



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

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| Name of service provider: | Orchard Fostering Service |
| Type of inspection: | Private Foster Care Service |
| Date of inspection: | 28 – 30 March 2023 |
| Fieldwork ID: | MON_0039299 |
| Lead Inspector: | Sheila Hynes |
| Support Inspector(s): | Sue Talbot Rachel Kane Sharon Moore |

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 Orchard Fostering 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 Orchard Fostering and with foster carers. Inspectors observed practices and reviewed documentation such as foster carer's 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 managing director and director of operations of the company
 - the director of quality of the company
 - the principal social worker (PSW) and team leader
 - advocacy group representative for foster carers
- focus groups with:
 - four link workers
 - two foster carers
 - two team leaders
- observations of:
 - Quality committee meeting
- the review of:
 - policies and procedures, minutes of various meetings, staff supervision files, audits and service development plans
 - a sample of 12 children's and 18 foster carer's files
- conversations or visits with:
 - three foster carers
 - two social workers
 - two children

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.

Profile of the foster care service

The Service Provider

Orchard Fostering was established in 2008. It is an Irish owned non statutory foster care agency that works in partnership with Tusla to provide children and young people with a positive care experience. The head office is based in Dublin and Orchard Fostering provide foster care to children and young people in the Republic of Ireland. The main business of Orchard Fostering is to recruit, assess, train and support foster carers who can offer high quality placements for children referred by Tusla. They provide foster care and supported lodgings to a wide range of children and young people from the ages of 0-18 years, who have a variety of different needs. They provide 24 hour on call service for foster carers.

Data provided by Orchard Fostering prior to inspection showed that the service had 86 foster care households and, at the time of inspection, they provided foster care placements for 132 children. These foster care households were located in various geographical areas in the republic of Ireland.

Placements with Orchard Fostering 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 (FCC). 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.

Private foster care services are monitored by Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. OF was last audited by the Tusla Alternative Care Inspection and Monitoring Service (ACIMS) in June 2022 and the report was published in October 2022. The report found that Orchard Fostering had made good progress in addressing compliance deficits that were reported by HIQA from an inspection carried out in March 2021. The progress related to timelines of An Garda Síochána (police) vetting, completion of foster care reviews and key documentation for children in care files.

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 |
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| Standard 8 | Matching carers with children and young people | Substantially 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 |
|---------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 28 March 2023 | 09:00hrs to 17:00hrs | Sheila Hynes | Lead Inspector |
| 28 March 2023 | 09:00hrs to 17:00hrs | Sue Talbot | Support Inspector |
| 28 March 2023 | 09:00hrs to 17:00hrs | Rachel Kane | Support Inspector |
| 28 March 2023 | 09:00hrs to 17:00hrs | Sharon Moore | Support Inspector |
| 29 March 2023 | 09:00hrs to 17:00hrs | Sheila Hynes | Lead Inspector |
| 29 March 2023 | 09:00hrs to 17:00hrs | Sue Talbot | Support Inspector |
| 29 March 2023 | 09:00hrs to 17:15hrs | Rachel Kane | Support Inspector |
| 29 March 2023 | 09:00hrs to 17:30hrs | Sharon Moore | Support Inspector |
| 30 March 2023 | 09:00hrs to 15:30hrs | Sheila Hynes | Lead Inspector |
| 30 March 2023 | 09:00hrs to 15:00hrs | Sue Talbot | Support Inspector |
| 30 March 2023 | 09:00hrs to 15:30hrs | Rachel Kane | Support Inspector |

Children's experience of the foster care service

Children's experiences were established through speaking with a sample of children, foster carers, external advocates and professionals. The review of case files, complaints and feedback also provided evidence on their experience. Inspectors spoke with five foster carers and two children. From what inspectors were told and observed it was evident that children's rights and diversity was promoted and children were treated with dignity and respect.

Children's rights were promoted at every level of the service. Children were encouraged to express their views and if they were dissatisfied with any aspect of their care and support, a number of complaints process were open to them. Children received a welcome pack that provided them with details of support services. The pack also contained information of an advocacy service for children in care and how to make a complaint to Orchard Fostering and externally to Tusla or other relevant service. It contained two other booklets that were produced in consultation with children in foster care placements and birth children. Both booklets were aimed at helping children to feel supported and hopeful for a positive future. Some children had generously shared insights into their experience of foster care and answered questions that may arise for a child coming into foster care for the first time.

Children's best interests were central to decision making with regard to matching. Inspectors found this in records of the assessment and matching process where children's views were sought and explored. There was a whole family approach to risk assessment that considered the overall impact of a potential placement on the family, while being mindful not to increase risks for children in placement. A foster carer told inspectors that they 'felt Orchard was very good, I always felt they were there and would always encourage open discussion and exploration of risks. I trust them'.

Orchard Fostering provided other avenues to ensure children's views were heard. Link workers made efforts to regularly meet with children in foster placements and birth children. The link worker support visit record templates had been reviewed to incorporate all children's views. Children were encouraged to attend their child-in-care reviews. Inspectors found good practice with regard to supporting children and seeking their views prior to child-in-care reviews. Children's contact with their family, community and school were maintained and support was put in place by Orchard Fostering through the social care team as required.

Orchard Fostering had a forum where birth and foster care children expressed their views. Inspectors spoke with two children on this board who spoke positively about their experience of being on the board. They valued the support they received from the link worker facilitator, describing them as 'the perfect person'. Prior to joining the

board one young person felt that their voice was not heard and 'thought it would give me the opportunity to have my voice heard and to meet other children who shared my situation. It is fun and interesting'. They described different opportunities it has given them such as launching a new booklet every year and meeting other children in foster care. Another highlight was, 'we are able to recommend activities for foster children'. The children told inspectors that they were happy with the service they receive and said 'we don't have any complaints about Orchard'.

At the time of the inspection, the children's forum were preparing for the launch of a booklet on culture. The children's voice was central to the development of this book and they were supported by Orchard Fostering in developing this. This booklet was aimed to develop cultural awareness and ensure that children's culture was supported by each other, foster carers and other professionals. The booklet gave a breakdown of the diversity of children that Orchard Fostering supports. In addition, it gave details of cultural best practice and tips for foster carers to support children's culture. It was clear that children's diversity and identity was being supported and children played an active role in this process.

Orchard Fostering recognised the voice of birth children having a unique role in the foster care family. The service had formed a support group for birth children and the first meeting was scheduled to take place in April 2023. Birth child to help them understand what fostering might be like for them. They were invited to a play day with other children already fostering or about to start fostering.

Foster carers spoke highly with regards to the level of formal and informal supports. Foster carers told inspectors that there was good support from the link workers and a 24 hour on-call service. One foster carer told inspectors 'I am a great advocate for Orchard, they have been a great help and support for me from the word go. Anytime I phoned Orchard, they were there for me'. Another foster carer said 'we are very lucky with Orchard' and described receiving very good support from the day children were placed with them. They described good support from the 24 on-call service in dealing with children's complex behaviours and supporting children not in their country of origin. They reported that Orchard Fostering staff were helpful in advising on appropriate boundaries and in particular helping with children from other countries adapt to life in Ireland while supporting the children's culture.

Orchard Fostering had created a community of support for foster carers. The foster carers valued the opportunity to talk to other foster carers in support group meetings and share experiences about how they managed challenging incidents. Support groups were facilitated by a link worker and were held in different regions of the country. Training also gave foster carers opportunities to meet each other, have peer support and opportunities for group discussion. Foster carers complimented Orchard Fostering

training that was on offer. One foster carer said that there was 'lots of training available, a list provided of different subjects each month'.

External social workers told inspections that Orchard Fostering provided a high quality service and that communicated well. They found that children were generally matched well and good support provided to children and foster carers. With regards to placements that were facing challenges, they gave examples of how the service considered the views of the children and supported a placement to continue. They did not have any complaints about the service and have not received complaints from foster carers in the past twelve months. One external advocate stated that in the past twelve months "Orchard Fostering's own governance and relationship with foster carers has significantly improved". They had experienced a decline in the number of referrals to the service regarding concerns with Orchard fostering and foster carers reported positive experiences.

Summary of inspection findings

Placements with Orchard Fostering 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 FCC. 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 eight national standards.

The standards included matching carers with children and young people, safeguarding and child protection, supervision and support, training, effective policies, management and monitoring of foster care services, recruitment and retention of an appropriate range of foster carers and representations and complaints.

In HIQA inspection in March 2021 there were seven standards assessed. These were safeguarding and child protection, assessment and approval of foster carers, supervision and support, training, effective policies, review of foster carers and management and monitoring of foster care agency. The inspection found that the

service was compliant on five standards and moderate non-compliant on two standards.

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

- seven standards were compliant
- one standard were substantially compliant

The inspection found that Orchard Fostering had a number of areas of good practice and an area that required improvement. The areas of good practice were and safe guarding and child protection, supervision and support of foster carers, training, effective policies, management and monitoring of foster care service, recruitment and retention of foster carers and representations and complaints.

The service had clear and robust systems in place to promote the safety and welfare of children in all aspects of service provision. There was a clear system of managing safeguarding measures and ensuring safeguarding policies were followed. Child protection and welfare concerns were responded to and reported in a timely and appropriate manner. Both staff and foster carers received the necessary training to enable them to respond appropriately to any child protection concerns.

All foster carers in Orchards Fostering had a link worker. There were high levels of support provided to foster carers. There were clear records pertaining to supervision on file and all supervisions were taking place in line with policy. Foster carers who spoke with inspectors were complimentary of their experience of the service.

Orchard Fostering ensured foster carer participation in all training and made it accessible to them in person and online. Mandatory training was completed as required. Additional training sessions were provided to meet the individual needs of foster carers to provide high quality care to children. Inspectors found that the schedule of training for 2023 reflected the diverse needs and cultures of the children in foster care.

Orchard Fostering 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 reviewed in light of changing needs of foster carers, children and national policy. Orchard Fostering planned a comprehensive strategy for 2023 in order to effectively improve service delivery and outcomes. Inspectors found that the strategy was being implemented and actions achieved in line with projected dates.

Inspector found that the service had enhanced and created a number of internal systems and processes to improve the quality of the service delivered to children and foster carers. There were high levels of oversight and governance of the systems that gave pertinent data to management on the performance of the service. The communication systems in place ensured that all staff were fully aware of their responsibilities and there were systems in place to ensure staff were accountable for their practice. There were notable improvements to the quality of supervision records of staff and performance issues were being addressed.

The service had recruitment and retention strategies in place for foster carers. The recruitment and retention strategy for 2022 had been reviewed and analysed to ensure that there remained an appropriate number of high quality foster carers in the service. There was a marketing strategy in place for 2023 that took lesson from the campaigns in 2022. While foster carers declined to attend exit interviews, the service ensured that they received feedback from foster carers and made improvements were possible.

The area for improvement was in matching carers with children. Orchard Fostering had a matching policy and procedure in place that promoted a human rights based approach and the best interest of children was central to decision making. However, inspectors found from a review of records that the matching records required improvement with regard to detail and analysis. The matching tool did not sufficiently explore foster carers skills and knowledge in relation to children with additional or complex needs and also cultural and identity needs.

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.

Orchard Fostering had a matching policy and procedure in place that promoted a human rights based approach and the best interest of children was central to decision making. Their aim was to ensure children were matched with foster carers who had the capacity to meet their needs. There was good oversight of the families and children's placements ensuring that any changes or risks were identified and responded to in a timely manner. Inspectors found that that foster carers and children including birth children had a voice in the matching process. Inspectors found that in bridging and respite placements, children had an opportunity to visit foster carers home prior to placement. Foster carers informed inspectors that the matching policy and procedure was followed as per their approval by FCC. Foster carers were involved in decision making process with regard to accepting placements. However, inspectors found from a sample of records that the matching records required improvement with regard to detail and analysis.

Inspectors found that Orchard Fostering supported and promoted children's right to participate in the matching process, access to education and birth family. Their views were sought and impacted on placement decisions. Children's views were sought on an ongoing basis throughout their placement and this was recorded in the support visit records.

Orchard Fostering had a clear process in place for matching children with foster carers. It included a weekly referrals meeting, pre-placement meeting, and discussion of children's individual needs, likely duration of placement, contact with wider family and exploration of a suitable date for child to be placed. The pre-placement meeting included foster carers, the child's social worker and Orchard Fostering link worker. Foster carers were aware that they could decline a placement if they felt they were not best placed to meet the child's needs. Inspectors found that the matching records highlighted the importance of placing siblings together, continuity of school placements and therapeutic support. The meeting records reviewed previous foster care placement and issues that contributed to any placement breaking down.

Inspectors found from talking with foster carers, staff and review of files that most children and their foster carers were appropriately matched. The foster carers informed inspectors that they were receiving high quality support and found the support from link workers was helpful. Orchard Fostering ensured there was enhanced support to foster carers who were caring for children with high or complex needs. These enhanced placements benefited from additional support from Orchard Fostering team of social care workers, psycho-therapist and occupational therapist.

There was a matching tool in place that was required to be completed prior to placement agreements. Inspectors found improvements were required with regard to identifying gaps in skills and knowledge of foster carers and the support required to respond to these gaps. The matching records did not sufficiently explore foster carer skills and knowledge in relation to children with additional or complex needs and cultural and identity needs. Some of the improvements required were identified in an audit in 2022 and were been actively managed by Orchard Fostering management.

In the previous 12 months from the data provided by Orchard Fostering, there were 22 children awaiting approval of long term placements. Of these, there were six on hold, six were submitted to FCC and 10 were at the final stages of completion. There were 16 children approved for long term placements and four in special foster care placements. Inspectors found comprehensive reports were completed for long term matches and these were presented to FCC for approval.

Placements were reviewed and reassessed when circumstances changed. For example, when foster carers personal circumstances changed or children's needs changed, additional support arrangements were put in place. There was a weekly risk register review meeting of all foster families that analysed risk and responses of Orchard Fostering. This allowed for clear planning and support to foster carers and children or additional next steps to support or plan an ending of a placement.

Overall, Orchard Fostering was committed to providing placements for children that met their needs and ensured children were placed appropriately. There was also strong governance arrangements in place that responded to foster families and children. Where possible children spent time in the foster family home prior to placement. The importance of maintaining the child's links with their family and community was recorded in matching records. The views of children, foster carers and their birth children were sought and taken into consideration in the decision making process. The best interest of the children was central in the decision making process and foster carers made the final decision to accept a placement. However, inspectors found that the matching records required improvement with regard to detail and analysis of foster carer's skills set and matching with children with additional or complex needs. For these reasons the service was deemed to substantially compliant.

Judgment: Substantially compliant

Standard 10: Safeguarding and child protection

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

Orchard Fostering had a child protection and welfare policy which set out how all employees and foster carers work together to safeguard, protect and promote the welfare and rights of children in accordance with legislation, regulation, standards and Children First 2017.

The child protection and welfare policy identified that Orchard Fostering staff and foster carers were mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015. The staff and foster carers who spoke with inspectors understood their role and responsibilities as mandated person and their obligation to report abuse in line with Children First (2017). Foster carers had completed their children first training and received a handbook detailing information regarding mandated persons. In addition, a two day preparation training for foster carers provided relevant information about their role as mandated persons and introduced foster carers to the new Child Abuse Substantiation Procedure (CASP) and appeals process. Link workers supported and training helped to prepare foster carers for what to expect in these circumstances. A recently approved foster carer told inspectors that they had felt well-prepared as a result. Inspectors found that foster carers recording of incidents and risks to children was of a good standard.

Inspectors found that there were records of appropriate information sharing with foster carers regarding children prior to placement. Foster carers told inspectors that they received a good level of information that allowed them to make an informed decision to proceed with or decline a placement. Inspectors found safe care plans in each foster carer's file that was bespoke to the needs of children and foster carers. This included access to therapeutic support, respite care 24 hour on-call service and additional support from social care teams.

The child's social workers and Orchard Fostering link workers carried out joint visits and supervision meeting with the foster carers in line with the regulations and standards. Foster families had a minimum of one unannounced visit each year. A role was developed in early 2023 for a social worker dedicated to this safeguarding measure and tools were developed to record these visits. Inspectors found that the records of these visits were thorough with a high standard of recording.

There were three household outside of the standards regarding the number of unrelated children placed within a foster carer's home. Tusla was notified, and appropriate approval was sought with the relevant FCC. This continued to be monitored by the children's social worker and by Orchard Fostering.

Orchards Fostering have a protected disclosure/ whistleblowing policy in place that was reviewed in February 2023. It outlines the principles and process of raising a concern internally and externally. This policy was discussed with staff at team meetings and an agency day.

The Garda vetting arrangements were well-managed for new and established foster carers, other adults in the household and members of the foster carers own support network. There was clear process for tracking applications and renewal requests to the relevant adults. The tracker included process of escalations and to whom, ensuring clear management oversight. The Garda vetting policy was last reviewed in December 2022.

The service had developed a clear process for tracking and reviewing serious concerns in the absence of a Tusla-led process. The process included holding strategy discussions, risk assessments and professionals meetings with all relevant professionals and foster carers where appropriate. Inspectors found recent incidents indicated improved engagement and levels of involvement of Tusla's social workers in assessing whether concerns and allegations met the threshold for significant harm, including categorisation of abuse and next steps. There were indications of a strengthening of partnership responses to investigating safeguarding concerns, with jointly developed safety plans and agreements about key roles and accountabilities for informing and supporting foster carers and children. Inspectors found that the records were of a high standard with good oversight by PSW and senior management. The CASP assessment requires the allocation of an independent CASP social worker who works collaboratively with other relevant external agencies. Inspectors found that there were significant delays in progressing of allegations that met the threshold for CASP and external factors to Tusla contributed to this delay. These delay impacted negatively on the foster carers subject to the CASP process. Inspectors found that Orchard Fostering management escalated their concerns appropriately to Tusla CASP team and Tusla senior management.

Orchard Fostering managers were alert to the safeguarding risks to children at a number of levels including self-harm, mental health needs of children, risks of placement disruption, and missing from care incidents. These incidents were the subject of weekly review by managers with checks of the adequacy of controls and any additional supports required to support children and foster carers. Incidents of challenging behaviour were sensitively considered in the context of the levels of trauma children had previously experienced. Inspectors found incidents of missing from care were discussed with foster carers in link worker visits and resulted in review of the safe care plan and convening of professionals meetings when required.

The register of significant events and other reportable incidents was well-managed and categories of abuse or welfare concerns were clearly recorded. Regular checks

were made by managers to ensure Tusla was notified in a timely manner of all relevant incidents in line with Children First 2017. The Child Safeguarding Statement was reviewed and updated in February 2023. There was a comprehensive Child Safeguarding Statement which met the expected standards of practice set out by Tusla. A child protection and welfare tracker was maintained and reviewed on a monthly basis. This together with a management checklist ensured ongoing tracking of child protection and welfare concerns. This included requesting an initial strategy discussions with Tusla within three working days. Any drift and delay in such meetings taking place were escalated to Tusla by Orchard's managers. The relevant FCC's were notified of allegations.

The service had clear and robust systems in place to promote the safety, protection and welfare of children in all aspects of service provision. There was a clear system of managing safeguarding measures and ensuring safeguarding policies were followed. Child protection and welfare concerns were responded to and reported in a timely and appropriate manner. Both staff and foster carers received the necessary training to enable them to respond appropriately to any child protection concerns. For these reasons, Orchard Fostering was 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 the foster carers were allocated a link worker and regular contact was maintained. The role of the link worker and social worker for the child were outlined in the foster carer's handbook that was given to each foster carer. The inspectors found foster carers were provided with a good level of support and supervision and the service actively sought their feedback.

A foster carer's survey was conducted in 2022 and provided important feedback on foster carer's experience of the service. A sample of the findings were that 86% of foster carers had rated their link worker as good/excellent (from a 64% response rate) and 91% rated their interaction with their link worker as good/excellent. An action plan had been put in place in response to foster carers' feedback and additional efforts were made to follow up with foster carers who had not submitted a formal response to the survey. Improvements identified included strengthening of annual visits by senior managers and the appointment of a dedicated social worker to undertake unannounced visits.

Support and supervision visits were almost monthly and in line with policy. Inspectors found that a rationale was provided on file if a visit was cancelled or re-scheduled. When the allocated link worker was on leave another Orchards Fostering link worker was assigned to support the foster carer in their absence, providing continuity of supervision and support. Foster carers had a personal learning plan on file that was developed in conjunction with their link worker and detailed their learning goals and identified training needs. Inspectors found comprehensive case supervision records and a consistent approach to recording using a standard template. These records demonstrated good discussions on agreed actions from previous visit, challenges or needs of the children, as well as the needs of the foster carers including training and development needs. All children including birth children were being considered as part of the visit and link workers took opportunities to meet with children when they were home. This gave children to opportunity to express their views on their experience of living in a foster care home.

Link workers supported foster carers to prepare for child-in-care reviews and attended meetings with them. All foster carers were trained and well-supported in managing the child protection and absent management processes. There was a 24 hour on-call service provided that was available to all foster carers.

Orchard Fostering, Tusla and foster carers had a collaborative approach in the identification of needs and risk of a placement. Risk assessments were reviewed and updated to respond to the changing needs of the foster care household. The risk assessment identified additional support for foster carers and the children placed. These supports included support of social care workers, weekend support, additional link worker visits, respite, occupational therapist and psycho-therapist. Foster carers who spoke with inspectors highly praised the support and supervision they receive for the service.

Inspectors found that the service sought the view of children on their placement. There were good records of engagement with children regarding supports required for a successful placement that reflected their care plan. The views of children were sought on an ongoing basis and this was recorded in the support visit records.

There was a strong emphasis placed by Orchard Fostering on the role of the Foster Carer's board. The feedback received from the board in relation to policies and practice was received well by Orchard Fostering, resulting in improved service experience for foster carers and all children. For example, feedback was sought on changes in the observation reports to life story style of reporting on children's progress. This report would be given to a child at the end of their foster care placement. Additionally, it was clear that consultation was sought in relation to planning events and development of peer support groups throughout the country.

All foster carers in Orchard Fostering had a link worker. There were high levels of support provided to foster carers. There were clear records pertaining to supervision on file and all supervisions were taking place in line with policy. There were additional supports available to foster carers, such as 24 hour on-call service and social care team support. Link workers provided foster carers with information on potential placements and care planning needs of children placed with them. Foster carers were provided with appropriate training and were informed of changing policies and procedures on an ongoing basis. For these reasons this service was deemed 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.

Orchard Fostering 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. A training needs analysis was conducted for 2022 and this was informed by feedback received from foster carers. Mandatory training formed part of the standard annual training and this was well managed by the service.

Inspectors reviewed feedback received from foster care survey, training evaluation forms and from records on foster carer's files. Some of the training needs that emerged from the survey included managing challenging behaviour, therapeutic activities with children and child and adolescent mental health. The survey finding with regard to online and in person training found 79% of foster carers had a preference for online training and 62% had a preference for training delivered by Orchard Fostering. Also, 40% of foster carers would like to be involved in facilitating training. There was a high satisfaction with the training provided by Orchard Fostering of 93%. The survey informed the training plan for 2023 and it included the training needs identified by foster carers.

Link workers discussed training at almost all supervision visits and foster carers were encouraged and supported to attend. The value and the impact of training for foster carers could have been strengthened in some support visit records reviewed by inspectors. There were some records where foster carers discussed how they implemented the training they received on a day to day basis. Foster carers were asked for feedback after training and these evaluation forms informed the training needs analysis.

Orchard Fostering offered training to foster carers based on any changes to policies and procedures and joint training with staff and foster carers was facilitated. Furthermore, training was offered that responded to the changing demographic of children that ensured children's rights, culture and identity was supported and promoted through the care they received. Some of the training on offer for 2023 included an overview of the international protection system with a focus on unaccompanied minors and training on caring for unaccompanied minors and understanding trauma.

All training was tracked and there was clear oversight and escalation regarding all mandatory training. This enabled a prompt response to training due or over-due. Mandatory training was up-to -date on files and trackers reviewed by inspectors and a good selection of other relevant training was on offer by the service.

The foster carers that spoke with inspectors were aware of their requirement to attend training and were committed to attending. Some foster carers had become trainers and facilitated training to newly approved foster carers.

Training was externally commissioned when required for the wider foster carer group or for individual foster carers. For example, training for foster carers to help build their awareness and strategies for understanding and promoting their relationships with children and managing behavioural risks.

Orchard Fostering had a training strategy in place and aimed to ensure foster carer participation. They made training accessible to foster carers in person and online to support attendance. Mandatory training such as Children First was completed in line with policy. Additional training sessions was delivered to meet the individual needs of foster carers to provide high quality care to children. The training that was delivered reflected the training needs of the foster carers to deliver high quality care for children. Foster carers facilitated training and shared their experience of fostering with new foster carers. The training plan was developed through feedback from foster carers and the needs of children. It was for these reasons this service was deemed to be compliant with this standard

Judgment: Compliant

Standard 18 : Effective Policies

Health boards² 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.

Orchard Fostering had up-to-date policies and procedures in place to promote the provision of a high-quality foster care service. Orchard Fostering policies and procedures for the delivery of foster care services were aligned to relevant legislation, regulations and national standards. The service had a plan for the review and update of policies and procedures with review dates planned for the coming years.

The service had reviewed, updated and archived a high number of service policies and procedures in the past six months. These included complaints and feedback policy, foster carer support policy, foster carer exit interview policy, , risk management policy, incident management and notifications policy, referrals and matching policy, foster carer support policy, escalation policy, self-audit and whistleblowing policy. Also, caring for children from Ukrainian had been added to an existing safe care policy. The policies that were archived had been amalgamated into newly reviewed policies. All policies contained clear dates for future review and version history. In addition, management had developed and had oversight of a tracking system that accompanied the policy review programme.

The service ensured staff were aware of policies and procedure through a number of channels. For example, Orchard Fostering had held an agency day in early 2023 and was attended by all staff. Recent developments in policies and procedures formed part of the discussion of the day. This information sharing ensured that staff were aware and understood their responsibilities as set out in the new or revised policies and procedures. Inspectors found records of policies and procedures had been discussed in supervision and meetings across the service. Training and workshops were delivered throughout the year to staff and foster carers to ensure policies were adhered to.

Foster carers who spoke with inspectors had good knowledge of the service's policies and procedures and were informed of any changes or the development of new policies. Consultation regarding policies and procedures were largely through the foster carer's board. Additionally, inspectors found that feedback from foster carers through support visits resulted in policy and procedure change. For example, there was a change to how important events were acknowledged such as length of time providing foster care and birthdays. The foster carer's handbook gave foster carers

² 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).

key policy information. All foster carer's records provided good evidence of foster carers being regularly informed of key policies and updates to service policies and procedures.

Inspectors found that policies and procedures were implemented in practice by the service. For example, escalation policy was used to request care plans and absent management plans. From records reviewed by inspectors, the foster carers support policy was adhered by link workers and management of the service. Standard templates had been developed to assist with adherence to purpose of this policies.

Orchard Fostering had developed a comprehensive business plan that incorporated their strategy for 2023 setting out the key objectives of the service including the development of their quality management system, consultation and participation of children, support developments for foster carers, staff motivation and engagement, marketing activities, increase number of foster carers and update information technology infrastructure. Inspectors found that aspects of the strategy had been completed by the agreed time line. For example, there was successful recruitment to the role of unannounced visit worker, the children's board had developed a culture booklet for publication and the development of a support group for birth children.

The service ensured the children's voice was actively sought and that their rights were supported and promoted. A booklet had been developed with the help of children in the care of the service. The booklet clearly explained the process of making a complaint, expressing views, consultation on decision making and obligations of adults involved in children's care. The booklet included an explanation of children's rights that was age appropriate, easy to read and engaging through the use of children characters. The booklet identifies external agencies that can support children to ensure they receive high quality care in line with Orchard Fostering policies and producers. This was part of the welcome pack for children. Both the child's social worker and link worker explained the contents to the children.

A foundation was established by the service to give opportunities to foster children, birth children by funding activities, classes or items to improve quality of life. This group meets on a quarterly basis to review applications for support and consists of Orchard Fostering link worker, financial staff and foster carers. Priority was given to children's needs that require immediate support. The foundation was promoted through newsletters, information evening and link worker support visits. Inspectors found that examples of this support in records reviewed.

Orchard Fostering 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 reviewed in light of changing needs and updated accordingly. Orchard Fostering planned a comprehensive strategy for 2023 in order to effectively improve service delivery and outcomes.

Foster carers were consulted on policy development through the foster carer's board. There was a child friendly version of the policies and procedures and children were supported to understand them. It was for these reasons that Orchard Fostering 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.

Orchard Fostering had effective structures and governance arrangements in place for the management and monitoring of foster care services. The organisation structure showed clear lines of responsibility and accountability. The management team had implemented effective systems to manage and monitor the service and there were several layers of governance to ensure the service was safe and effective.

The service was well led and organised. The managing director (MD) had clear oversight of all aspects of the service and demonstrated commitment to the provision of a quality service. The director of operations (DOO), chief financial officer (CFO), PSW and director of HR (DOHR) had effective lines of communications and a schedule of meetings to ensure the service was effective. The senior management team was accountable to the group Board, group CEO, group CFO and group director of quality (DOQ), and communication structures were established and effective. Inspectors found that the management team was dynamic in its approach to growth, development, learned from issues raised in practice and strived to comply with national standards.

There were effective governance arrangements in place and areas of good practice. For example, there was an independent chair of the quality committee and quality and safety committee that provided good challenge and support that enabled open reflection of the service achievements and areas where further change and improvements were required. The service's quality improvement plan's priorities were reflected within the records of such meetings which had clear actions, persons responsible for implementation and timeframes.

Inspectors found from a review of quality committee minutes that discussions were effectively informed by weekly review of foster carers where risks were considered to be high as per risk management policy. The service had actively taken learning from significant events, for example altering its recording paperwork to strengthened

monitoring of the changing personal circumstances of foster carers. Emerging risks were identified with clear decision and action planning regarding same. There was clear recording of items open for action and the items that were actioned and closed.

The quality review committee met on a monthly basis and had a strong, risk management and improvement focus with standing agenda items. Within this there was a review of the risk register including analysis of levels of risk, effectiveness of controls and inclusion of new items where escalating concerns were identified. There was oversight of the internal audit schedule and the service had set clear benchmarks for its performance and rated its monthly audits as compliant (95% of compliance achieved), substantially compliant (85%-95%) or not compliant. Areas of practice deemed not compliant were subject to further review until senior managers were assured the expected standard of practice was consistently delivered. The committee analysed the service performance through review of key performance indicators (KPI) and trends which included outcomes for staff, children, foster carers and ongoing review of the impact of their quality systems. Additionally, there was a review of serious concerns, allegations, incidents, complaints and compliments through monitoring and oversight of trends and actions agreed. The committee oversaw the quality control of Orchards Fostering's policies and procedure.

The quality and safety committee met quarterly. Inspectors found from that Orchards Fostering senior management reported on developments from the quality committee and quality review committee. Actions from previous meetings were reviewed and actions for the next meeting were agreed. The service had a quality and safety subcommittee which strengthened the process of improving quality and safety.

The service had an audit schedule that was helping to embed a consistently high standard of practice. The PSW in consultation with team leaders updated a governance spreadsheet on a monthly basis which supported the auditing system. Audit findings were shared with Tusla. Management checks of case records had been effective in identifying improvements to practice. For example, the need for all children to be regularly seen during support visits and their views noted in support visit records and for all required notifications to be made to Tusla in a timely manner. Inspectors found gaps in records that were identified by internal audits. For example, there were gaps in relation to records of newly approved foster carers, some records were missing or had not been uploaded to the relevant folders. These gaps were addressed and improvements were made. The management continued to have oversight with regular audits scheduled.

Inspectors found that the service had a culture that was open and transparent. For example senior managers sought feedback and had responded openly to quality concerns raised by a few Tusla service areas. Orchard Fostering had strengthened

oversight of foster carer assessment and reviewed processes to strengthen the quality of analysis within report to FCC.

There were improvement made in 2022 to the supervision, support and learning for staff. Inspectors reviewed a sample of staff supervision records. Some but not all the records from early 2022 captured the essence of the discussion but required greater detail and follow up action. This issue had been addressed in the latter half of the year and there were clear accountability for practice performance, support requirements and action planning. Team leaders who spoke with inspectors had a clear understanding of service priorities and their individual and joint accountabilities. They were positive about the communication and supports they received from the management team. Furthermore, they spoke of robust risk management systems and trackers in place and described learnings that come from audits, feedback and complaints. Link workers spoke to inspectors about the supports they received that were formal and informal such as supervision, annual appraisals, monthly team meetings and accessibility of management support. They were very clear on their role and responsibilities in upholding the policies and procedures of the service.

The service was striving to be an employer of choice in a competitive employment market. The service has experienced some turnover of its link workers staff over the past 12 months (reported as 12%). The 2023 service improvement plan focused on strengthening staff retention to improve continuity of relationships and support to foster carer households. Strategies include protected caseload sizes, focus on frontline practitioner's mental and physical wellbeing, employee support programme and 'recognition programmes. The service had contingency plans in place for covering staff absences or exit. The risks associated with same were reviewed and monitored as part of the service risk register. In addition, succession planning provided opportunities for staff to develop skills and confidence in aspects of more senior roles.

The service had an information technology infrastructure in place that was used to support their case work and auditing function. However, due to the limits in the system to support managerial functions, it was planned for 2023 to transfer to another system that had greater capabilities.

Orchard were committed to providing children with high quality care that supported and promoted their rights at every level. The structures in place ensured that staff were accountable for their practice and delivery of support to children.

Orchard Fostering had had effective structures and governance arrangements in place for the management and monitoring of foster care services. The management team had implemented effective systems to manage and monitor the service and there were several layers of governance to ensure the service was safe and effective. The service had good systems in place for the management of risk, auditing and quality improvement. Staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities and were

held accountable for their practice. It was for these reasons that Orchard Fostering were 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.

Orchards Fostering were actively involved in recruiting and retaining an appropriate range of high quality foster carers to meet the diverse needs of the children and young people in their care. There were effective systems in place to oversee the management of these strategies and a review had taken place of their success or otherwise. Foster carers were trained and skilled in the care of children and additional training and support were given as required.

The service produced a report reflecting on the marketing campaign and assessment process in 2022. There was a detailed analyses of the trends detailing the success of the campaign and areas for growth. The service saw an increase of almost 26% in the number of enquiries from the previous year, with a conversion from enquiry to approval as a foster carer of 2%. The service analysed the strongest performing marketing sources and this informed their marketing strategy for 2023. There were responsive structures in place to ensure that enquiries were responded to and follow up was completed in a timely manner. There were marketing campaigns focused on particular counties to increase interest and this proved to be successful. An assessment social worker had been recruited to respond to the increase in interest from these areas and the increase in the catchment area.

There were seven marketing events in 2022, these included advertisement in national newspapers, appeals sent to both primary and secondary schools in some counties, information stand at a national event and information hubs. In addition, there were information sessions held throughout the year. The success of some of these marketing events had informed a focused plan for 2023 marketing campaign. Inspectors were told by some foster carers that they were involved in recruitment campaigns and spoke with potential foster carers.

The diversity of children's needs, culture and identity was an area the service endeavoured to meet. The marketing events tried to recruit foster carers from diverse backgrounds and skills. This aimed to meet all children's support needs and protect their rights. For example, the service endeavoured to keep children within their

community of origin and continue to attend their school. Additionally, children's right to have a safe and nurturing home that meet their needs was central to recruitment and retention strategies.

The foster carers who spoke with inspectors were positive about their experience of the service. The areas that were highlighted included feeling valued, receiving good support and supervision, 24 hour on-call service, therapeutic support, training, support groups and good matching. The foster carers said that their experience has ensured that they have continued to be foster carers. Mandatory training was up to date on files reviewed and a good selection of other relevant training was on offer by the service. Training was discussed at almost every supervision and carers were encouraged and supported to attend. Carers were asked for feedback after training and inspectors found that feedback was considered in the planning of future training.

Orchards Fostering had retention strategies in place which supported foster carers. Senior management had retention visits with families that had voiced a concern or a wish to leave the service. Inspectors found high quality records of these visits and it was clear that foster carers were listened to and responded to appropriately. Some of these issues were managed through the complaints system which ensured a timely response and pathway to appeal a decision. From a review of records, there was evidence of practice change that lead to greater foster carer satisfaction with the service.

The service promoted a culture of belonging and inclusion through a variety of social events. These events were in person and through the use of social media. It was clear that these events appealed to a variety of interest of foster families and children. Inspectors found that foster carers and children were consulted on their preference for social events. Important national dates such as 'Care Day' and 'World Culture Day' were celebrated with activities and events organised.

Exit interviews were offered to all foster carers leaving the service. However, in 2022 this offered was declined by all the foster carers and this choice was respected. Foster carers did engage in a less formal meeting with senior management were they reflected on their time with the service and made recommendations for changes. The reason foster carers choice to leave the service was documented well and there were clear lines of support offered and received by the foster carers. Inspectors found that foster carers views were actively sought and their autonomy was respected.

Orchards Fostering had recruitment and retention strategies in place for foster carers. The service had a detailed marketing strategy. The recruitment and retention strategy had been reviewed and analysed to ensure that there remained an appropriate number of high quality foster carers. The service endeavoured that children remained within their local community. The service had expanded the geographical area for

foster carer. It was for these reasons that Orchards Fostering were 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.

Orchard Fostering had policies and procedures in place which were clear and responsive to managing representations and complaints made by children, their families and foster carers. The policies and procedures were available to children, families and foster carers who were made aware of how to make a representation, complaint or provide feedback to the service. Information was provided in written format as well as being provided verbally to all parties.

In a drive for service improvement, Orchard Fostering made changes in its procedures to management complaints. In October 2022, the service had revised its complaints policy to include feedback from foster carers, children and other professionals. The value of complaints and feedback to drive service improvement and the provision of a quality service was clear in the revised policy. The procedure to manage complaints was broken down into three stages with clear lines of responsibility and timelines. The appeals process within the service was outlined with clear timelines. External review sources were also outlined in the policy. Inspectors viewed complaints that were made to the service and found all complaints were resolved with satisfaction at stage one and learning applied to the service. At stage one complaints were resolved through a meeting or discussion with the complainant within five working days. In addition, the service tracked compliments to acknowledge areas of good practice and high quality service provision.

The change in the management of complaints and feedback and the updated policy was communicated well to staff and foster carers. Training had been provided to staff at all levels to strengthen their identification and management of complaints. A flow chart of the procedure was produced as a visual aid. There was a system in place to review compliments and complaints on a weekly basis involving team leaders and the principle social worker. In addition, the service maintained a complaints and compliments tracker that helped ensure a strong focus on any themes or issues for further improvement. The compliments system, introduced in November 2022, provided an emerging picture of service effectiveness including staff motivation and

the quality of its services. This further demonstrated the services commitment to responding to all feedback and improving the quality of the service.

Children right to have their voices heard and their opinions valued was promoted and supported by the service. A booklet outlined to children the steps to make a complaint to Orchards Fostering complaints officer.

It detailed how to make a complaint to Tusla using 'Tell Us' complaints policy by the Tusla portal, email and telephone. The contact details for Ombudsman for Children are detailed in the booklet. There was a copy of the complaint form in the booklet and advised children of the support that was available from Orchard Fostering or Tusla in completing the form. The link workers for the foster families were making greater efforts to ensure that all children were included in some of the support visits. The children's forum gave children another avenue to express their views. Children were given information on external advocacy services in their welcome pack.

There was a focus on listening to foster carer's views and this was demonstrated in the records reviewed by inspectors. The foster carers who spoke with inspectors said that they knew how to make a complaint and who to complain to. They were aware of the complaints procedure for Orchards Fostering and for Tusla. The foster carer's board gave foster carers another avenue to voice their opinions and their views were actively sought by the service. The foster carers were encouraged and supported to become members a national organisation for foster carers that provide advocacy and receive complaints.

The service had good oversight and management of complaints and representations. There was a robust system where all complaints are tracked and dealt with in a timely manner resulting in swift and satisfactory resolutions. The policy and procedure for the management of complaints and feedback was communicated well with staff and foster carers. Children were aware of how to make complaint to Orchard Fostering and external agencies. Children were given written information on how to make a complaint and this was supported by link workers. Inspectors found the policy was been implemented well. The services demonstrated commitment to improving the quality of the service through complaints and feedback. It was for this reason that the service was deemed compliant with this standard.

Judgment: Compliant

Appendix 1:
National Standards for Foster Care (2003)
and
Child Care (Placement of Children in Foster Care) Regulations,³
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 ⁴ | 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 |

³ Child Care (Placement of Children in Foster Care) Regulations, 1995

⁴ Child Care (Placement of Children with Relatives) Regulations, 1995

| | |
|--|--|
| Regulation Part III, Article 5 (1) | Assessment of foster carers |
| 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 |

Compliance Plan for Orchard Fostering Service

OSV – 0004244

Inspection ID: MON_0039299

Date of inspection: 28-30 March 2023

Introduction and instruction

This document sets out the standards where it has been assessed that the provider is not compliant with the National Standards for Foster Care, 2003.

This document is divided into two sections:

Section 1 is the compliance plan. It outlines which standards the provider must take action on to comply. In this section the provider must consider the overall standard when responding and not just the individual non-compliances as listed in section 2.

Section 2 is the list of all standards where it has been assessed the provider is not compliant. Each standard is risk assessed as to the impact of the non-compliance on the safety, health and welfare of children using the service.

A finding of:

- **Substantially compliant** - A judgment of substantially compliant means that the provider has generally met the requirements of the standard but some action is required to be fully compliant. This finding will have a risk rating of yellow which is low risk.
- **Not compliant** - A judgment of not compliant means the provider has not complied with a standard and 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 has identified the date by which the provider must comply. Where the non-compliance does not pose a risk to the safety, health and welfare of children using the service it is risk rated orange (moderate risk) and the provider must take action *within a reasonable timeframe* to come into compliance.

Section 1

The provider is required to set out what action they have taken or intend to take to comply with the standard in order to bring the service back into compliance. The plan should be **SMART** in nature. **S**pecific to that standard, **M**easurable so that they can monitor progress, **A**chievable and **R**ealistic, and **T**ime bound. The response must consider the details and risk rating of each standard set out in section 2 when making the response. It is the provider's responsibility to ensure they implement the actions within the timeframe

Compliance plan provider's response:

| Standard Heading | Judgment |
|--|-------------------------|
| Standard 8: Matching carers with children and young people | Substantially compliant |
| <p>1) The Principal Social Worker, Support Team Leaders, Referral Manager and Quality Manager will revise Orchard Fostering's matching tool. The purpose of which is to ensure that the matching tool identifies any gaps in skills or knowledge of prospective foster carers in relation to children with additional/complex needs and cultural/identity needs. The matching tool will also identify any supports the prospective foster carer may need to respond to these gaps.</p> <p>Action by: PSW, SWTL's, Referrals Manager and Quality Manager 2023</p> <p>Timeline: June</p> | |

Section 2:

Standards to be complied with

The provider must consider the details and risk rating of the following standards when completing the compliance plan in section 1. Where a standard has been risk rated red (high risk) the inspector has set out the date by which the provider must comply. Where a standard has been risk rated yellow (low risk) or orange (moderate risk) the provider must include a date (DD Month YY) of when they will be compliant.

The registered provider has failed to comply with the following regulation(s).

| Standard | Regulatory requirement | Judgment | Risk rating | Date to be complied with |
|------------|---|---------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Standard 8 | 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. | Substantially | yellow | 30.06.2023 |

