directors who were also the principal social workers for fostering and for recruitment and assessment respectively. The management team also consisted of a team leader for fostering and a team leader for recruitment and assessment. There was good collaborative working between senior management and middle management who demonstrated a commitment to quality improvement and improved outcomes for children.

Origins Foster Care was adequately staffed and well resourced. The social work team leader for fostering had responsibility for two link workers and three sessional link workers. The other social work team leader had responsibility for a panel of sessional

social workers who completed assessments of foster carers. The provider also employed a recruitment and marketing co-ordinator. The provider had recently hired a peer mentor with the role of coordinating foster carer support groups. The service had six further staff members who provided business, administration and accounts support. The provider had contracted a compliance consultant, an external social work supervisor and a marketing consultant. The level of resources required was reviewed on an on-going basis by the service directors.

Overall, there was good management oversight of the support and supervision provided to foster carers and of case decisions. Team leaders signed off on documents such as safe care plans, significant event reports and matching forms. Staff supervision encompassed the case supervision process also. These records were comprehensive and gave an overview of the quality of work and support to children and foster carers.

Frontline staff were held to account by management. Supervision records reviewed by inspectors found that supervision happened on a regular basis, in line with policy and was of a good quality ensuring that managers had effective oversight of cases and staff received adequate support when needed. The staff team consisted of experienced and skilled staff. Frontline staff told inspectors that management including the company directors were very accessible and supportive. The team leader responsible for assessments provided assessing social workers with formal supervision and there was a minimum of three assessment meetings during the course of a full assessment.

Origins Foster Care had a policy and procedures in place to identify placements which were at risk of breakdown, and to ensure that all possible efforts were made to reduce the likelihood of this happening. Inspectors saw regular reviews and discussions of possible placement breakdowns across various meeting minutes. The provider convened placement disruption meetings when placements were at risk of breaking down. In the files sampled by inspectors, regular core group meetings were convened where placements were at risk of breaking down. The provider also convened placement disruption meetings following the breakdown of placements. Inspectors reviewed meeting minutes of one placement disruption meeting following the breakdown of a placement. It was clear that the service had reflected on the placement breakdown and put measures in place to strengthen their assessment process as a result of this.

The provider maintained a register of the panel of persons approved to act as foster carers in each county in order to comply with the Child Care (Placement of Children in Foster Care) Regulations 1995. It included a list of approved foster carers, their address, contact details, their approval details, and the date of their approval as well as other relevant information specific to each carer.

Records reviewed by inspectors showed that policies and procedures were effectively implemented by the provider. Origins Foster Care had a comprehensive business plan and service development plan in place for 2021-2023. The provider had put in place an updated business plan for 2023. This plan set out high level targets in relation to;

- Staffing levels
- Management and governance
- Financial investment
- Policy review
- Agency model of care
- Expected growth targets

Inspectors reviewed various meeting minutes, for example, team meetings, directors meetings and service development meetings which showed discussions and reviews of the business plan objectives and any actions that required follow up. Overall, Origins Foster Care were on track to meeting their objectives in 2023 thus far. For example, in consultation with foster carers and children the provider had developed a unique model of support that aims to enable foster carers to provide a high quality of care.

The provider had a risk register in place, which identified relevant risks for the service, this was well maintained, up to date and had appropriate measures in place to mitigate against the risks. The principal social workers had oversight of all significant events including; child protection and welfare notifications, allegations and serious concerns, by maintaining a tracker, which was reviewed on a monthly basis.

Origins Foster Care had effective quality assurance and monitoring systems in place. To ensure compliance with policies and standards, the provider completed regular internal and external audits. There was good managerial oversight of the various audits which had occurred throughout the year through regular audit feedback meetings. The team leaders were responsible for conducting regular internal audits within each other's assigned areas of management. The external compliance auditor completed audits every three months. Audits that took place in 2022 focused on areas such as; support and supervision of foster carers, transfers and foster carer reviews. Areas of good practice and areas for improvement were identified with recommendations made to improve the quality of the service. Learnings from these audits and review processes were shared across the staff team, and changes to systems were implemented as needed. One area for improvement identified through an audit was in relation to the development of a complex case review system. Origins Foster Care developed a complex case review policy which promoted effective review, planning and oversight of particular cases.

Origins Foster Care had clear and effective management and governance systems that enabled regular review of service provision and development. Management

actively monitored performance through service development meetings and case supervision. Regular management meetings took place which ensured that the directors and team leaders had a comprehensive overview of the service and oversight of all aspects of the service. These meetings monitored all significant event reports, complex cases, placements at risk of disruptions, recruitment processes and progress and assessments of foster carers.

Exit interviews were offered to all carers exiting the agency. Two exit interviews were conducted in the previous 12 months which inspectors reviewed. In both of these interviews it was clear that the foster carer's were satisfied with all aspects of the service provided to them by Origins Foster Care.

As previously mentioned in this report, Origins Foster Care was last audited by the ACIMS team in November 2021. The focus of this audit was on Origins Foster Care's management of serious concerns and allegations of abuse or neglect against foster carers in line with the Tusla Interim Protocol, 2017. The report outlined actions requiring follow up by the provider which were completed at the time. It was clear that serious concerns were managed appropriately during this inspection. Origins Foster Care reported to ACIMS on a quarterly basis. These reports contained quantitative information on the number of children in placement, number of complaints received from children, number of allegations by children against carers or members of carer's family and significant events.

The service directors met with Tusla service areas every six months. Minutes of these meetings reviewed by inspectors showed comprehensive discussion of placements, in particular complex cases and any additional supports needed. This showed that there was good collaborative working between Origins Foster Care and Tusla.

Origins Foster Care had entered into a service level agreement (SLA) with Tusla. During this inspection, inspectors reviewed the SLA in place between Tusla and the provider which specified the provision of a standard general foster care service. Origins Foster Care also had an agreement in place to provide a placement for a kinship arrangement with a United Kingdom (UK) based county council. The foster carers had been approved by the local foster care committee and were receiving full support from Origins Foster Care. The children in placement remained in the care of the UK based county council. Origins Foster Care had made Tusla aware of these children being placed with foster carers in this jurisdiction. There was good oversight of this case by the management team. There were regular internal meetings and meetings with the UK based social work team to maintain effective communication, review and planning of this case.

Link workers and managers demonstrated an openness to learning from feedback, complaints, inspection processes, internal reviews and placement breakdown meetings. The provider sought feedback from carers through an annual survey and

throughout the year for specific issues. Link workers followed up with foster carers if their feedback indicated that they were not happy with any aspect of the service. Foster carers told inspectors that the team leader and principal social worker contacted them to discuss issues also. It was clear that the provider tried to resolve any emerging issues with foster carers in an efficient and timely manner. The provider also sought feedback from Tusla social workers through an annual survey. Tusla social workers and other external professionals described to inspectors how Origins Foster Care was open to receiving feedback and working together to achieve positive outcomes for children.

Origins Foster Care strived to involve children in the development of the service. A children's consultation policy was in place and inspectors viewed records of child consultation visits taking place in the files reviewed. In addition, Origins Foster Care had launched a child participation strategy in 2023 which the service had begun to implement. Inspectors reviewed some child participation plans in the files sampled and found these to be of a good quality. The service also endeavoured to include the birth children of foster carers in service development. The birth children of foster carers were invited to a recent child participation day and their views were sought on the new model of support.

Origins Foster Care had effective governance and management systems in place. The provider had an SLA with Tusla and an agreement with a UK county council in place for the delivery of their service. Staff were aware of their responsibilities and carried out their roles effectively. Records pertaining to staff and foster carers were comprehensive and up to date. The risk management systems in place supported Origins Foster Care to provide a safe and effective service. The provider's operational and strategic plans were clear and effectively implemented. Human rights and children's rights were at the core of these plans. Origins Foster Care continuously planned to improve through service planning and quality improvement initiatives. Origins Foster Care pro-actively sought feedback from foster carers and children on their experience of the service and consulted with them on ways to make improvements. The provider had launched a child participation strategy in January 2023 and were working to ensure children's voices were heard in all aspects of service delivery. For these reasons Origins Foster Care was deemed to be compliant with this standard.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 21: Recruitment and retention of an appropriate range of foster carers

Health boards are actively involved in recruiting and retaining an appropriate range of foster carers to meet the diverse needs of the children and young people in their care.

Origins Foster Care had a pool of foster carers at various stages of experience in fostering. All foster carers were trained, skilled and located throughout Ireland. Origins Foster Care had clear structures in place for recruitment and retention. This aspect of the service was a key feature of the business plan for 2023 and a marketing and recruitment strategy for 2023 mapped out several objectives to further progress recruitment. The director and team leader with responsibility for recruitment acknowledged the current national challenges in recruiting foster carers which proved difficult to overcome in 2022. However, recruiting and retaining foster carers remained a top priority for the management and in the 12 months prior to the inspection the provider had recruited some new foster carers through the transfer process.

Origins Foster Care ran rolling recruitment campaigns throughout the previous 12 months which included both online and in person events. The provider hosted a high number of information meetings for prospective foster carers in the previous 12 months. Some foster carers were involved in recruitment campaigns and were available to talk to future applicants. Origins Foster Care aimed to meet all children's support needs and protect their rights as part of their recruitment strategy. For example, the provider endeavoured to keep children within or close to their own community. Additionally, children's right to have a safe and nurturing home that meets their needs was central to recruitment and retention strategies. There were responsive structures in place to ensure that enquiries were responded to in a timely manner and that people making enquiries were provided with all the necessary information. Inspectors reviewed a tracker which showed that all enquiries had been responded to within 23-48 hours.

In the 12 months prior to this inspection, Origins Foster Care had three new foster care households transfer to their service. Inspectors reviewed two of these files and it was clear that the provider followed their own policy in relation to transfers. Transfer screening visits were detailed and thorough and the provider consulted closely with other agencies before approving transfers. Origins Foster Care aimed to ensure that foster carers who were transferring from other agencies were skilled, motivated and the right fit for the service.

Origins Foster Care had a marketing and recruitment strategy in place for 2023 that took lesson from the campaigns in 2022. The provider was proactive and had engaged the services of a marketing consultant since December 2022 to support their ongoing recruitment of foster carers. Inspectors were told that this role was beneficial

to the service in attracting potential foster carers. Attracting foster carers from ethnic minority groups was part of the marketing and recruitment strategy for 2023. During the course of the inspection the provider had a meeting with Tusla's separated children's team to discuss how they could meet the needs of these children in the future.

The provider had retention initiatives in place. For example, they had recently had a participation day where they provided foster carers with the opportunity to reflect and promoted self-care. Origins Foster Care provided foster carers with gifts at Christmas and vouchers for self-care during the year. Foster carers voiced that they felt very much supported and valued by Origins Foster Care.

Origins Foster Care had recruitment and retention strategies in place that proved effective. The provider prioritised placing children in their local community and the placements met the children's needs. Foster carers were involved in some recruitment campaigns, which offered prospective foster carers a realistic view of what it was like to be a foster carer. Foster carers told inspectors that there were high levels of support, advice and information provided, which led to good retention of foster carers. Origins Foster Care had three new foster carer households join the service in the 12 months prior to the inspection. It was clear that prioritising the best interests of children was at the core of how the provider tried to find suitable foster carers and placements for children. It is for these reasons that Origins Foster Care was deemed to be compliant with this standard.

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 25: Representation and complaints

Health boards 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.

Origins Foster Care had a complaint policy which was clear and responsive to managing representations and complaints made by children, their families and foster carers. Origins Foster Care had a complaints form which outlined the appeals process. The policies and procedures were available to children and foster carers who were made aware of how to make a representation, complaint or provide feedback to the provider. Information was provided in written format as well as being provided verbally to all persons.

The complaints procedure was outlined in the foster carer's handbook and children's booklet. This booklet was child friendly and age appropriate. It also provided details of external agencies should a child wish to make a complaint about Origins Foster Care. The children's right to have their voices heard and their opinions valued was promoted and supported by the provider. Foster carer's membership to an external advocacy service was funded by the provider.

The service directors had oversight of all complaints. The principal social worker for fostering was the designated complaints officer with responsibility for investigating complaints. The complaint policy stipulated that where there was a conflict of interest, an external party would be identified to investigate the complaint. Complaints were recorded on the provider's online recording system and there was a dedicated complaints email address. A complaints register and potential complaints register were in place, however there were none recorded in the 12 months prior to the inspection. The provider reported that they had five compliments in the 12 months prior to the inspection. These compliments acknowledged areas of good practice and high quality service provision.

As there were no complaints in the 12 months prior to the inspection, inspectors reviewed feedback from foster carers that was highlighted in the foster carer feedback survey. The majority of the feedback received from this survey was positive. Inspectors saw that when foster carers expressed dissatisfaction through the feedback survey, it was promptly and adequately responded to by the link worker and in some cases the team leader or principal social workers.

Origins Foster Care had a complaint policy and procedures in place which were user friendly and accessible. Origins Foster Care had a complaints form which outlined the appeals process. Any issues that arose were dealt with in a timely and effective manner. Origins Foster Care have a culture of continual improvement and sought feedback from foster carers, children and other stakeholders to help them reflect, learn and implement changes. The child's right to have their voice heard and their opinions valued was promoted by Origins Foster Care. It is for these reasons that Origins Foster Care were deemed to be compliant with this standard.

Judgment: Compliant

Appendix 1:

National Standards for Foster Care (2003)
and

Child Care (Placement of Children in Foster Care) Regulations,⁴ 1995

Standard 8	Matching carers with children and young people
Regulations Part III, Article 7	Capacity of foster parents to meet the needs of child
Part III, Article 7 ⁵	Assessment of circumstances of the child
Standard 9	A safe and positive environment
Standard 10	Safeguarding and child protection
Standard 14(a)	Assessment and approval of Non-relative foster carers
Regulations Part III, Article 5	Assessment of foster parents
Part III, Article 9	Contract
Standard 14 (b)	Assessment and approval of Relative foster carers
Regulations Part III, Article 5	Assessment of relatives
Part III, Article 6	Emergency Placements
Part III, Article 9	Contract
Standard 15	Supervision and support
Standard 16	Training
Standard 17	Reviews of Foster carers
Standard 18	Effective policies
Regulation Part III, Article 5 (1)	Assessment of foster carers

⁴ Child Care (Placement of Children in Foster Care) Regulations, 1995

⁵ Child Care (Placement of Children with Relatives) Regulations, 1995

Standard 19	Management and monitoring of foster care services
Regulations Part IV, Article 12 Part IV, Article 17	Maintenance of register Supervision and visiting of children
Standard 20	Training and qualifications
Standard 21	Recruitment and retention of an appropriate range of foster carers
Standard 22	Special foster care
Standard 24	Placement of children through non-statutory agencies
Regulation Part VI, Article 24:	Arrangements with voluntary bodies and other persons
Standard 25	Representations and complaints