

The Fostering Team Statement of Purpose



Compliant with The Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011 (3 1a-b) (2 a-d) (4 a -b) (5)

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1. Organisational Overview

1.1. Introduction

In order to comply with the Fostering Regulations 2011, each fostering agency is required to have a Statement of Purpose.

Paragraph (3) (1a) of the Fostering Regulations 2011 specifies that the Statement of Purpose should consist of a statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and paragraph (3) (1b) specifies a statement as to the services and facilities (including and parent and child arrangements) provided by the fostering service. The overall purpose of the statement is to describe what the fostering organisation sets out to do for both children and foster carers and the way in which care is provided. The Guide makes clear that the Statement of Purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement between the registered person and placing authority that a placement within this fostering organisation is the right one for the child and that the foster carers are able to respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. Furthermore, the statement is also directed at those responsible for supervising and supporting the fostering households in order that they have a clear basis for making management decisions.

1.2. Business Description

The Fostering Team deliver a nationwide catchment service to children who have faced adverse childhood experiences that have led to acute trauma and attachment needs. Our offering is underpinned using a therapeutic model which lead to informed solutions that are intended to support, contain and ultimately enhance the lives of children in our care.

The Fostering Team offer holistic support to children and young people by way of providing care (residential and fostering); therapy (direct and through staff teams) and education (through our own DfE and Estyn registered schools).

1.3. Organisation Vision & Values

The Fostering Team is an organisation with social purpose that seeks to transform the lives of children and young people who have experienced complex trauma and abuse. Our approach is grounded in the lived experience of the children and young people we support and by valuing their contribution. As experts by experience, we ensure the services they receive are personal to them.

The Fostering Team is part of Care 4 Children Residential Services Ltd. The organisation is built upon core values that form part everything we do. These core values are:

- We are driven by quality - We insist on the highest quality in everything we do, everything we create, the way we behave, and in the outcomes, we deliver.
- We are a safe choice - We are a financially secure, trustworthy partner, using our experience to create a safer place for every child in our care to grow.
- We are ambitious (for the children) - We put our children at the heart of everything we do, constantly striving to find ways to set them on the pathway to become the best they can be.
- We are innovators - We pride ourselves on our expertise and knowledge, and for leading the way in creating clinically led, therapeutic solutions that deliver results.
- We are persistent - We demonstrate a constant drive to find and deliver flexible solutions that exceed the needs of our customers and children.

Individualised care - Children and young people will receive care and support that is tailored to meet their specific needs.

Dignity and respect - The Fostering Team will ensure children and young people have privacy when needed and appropriate, are treated as equals, are given appropriate support to help them to be independent to fulfil their potential, and to be involved in their respective local communities.

Equality - The Fostering Team is an inclusive organisation that works hard to ensure that children and young people are safeguarded and have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. The Fostering Team is committed to anti-discriminatory practice. In so doing, The Fostering Team recognise the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children including the barriers they face.

Safety - The Fostering Team will ensure that appropriate safeguarding practice is in place so that children and young people do not receive unsafe care or treatment or be put at risk of any potential harm. A robust risk assessment strategy will be in place to minimise harm during activities and delivery of care and support. The Fostering Team will ensure children and staff have the appropriate knowledge, qualifications, experience, competence and skills to keep children and young people safe through appropriate learning and development opportunities.

Safeguarding from abuse - Children and young people have an absolute entitlement to receive care and support without suffering any form of abuse or improper care. This includes disproportionate restraint, unnecessary or inappropriate restrictions on freedom, bullying, neglect and remain free from abuse from their peers, carers and all professionals involved in their care.

Complaints - The Fostering Team will ensure that the systems in place for handling complaints

are followed by staff to make sure that all complaints are monitored and considered seriously and are responded to sensitively. Complaint investigations will be comprehensive and conducted in a timely manner including informing the complainant about the outcome of their complaint. Any areas for learning will be identified and discussed so that appropriate improvements can be actioned.

Whistleblowing - The Fostering Team have a robust whistleblowing policy and staff have a duty of care to raise and report concerns. This is known by all staff and is supported by staff training. The Fostering Team encourage the active reporting of any concerns raised by our staff, our children and young people and third parties and we ensure that all such concerns are addressed in a timely manner. Any learning from such reports will be embedded into continuing professional development and will inform professional practice.

Good governance - The Fostering Team has an Independent Safeguarding and Quality Improvement Committee (ISQIC) to ensure that a robust governance framework is in place, including scrutiny and oversight of internal and external service audits. Good governance will help to improve the delivery of services, as well as identify and minimise risk to children and young people's health, safety and wellbeing.

Legislative framework - The Fostering Team will ensure that it complies with regulatory standards, regulations and government guidance that underpins its services relating to children's homes, fostering service and schools in England and Wales.

Staffing - The Fostering Team will ensure that our staff comply with these essential standards through appropriate levels of support, culturally appropriate training and supervision that is reflective, empowering and insightful to effectively assist them in their role.

Fitness to practice - The Fostering Team will seek to recruit and retain staff that can evidence their competence, knowledge and professional practice to provide safe and appropriate care in line with their roles and responsibilities.

These core values and essential standards form part of our recruitment, on-boarding and retention strategy as we firmly believe that all staff employed by us should share our values and essential standards and hold each other accountable against these on a day-to-day basis from a practice perspective.

2. Quality of Care

2.1. Position Statement

We aim to create something special that takes into account ideas from staff, foster carers, children and stakeholders.

We value each other and celebrate what we can achieve together.

We strive to create a fostering community where children are central to the service.

We actively seek to incorporate practice that achieves the best outcomes for individuals.

Quality must never be compromised, but best value is an important factor.

We strive to resolve 97% and above of difficulties and pride ourselves in thinking outside of the box.

We stand for responsive, rather than reactive care giving and seek sensitive solutions.

Care provided to children who are not able to remain with their families should be provided by well matched, sensitive carers who are able to care for traumatised children effectively.

2.2. Ethos

The face of the agency / service are front line professionals who understand children and young people's services and fostering. Amalgamating all of this joint experience from a range of settings to create something with unique features.

Key Elements

- An approach that above all is child centred
- An understanding of placement needs i.e. gaps
- An understanding of the support required for foster carers
- Recognition of the need for both staff and foster carers to have on-going growth and development
- A recognition for when support is best offered and how
- Identification on this basis of gaps in the market in regard to weekend and evening support/provision
- The core team have listened to what foster carers have, over time, identified as openings in service, the core team are aware that people need to feel that they are valued; part of something and have a say in issues that affect them
- The core team have identified that services on the whole, once children are placed ultimately pool resources around giving carers time away from young people; it is clear that to create stable and appropriate placements there needs to be a creation of family unit cohesion and family investment, which includes children who are placed

2.3. Objectives

To provide a comprehensive staff/carer induction process

To sustain productive communication between staff, carers and management through regular staff meetings/carer group meetings and forums.

To ensure staff and carers are supervised on a regular basis, at a minimum of monthly, individually and also with access to group monthly supervision.

Personal Development Plans and Performance Appraisals will be carried out once a year for all staff.

To identify an overall development/training plan for the service.

To ensure all staff/carers have the opportunity to voice their individual and/or collective anxieties, concerns, suggestions etc. by whatever means appropriate e.g., group meetings, whistle blowing.

To ensure that staff/carers provide up to date reports to management and prepare professional reports for other agencies if/when required.

To ensure that staff/carers recognise, act upon, record, and report at the earliest stage, any signs of tensions or discrimination between either groups or individuals, e.g., bullying, isolation, comments relating to religious, cultural or dietary differences

To ensure that appropriate opportunity is available to attend training.

All staff to adhere to health and safety, fire regulations and all of the fostering service/team's policies and procedures.

To continually and consistently develop, review and evaluate quality of service provided. Any shortfalls in practice should be immediately identified and addressed.

Develop a Code of Practice which identifies best standards of day-to-day practice in accordance with Legislation and National Minimum Standards.

All policies and procedure will be actively promoted, reviewed and developed. All staff /carers will work in accordance with these and be expected to develop a clear understanding through induction processes and further training.

External and Internal monitoring of the agency.

To continually and consistently develop, review and evaluate quality of service provided. Any shortfalls in practice should be immediately identified and addressed.

2.4. Operational Constitution

The Fostering Team is an independent fostering organisation, a private limited company, registered under The Companies Act 1985 (Co. Number 08074287).

The Fostering Team operates from its head office based in the North West.

Operations Meetings take place monthly with senior staff who are responsible for the corporate governance of the organisation.

The responsibilities of the Operations Meetings are as listed below:

Oversight of The Fostering Team service provision and adherence to Legislation.

Overview of policy and procedure across fostering.

Approval and monitoring of the fostering business plan.

Approval and review of budgets and financial performance.

Legal compliance

Annual Business Plan

Strategic vision, direction and goals.

Culture, values, vision and mission.

Financial expenditure, management and performance.

Organisational structure and capacity to implement strategic direction.

Policies and Procedures.

Quality Assurance.

The Fostering Team also hold various meetings weekly with the Responsible Individual, Registered Manager and relevant support staff, to monitor the service and overall performance, to consider and coordinate the implementation of service developments, business and strategic issues and to benchmark best practice.

2.5. Premises

The Fostering Team currently has 1 registered office at Bridge House, 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury, Stockport. We are registered as a Fostering Provider under the Care Standards Act 2000 and Fostering Standards Regulations 2011 and are therefore properly constituted to provide foster care placements for children and young people 'Looked After' on behalf of Local Authorities. The office at Bredbury is the head office of Care4Children Residential Services Ltd and the office includes HR, Referral Team, Finance, General Office Administration, Clinical and the Managing Director.

2.6. Types of Placements

The Fostering Team offer placements for children and young people between the ages of 0 to 18 years of age with foster carers who will have had extensive experience of and/or training in working with difficult and complex behaviour, including the effects of trauma and abuse.

Carers are recruited and approved for the following registration categories:

Emergency Placements

The fostering team provide a 24-hour service. Most foster carers will be able to accept unplanned, emergency placements for individual children or sibling groups.

Short-Term Placements

Foster carers undertake task centred work with children/young people and their families in situations where the purpose of a placement and the intended duration, are explicit or can be estimated with relative accuracy.

Bridging Placements

A bridging placement generally forms part of a longer-term plan for a child or young person and can sometimes be two years in duration. In such placement's carers will work with children/young people and their families toward reunification, preparing children/young people for joining adoptive or long term/permanent fostering families, preparing children/young people for moving to a semi-independent or an independent living arrangement.

Respite Placements

All our foster carers are entitled to up to fourteen days respite where appropriate and in consultation with the local authority social worker. Approved foster carers, family members or friends fulfil this role. They are subject to back-up carer assessment in line with agency policy. We actively encourage fostering households to identify their own support networks to undertake and respite/ back-up care for the children they are caring for.

Long-Term Placements

A number of foster carers will have a definite interest in providing placements for children/young people or sibling groups on a long-term basis, usually until children reach leaving care age (up to 18 years of age).

Solo / Enhanced placements

Foster carers will look after children and young people who may make considerable demands upon them and upon the services of the agency. However, occasionally a child or young person has very specific and complex needs which require a higher level of support services and supervision. A child or young person may require constant individual attention and supervision that precludes the placement of any other fostered children/young people or prohibits the use of any remaining placement vacancies within the foster home.

With such placements there is higher level of support required from the social worker, support worker and education services. The carers that provide these placements are considered enhanced carers and are part of the therapeutic enhanced placement scheme we offer.

Parent and Child Placements

Foster carers will look after parent/s and their child/ren in order to undertake an assessment regarding parenting capacity. Carers will have experience within the childcare sector or fostering experience to undertake this specialist placement. The Fostering Team will provide dedicated and specialist parent and child training prior to any carer undertaking this role. With such placements a higher level of support and recording will be required by both the carer/s and their Supervising Social Worker to provide the necessary reports and details potentially for court and core groups.

Therapeutic Foster Care Placements

Our therapeutic model of foster care is a programme that includes clinically led training, supervision and support for foster families and the team who work with them. This is combined with a collection of clinically recognised child assessments to guide and inform a tailored programme of care for each child, where relevant.

Achieving Outcomes for Children

- At The Fostering Team, we have a strong commitment to creating sensitive environments for children and young people to develop and grow. Therefore, the recruitment and selection of appropriate carers is essential.
- By creating the appropriate environment fostering families are enabled to support children and young people in achieving positive outcomes.
- As part of the assessment process, we consider personality and environmental factors or as some may call it the X factor.
- The Skills to Foster course are created to challenge potential foster carers and allow them to understand and practice skills that will be necessary to provide the appropriate environment for children and young people that have suffered trauma. This is also carried through the Form F assessment process that looks at the family's attachments and resilience factors.
- Following approval, fostering families are allocated a named Supervising Social Worker who will supervise them individually. The service also provides opportunities to access carer forums, further training and peer support.
- Services we provide are based on the belief that by providing good matches and appropriate environments children will thrive. Carers are supported in developing their ability and skills through a range of techniques and methods with the first step being control and understanding of their own reactions and behaviours. Once this is achieved carers are able to respond rather than react.
- All of our foster carers are made aware that training and development underpin positive family experiences.
- The fostering team work closely with all identified individuals involved in the child's life and care plan. We operate a live and confidential storage system where information can be recorded appropriately.

Be Healthy

- Monthly supervisions and monthly group supervisions with foster carers that will check on and encourage carer's commitment to achieving a healthy lifestyle and diet for themselves and all children within the household.
- Quality Assurance and questionnaires that ensure children are undertaking healthy activities.
- Family activities that provide the opportunity for families to participate together.
- A range of training that looks at developing carer's understanding of attachment; first aid; child development and play skills, that all promote physical and emotional health.
- Daily logs written by foster carers that record elements of lifestyle and diet, this includes health appointments and leisure activities which children undertake.
- Monthly and Bi-monthly clinical supervisions take place for foster carers and supervising social workers.

Stay Safe

- 24-hour support line.
- Safe Caring policies: risk assessments and risk management plans, reviewed and updated regularly.
- Minimum of monthly visits by social workers.
- Training programmes for foster carers including Safeguarding and safe caring.
- Monthly support services.
- Unannounced visits.
- Annual health and safety checks.
- Diary logs kept by foster carers.
- Recording accidents; incidents; medication and areas that may be identified in risk management plans.
- Weekly core structure meetings to ensure that the management team has full oversight of the service.
- Saturday Slots/ activity days which enables staff to have an oversight of carers and children's interactions together.

Enjoy and Achieve

- Careful matching of children to foster families who are able to support a child in achieving their milestones and development.
- Supporting children in enjoying holidays; activities and festivals.
- Supporting a child in achieving academically and positive planning for the future.
- Encouraging children with hobbies and interests to actively discovering these or continue to support a child in undertaking these.
- Logs written by carers that track children's achievements and interests.
- Children's forums and activities.

Make a Positive Contribution

- The service actively seeks the opinions of children; young people and foster carers in how best to develop and improve services.
- The service encourages participation and forum membership and endeavours to involve young people in as many aspects as possible.
- Foster carers are actively encouraged to support young people in having a voice and in their preparation to become a member of the community as an adult.
- Logs written by foster carers incorporate aspects of a child's ability to contribute emotionally and socially.

Achieve Economic Well-being

- Foster carers are paid a sum which incorporates not only pocket money for a child but also an amount that should be saved.
- All young people placed with us should have a bank account and be encouraged to be involved in learning saving skills as well as age-appropriate budgeting, where this is not possible, either foster carers will keep the savings, or this will be supported by the organisation.
- Foster carers are trained in promoting independence skills and this is also promoted in our children's forum.
- Logs that foster carer's record on a daily basis include school attendance, pocket money levels and independence and budgeting skills.

Matching

- Placements of children and young people with foster carers will be made in accordance with the Fostering Service Regulations 2011 11 (a) (b) (i & ii).
- The Fostering Team is committed to appropriate matches that consider cultural; religious and personality of both carers and children and that incorporate the wishes and feelings of each individual child.
- All children placed are registered with appropriate health services i.e., dentist, opticians and GPs.
- The Fostering Team strives to involve children and foster carers in the development of services and reviewing the progress of children and young people placed.
- The Fostering Team have experience of handling out of hour's emergencies and problematic situations with the aim of resolving these effectively and quickly.

Placement of Children with Foster Carers

- Placements of children and young people with foster carers will be made in accordance with the Fostering Service Regulations 2011.
- Full details of a placement request will be taken, and identification of an appropriate match will be made by liaising with all appropriate authorities and ensuring the area of authority is informed if a placement is made.
- The selection of the most suitable foster carers to match the needs of a child/young person is followed where possible by a visit by the child/young person to the foster home, after which planned introductions are made. If the foster family selected has another foster child or children, the social worker(s) of the children are approached to give their comments on the proposed second placement.
- For planned placements matching will begin with requests for relevant Looked After Children (LAC) documentation and all necessary information on the child. The social worker will meet the foster carer, and this will be followed by a pre-placement planning meeting where plans for introductions are made.

Services for Children and Young People

- Pocket money
- Dedicated bedroom
- Savings account/ facility
- Clothing allowance
- Contact facilitated with birth family
- Opportunities to participate in forums
- Opportunities to participate in activities, outings and events

- Children's Guide (age appropriate)
- The fostering team documents translated into language of choice

Services for Foster Families

- Fortnightly payment of fee and maintenance allowance
- Individual monthly supervision
- Saturday sessions, with childcare/activities
- Opportunities to participate in Carers Forum
- 14 nights per year respite
- 24/7 out of hours on call service (all year round)
- Annual review
- Clothing allowance for child (incorporated in maintenance payment)
- Social events and activities
- Membership of Fostertalk
- Organisational Membership of Fostering Network
- Clinical Consultations

2.8. Arrangements for Supporting Cultural, Linguistic and the Religious Needs of Children

As part of the admissions process we will make enquiries about a child/young person's religious beliefs (if any) and discuss with them and their parents/practitioners the arrangements which need to be made to enable the child/young person to follow their religion or receive instruction appropriate to his/her particular persuasion.

We recognise the importance that religion plays in the life of some children/young people and will provide support to ensure that they are able to continue to practice their religion. We will also ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place to meet a child/young person's cultural and religious needs.

We believe that all religions are equal, and no attempt will be made to dissuade or discourage the child/young person from their beliefs. Equally children and young people are entitled to have no belief and to be free from any compulsion to observe any religion or attend church of any sort. No matter what their personal beliefs, foster carers will not seek to influence children they care for in relation to the issue or religious observance. We provide information on world religions and celebrate festivals and cultural events within our Saturday Slots and other activities and functions.

Places of worship in the local area:

- These are identified according to where the fostering household is located and the place of worship relevant to the individual child.

Equal opportunities will be achieved by:

- Providing a family environment giving all children the opportunity to address the dilemmas and taboos associated with the generational differences they will have experienced in the past.
- Providing culturally specific care and support for children in line with the Quality standards, which meets their cultural, religious, racial, gender and linguistic needs.
- Empowering children to have knowledge of, access to, and respect for their community.
- Supporting self-identity by recognising that a child/young person's ethnicity religion, culture, sexuality and language are crucial to his/her self-image and self-esteem.
- Ensuring that foster carers and staff training covers equality and diversity and this is

promoted throughout all practice.

2.9. Complaints

To make a complaint you can contact in the first instance the Registered Manager – Anthony Turner on 0161-483-4769 or email address Anthony.turner@thefosteringteam.co.uk. If you are not happy with the outcome you can contact the Responsible Individual – Louisa Iqbal on 0161-4769 or email address Louisa.iqbal@thefosteringteam.co.uk. If your complaint is not dealt with in line with our complaints process below then you can contact Ofsted on 0300 1234666 and quote our URN number: 1244533.

About our complaints process:

We are committed to ensuring that children and young people placed with our foster carers are provided with the highest quality of care, to enable them to feel safe and well looked after. We believe it is important that children and young people are able to talk in confidence as well as openly, with regard to their care and be able to complain if they are unhappy about anything whilst living with foster carers. It is important also that others who have an interest in a child /young person's welfare - parents, friends, advocates, others have an opportunity to make comments or complaints about any aspect of the child /young person's care.

The Agency has a complaints policy (in which all staff and carers receive training) provided to each young person on their arrival as part of the children's guide and which both the carer and Supervising Social Worker will explain at an early stage of their stay. All children / young people are provided with a Children's Guide that explains this in an age-appropriate way (provided in a language of choice and age related).

Within the fostering service and in our team, we have a positive attitude to complaints and see them as an opportunity to improve the quality of care we provide for children and young people. All complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly in line with our policy. The child /young person, or the person making a complaint on his/her behalf, is kept informed on the progress of the investigation throughout.

Children /young people are reassured that they are free to complain at any time about anything without fear of repercussions.

Children and young people will have access to an advocate if they choose and they are informed of their right to access the placing authority's complaints procedure and to contact Ofsted if they wish. When placed children and young people are provided with a Children's Guide, that provides them with an email and telephone number to directly access the fostering team. The guide also contains other numbers including Childline, Ofsted and advocacy services local to them.

All complaints are recorded and regularly reviewed to ensure proper implementation of the policy and to address any general issues or concerns which emerge.

2.10. Access to our Child Protection and Behavior Management Policies

If you wish to access our policies in these areas you can do so by requesting a copy from the Registered Manager Anthony.turner@thefosteringteam.co.uk or alternatively contact our head office to receive copies in the post, or via email. Our Head Office contact telephone number is 0161-483-4769. This is a local rate number, charged at your normal local rate.

3. Views, Wishes and Feelings

3.1. Participation and Consultation

At The Fostering Team, we actively promote the involvement of children and their fostering families in the ongoing development and running of the organisation. Not only do we accept the principle of the children's involvement, but it can be seen in practice through a variety of participation and consultation activities within and outside of the home environment.

All care planning processes at The Fostering Team are child centered; from admission children and young people have a placement plan, where appropriate we actively encourage children to participate in this so as to incorporate their wishes and feelings from the outset. Consultation also takes place with children before we formulate other plans such as safe caring policies, risk management plans.

Our role is to assist children and young people to deal successfully with significant changes and challenges; develop positive relationships and display positive behaviour. With foster carers as role models, young people learn to behave in a non-discriminative manner, they are encouraged to understand the diversity of cultures and beliefs that exist within the fostering home as well as local and wider communities.

In terms of participating in their care, children/ young people work closely with foster carers, staff and where appropriate clinicians on their care plan and are encouraged to discuss what they want for themselves for both the short- and long-term future. They discuss how they think they can reach these goals and what they feel they need to do in order to achieve this.

Objectives

1. Give due consideration to the child/young person's wishes and feelings, having regard to their understanding in relation to decision making
2. To ensure full participation of both child/young person and parents in the care planning process
3. To encourage full participation in children and young people's meetings
4. Involve children in monthly supervisions
5. Ensure children are seen during unannounced visits to the fostering home
6. Encourage children to participate in providing feedback to foster carers' annual reviews
7. To take into consideration, and actively provide for religious and cultural differences
8. Encourage and support children/young people to identify and follow appropriate activities and interests within the community
9. To give the children and young person continuous feedback on their progress. To give praise at every opportunity no matter how small the achievement
10. To ensure that positive encouragement is always given, particularly if, and when, the child/young person is facing difficulties
11. To help children and young people develop into positive members of the community, cultivating intrinsic boundaries and values with the help of outside agencies.

3.2. Anti-Discriminatory Practice Policy (*children and families*)

At The Fostering Team, we strive to ensure that all children receive the same benefits as others in all aspects of life. Any discrimination towards children, young people or adults will be challenged. All staff and foster carers are trained (and participate in regular refresher training) in equality and diversity.

Similarly, we ensure that all foster carers and staff are treated as individuals by providing provision to ensure that everybody has fair access to equal opportunities.

Children and young people will also be encouraged to develop an understanding of their individual roots and culture to support their own identity. We also carry out individual work with children and young people through children's forums to help them gain knowledge of discriminatory factors and to develop their sense of self.

Diversity is celebrated at The Fostering Team and children and young people will be actively encouraged to participate in activities that celebrate differences in people.

3.3. Children's Rights

Our principles of practice endorse the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We believe that all children and young people are equally entitled to have their needs met and to be free from abuse and exploitation. Each child will have their rights as a child looked after explained to them by both their foster carer and the supervising social worker in consultation with the local authority social worker to ensure that these are being consistently met. There will be regular meetings between practitioners and children and young people where the issue of children's rights will be addressed to ensure that they feel that they are being consulted, listened to and treated equally and fairly.

4. Education

4.1. Management of Education

At The Fostering Team, we recognise that all children have the right to education. We also realise the significance of education in a young person's life and its potential to enrich, empower and inspire. We regard qualifications as currency for life and recognise that without them an individual's choice is severely limited. In short, education is a high priority to us.

Every child in our care will be treated as an individual and, as such, his/ her educational needs will be assessed accordingly. They will be supported at their personal education plan (PEP) meetings and lac reviews which discuss and review their education, achievement and attainment as well as setting realistic targets with action plans on how these will be supported. For children that do not have an education placement, we will actively support the foster carer in directing others to enable this provision to be accessed as soon as possible.

4.2. Education Support (outside school hours)

In order to provide our children and young people with the correct support around their holistic educational needs, the foster carers are encouraged and supported to ensure that education continues outside of school hours by providing extra-curricular activities, including activities and sports, joining clubs, attending educational trips as well as promoting fitness and health through activities each individual child is interested in.

All children and young people are provided with a space whereby they can undertake study or homework. They will have supervised access to a laptop/ computer to enhance their study as well as being provided with additional books and resources to assist them with their studies.

5. Enjoyment and Achievement

5.1. Enjoyment and Achievement

The Fostering Team is designed to incorporate weekends within the service provision. This will provide forums and activities for children whilst carers are able to learn; share experiences (peer support) and incorporate training skills. Involving both children and foster carers in development; training; forums and activities, Saturday slots are described by our children and carers as an energised environment that actively seeks ideas from carers and children to grow.

Our Saturday Slot provision meets on a bi- monthly basis on a Saturday. This incorporates children's activities, forums and workshops as well as organising activities and trips out collectively as a whole group of foster carers, children and staff. This also incorporates extra safeguarding checks ensuring children and carers well- being and promoting team ethos and sense of community.

Day trips are often planned for school holidays as well as during religious and festive celebrations, this ensures we celebrate a diverse range of religious celebrations together, expanding the knowledge and embracing the culture and traditions for all.

6. Health

6.1 Health Care Needs

It is important that children and young people's health needs are met. We work in partnership with a range of stakeholders to ensure that all identified health and welfare needs are met including the necessary health resources being made available. We seek health related information at both referral and placement planning stage to allow us to implement a robust plan.

Each young person has a Placement Plan which incorporates Health in line with the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 15 - (1) (2) (a-d)

- is a registered patient with a general medical practitioner who provides primary medical services under Part 4 of the National Health Service Act 2006,
- has access to such medical, dental, nursing, psychological and psychiatric advice, treatment and other services as the child may require,
- is provided with such individual support, aids and equipment which the child may require as a result of any particular health needs or disability the child may have, and
- is provided with guidance, support and advice on health, personal care and health promotion issues appropriate to the child's needs and wishes.

Prescribed, non- prescribed medication and all treatments will be administered in line with the written policy and guidelines for foster carers which includes instructions on statutory notifications to Ofsted where applicable. In some circumstances where children and young people are diagnosed with medical conditions i.e. asthma, ADHD (controlled medication) protocols will be added to their care plans and specialist practitioner support will be sourced for both the child/young person where applicable.

We promote and maintain a healthy diet which includes fruit and vegetables daily. We encourage children and young people to participate in physical exercise by using local facilities of swimming baths, parks and climbing walls.

All foster carers receive training in First Aid, the administration of medication and the treatment of minor accidents or illnesses.

6.2. Therapeutic Care

At The Fostering Team, we have access to the organisation's clinical team. This includes psychotherapists who undertake bespoke and non-bespoke pieces of work with foster carers and where appropriate children and young people placed with them. The Clinical team also provide training to staff and foster carer's as well as reflective practice sessions.

The clinician alongside the supervising social workers are responsible for the completion of a range of assessments throughout the duration of a placement (where assessed as appropriate) as well as supporting the foster carers in the delivery of clinical input and training.

Our approach is well-grounded, based on proven research into childhood trauma that has been conducted by leading experts around the world. Our integrative approach to health and wellbeing remains at the core of our therapeutic model to ensure we always look beyond the behaviour to see the child and alongside this support all members of our fostering families to ensure our approach is inclusive and considerate of all.

All supervising social workers can access clinical support to ensure the focus remains on children and young people's progress and improving outcomes as well as to ensure they are supported with reflective practice. We use evidence-based practice and outcomes trackers to monitor progress over time.

Our "*Wellbeing for Life*" fostering therapeutic manual is a tool to support foster carers as a reference guide throughout a child's placement. The aim of the manual is to support foster carers to understand a child's behaviour and how this relates to their lived experiences in order to build up successful approaches to support in the long-term management of a child's behaviour and to support all children to achieve to their fullest potential.

As an organisation we do support young people who step-down into a fostering placement from a residential provision. Once children move into our step-down therapeutic fostering placements, they and their foster carers are supported by the clinical team to ensure continued containment within a fostering household. Within a fostering household, children deemed complex or placed on a step-down therapeutic fostering placement will have outcome measures that will track the child's experiences, these will help to map their progress over time. These will provide oversight of reflective progress and the positive work everyone is doing, and also highlight areas for development and improvement which will assist with ongoing care planning.

The measures to be used consist of the ACEs tools as well as Strengths and Difficulties (SDQ) questionnaires.

7. Positive Relationships

7.1. Contact

Contact with family and friends, where deemed appropriate for a child is initially discussed at the referral stage and then formally agreed at the placement planning meeting. Contact arrangements may change over the course of a child's placement, as such we encourage regular contact meetings as well as contact arrangements being discussed at children's reviews.

The Fostering Team support supervised contact as agreed by the child's placing authority and

ensure foster carers facilitate this by transporting a child to and from contact and where deemed appropriate may supervise contact between children and birth family members.

8. Protection of Children

8.1. Behaviour Support and Management

The Fostering Team are vested in ensuring all children have individualised care. We always strive to look at the reasons for why a child may be presenting in a sensitive manner, this is embedded in our foster carers from the onset of their approval and is discussed with them throughout their career. Training for foster carers is specific to supporting children to learn to manage their behaviours, to ensure they are supported to share their own wishes and feelings, to make informed choices regarding their care planning.

From the outset of us delivering Skills to Foster Training through to Behaviour Management Training, monthly supervisions, children and carer forums and our work with our clinical partners we place significant emphasis on looking beyond the behaviours to see the child. This enables children to build their own resilience and coping mechanisms and understand acceptable behaviours.

8.2. Physical Intervention

The Fostering Team have a 'No Restraint Policy'. When physical interventions are employed, they should only be used as a last resort when it is absolutely necessary to prevent serious harm to people or property and by foster carers who are **fully trained** and **certificated** in physical intervention techniques approved by The Fostering Team, in line with the BILD Code of Practice 2006. The use of physical intervention is an act of care not punishment. All carers have the right to guidance; support and training to enable them to manage children with challenging behaviour safely and effectively.

All incidents of physical intervention will be recorded in the child's daily log and reported into the agency at the earliest opportunity. The Registered Manager closely monitors this area of practice to ensure the decision to apply physical intervention was appropriate after exhausting all other interventions. The effectiveness of the hold is monitored, and appropriate learning is shared.

Physical interventions are also monitored through Schedule 6 and Schedule 7 reporting, weekly welfare reporting and key performance indicators.

8.3. The Fostering Team's Approach to Safeguarding

The Fostering Team approach to safeguarding is underpinned by: The Fostering Services Regulations (2011)

Regulation 12 Arrangements for the protection of children;

Regulation 17 Support, training and information for foster parents;

National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (2011) 4.1:

"Children's safety and welfare is promoted in all fostering placements. Children are protected from abuse and other forms of significant harm (e.g. sexual or labour exploitation)."

We strive to endorse a culture of protection ensuring rigorous policies and practice are in place and promoted throughout both the fostering households and the staff team. It is our primary responsibility to ensure children and young people are safe when they are in our care. We achieve this by ensuring safe and effective leadership, having detailed policies in place and implementing effective training.

We provide safeguarding training in induction to all staff members as well as in our Skills to Foster Training to applicants being assessed as foster carers. All staff; foster carers and children are aware of our whistle blowing policy. Team meetings; supervisions and clinical reflective supervisions are key opportunities to reflect on safeguarding processes; identify patterns of trends; consider triggers and control measures and to identify areas of concern.

At The Fostering Team, our staff team hold the on-call/ out of hours 24/7, this is overseen by the Registered Manager/ Head of Service who is management back-up on-call ensuring foster carers and children are able to make contact with a known person within the staff team at any point. This ensures higher levels of safeguarding and reporting of this so as foster carers can seek guidance at any given time.

The Registered Manager is the Designated Safeguarding Children's Office (DSO)- Anthony Turner on 0161-483-4769.

8.4. The Fostering Team's Approach to Missing from Care

The Fostering Team have a Missing Child Policy which is underpinned by Fostering Services Regulations 2011, Regulation 13 Behaviour management and absence from the foster carer's home;

Schedule 7 Notifications;

National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011, Standard 5 Children Missing from Care. This policy works alongside the policies of the local and placing authorities, the police and is in line with Government Guidance: Children who run away or go missing from home or care.

The areas covered within individual risk management plans include:

- The risk of harm
- Any medical conditions the child may have
- Their emotional well-being
- Previously assessed levels of vulnerability including any known associates
- Previous patterns of behaviour including criminality, drug/alcohol misuse

The Fostering Team will provide care to placed children in a manner that minimizes the likelihood of them going missing by trying to help them to feel safe and secure to remain in their placement. Foster carers will work with children and young people to educate them about the risks of going missing and they will be helped to identify other solutions than running away, as well as informing them of the help that is available to them in these circumstances.

Foster carers will be familiar with the Runaway and Missing from Home Protocol for the LSCB area in which they live. The Fostering Team is committed to working within the parameters of these protocols.

As part of the referral, placement and ongoing planning process, consideration must be given to the risk of the child becoming absent/missing. If there is a risk, a plan must be drawn up to reduce or prevent it including The Fostering Team Risk Management policy.

On a day-to-day basis, foster carers should be alert to signs or indications that a child may be likely to 'run away' or become missing. If foster carers suspect that this may happen, they should take any actions already agreed with the Supervising Social Worker, Support Worker and Local Authority Social Worker, or do what they reasonably and safely can, to reduce or prevent the child

from leaving. If the risk increases, they should contact the Supervising Social Worker/OOH Social Worker or Registered Manager for advice.

If there is a serious risk e.g. the child is behaving in a violent manner or threatening to damage property, the foster carer should contact the Police, then contact the Supervising Social Worker and Registered Manager at the first opportunity. Foster carers will not use restraint to prevent a child or young person from going missing unless it is necessary to prevent injury to the child or others or serious damage to property, in this situation they are to consider physical intervention.

Where a child remains missing, the Police and social worker must be consulted, and a Schedule 7 notification completed. This is counter viewed by the Registered Manager and is monitored daily across the Fostering Senior Management Group including the Responsible Individual. When notifying or consulting the Police and social worker an explanation should be provided of the circumstances leading to the absence and that there is a high-level of concern about the child - as well as an explanation of those concerns. All notifications and consultations must be recorded according to The Fostering Team's practice, policy and guidance.

Where a child goes missing for long periods of time or very regularly (three times), a strategy meeting will be convened to decide what action should be taken to help and protect the child. This will be reported to Ofsted via Schedule 7 notification.

8.5. Our Approach to Bullying

Bullying is identified as the willful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else, putting them under stress. Bullying can take place in several ways including; race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and can take many forms.

The Fostering Team's Anti-Bullying Policy details procedural guidance on countering bullying, however, we acknowledge that bullying may need to be dealt with as a safeguarding issue. At The Fostering Team we deem bullying to be unacceptable in any form. As such, we are all dedicated to creating awareness of this via supervisions, training, forums with both children and foster carers.

9. Leadership and Management

9.1. Name and Work Address of Registered Provider, Responsible Individual & Service Manager

Contact Details:

The Responsible Individual is: Louisa Iqbal
The Registered Manager is: Anthony Turner

The Registered Providers Address is:
1 Stuart Road
Bredbury
Stockport
SK6 2SR

9.2. Staffing Structure and Qualifications

Responsible Individual – Louisa Iqbal

Louisa is the co-founder of The Fostering Team. She has been a qualified social worker for 19 years with experience in the child and family sector which included Child Protection and Children in Need. She has previous experience within the sector of Safeguarding in Education, Residential Childcare and Children with Disabilities, as well as Vulnerable Adults. Louisa has completed her Practice Teaching/Practice Educator Course with The University of Manchester and has also completed the NVQ Level 5 in Strategic & Operational Management. Louisa is a Safeguarding Governor at a local primary school and has held this position for 9 years now.

Louisa retains an active interest in promoting the value of children within the service and encourages continued development of staff.

Louisa, for nine years, worked within child protection teams within local authorities thus gaining experience in court work and statutory services. She is the Designated Safeguarding Officer for The Fostering Team – Fostering Team, having completed the NSPPC training. Previously, Louisa practiced as a Senior Social Worker within a large IFA, developing support groups, training and workshops for foster carers before moving into a Practice Manager role. Louisa also has been pivotal in offering student placements in her role as Practice Educator. Louisa has a particular interest in facilitating growth and development of foster carers from a very child centred approach linked to her child protection roots. She has a clear understanding of the value of quality family-based experiences for children and young people, leading to an ability to create positive personal relationships for children and young people in their adult lives. Louisa remains passionate about fostering and the potential to provide positive changes to children and young people's lives.

Louisa is also one of the Agency Decision Maker's for The Fostering Team.

Registered Manager – Anthony Turner

Anthony started in Social Care in January 1993. Anthony qualified as a Social Worker in December 2003. Since qualifying Anthony has achieved other social work and various management qualifications as per OFSTED requirements. Anthony is registered with Social Work England.

Anthony has worked in various social work environments such as residential child and adult care, a local authority initial social work response team and further experienced working in a long term residential social work team as a senior residential social worker.

Anthony has worked in the independent sector since 2004. Anthony has held various management and senior positions with other Independent Fostering Agencies and has good knowledge of the associated fostering regulations and standards that underpin good practice.

Anthony is passionate about developing foster carer's training and development, which ensures that the best possible outcomes for children and young people in foster care are achieved. Anthony has a clear understanding of delivering a highly supportive fostering service to foster carers and children and young people placed in their care.

In previous roles Anthony has been the designated Safeguarding Lead for Children and Young People, which has given Anthony the knowledge regarding dealing with potentially difficult situations in a sensitive and timely manner and where appropriate following the necessary procedures.

Quality Assurance Manager – Helen Dwyer

Helen holds a BA (Hons) Applied Social Studies, formal qualifications in Social Work and is also qualified as a Teacher in Further Education.

Helen has a wide range of experience, previously working as a Lecturer at a sixth form college with 16+ including A Level Students and Adult return to Education Learners. Helen Taught Social Sciences.

Helen gained her MA Social Work in 2008 and has worked in several Independent Fostering Agencies as well as the Adult Mental Health sector. Helen started as a Supervising Social Worker for a large independent fostering agency and worked with a variety of carers and children when in this role; within the same agency Helen progressed to Senior Practitioner and oversaw Recruitment and Assessment of foster carers. This included taking the lead in Quality Assurance and supervising staff members. Helen attends specialist fostering forums and has taken a lead role for the agency within this.

Helen has led a variety of training courses for foster carers and is a Skills to Foster Trainer; she has also undertaken staff training.

Helen has held the role of Senior Supervising Social Worker with The Fostering Team since 2016 before commencing her role in quality assurance.

Helen is responsible for the quality assurance and sign off for all reports that are to be presented to our independent review and fostering panels.

Senior Supervising Social Worker – Ruby Bamber Fisher

Ruby holds formal qualifications in social work gaining her degree in 2015. Ruby has a range of experience, previously working with groups such as young people and looked after children within her varied practice placements. Ruby completed her final social work placement within the team and subsequently was offered a position on a permanent basis in 2016.

Since becoming qualified as a social worker, Ruby has undertaken a Supervising Social Worker role and Independent work as a Form F Assessor and has now progressed to a Senior role. She has recently completed the Child Focused Systemic Practice Course enabling her to support therapeutic fostering placements.

Ruby leads the Consultation Groups with Young People and supports in delivering training with the “The Skills to Foster” course. Ruby has also taken more of a lead role in mentoring her colleagues as well as with therapeutic fostering placements.

Ruby’s area of interest lies in engaging children and young people plus mentoring colleagues with their daily practice. Ruby enjoys the challenge of helping others to make positive changes and is child centred in her approach.

Senior Supervising Social Worker - Katie Fletcher

Katie holds formal qualifications in B.A.(Hons) in Sociology and Cultural Studies and also has her Post Graduate Diploma in social work in 2010.

Katie has a wide range of experience across service user groups including mental health, residential work with children and fostering since 2010. Katie completed her final social work placement within a fostering team and subsequently was offered a position on a permanent basis in 2010.

Since becoming qualified as a social worker Katie has undertaken a Supervising Social Worker role and Independent work as a Form F Assessor. She has covered all aspects of the fostering role including recruitment, assessment, supervising carers and placement making.

Katie’s area of interest lies in engaging children and young people plus recruitment of fostering households and positive placement matching. Katie enjoys the challenge of helping others to make positive changes and is child centred in her approach.

Senior Supervising Social Worker – Kayleigh Woodbridge

Kayleigh is an experienced social worker having previously worked in a statutory setting within a duty team. Kayleigh has experience of completing holistic assessments, child in need and section 47 investigations. She has experience of chairing child in need meetings and building effective working relationships with families, enabling partnership working. Kayleigh has experience of working with children in the care system and this has also supported her to work with foster carers in varied capacities. Kayleigh has a broad range of knowledge and experience within social work practice which are invaluable skills to bring to the role of supervising social worker. She has a keen interest in ensuring children and families are safe whilst supporting the continued development and resilience of children in the care system.

Supervising Social Worker – Alexandra Herd

Since leaving high school, I had always hoped to work with children, young people and their families. My journey towards this started in college where I studied Health and Social Care and as part of my college course, I undertook a work placement as volunteer support worker where I worked closely with families, empowering them to achieve good outcomes in their lives. I then went on to study at Manchester Metropolitan University where I have recently been awarded a First Class Honours degree in Social Work. Prior to commencing in my full-time social work role with The Fostering Team, as part of my course, I completed a social work placement with the Agency which I thoroughly enjoyed. The placement gave me a unique insight into children and family services and how foster carers play an

integral part in achieving positive outcomes with Looked After Children. I am passionate about supporting foster carers with their roles and responsibilities in caring for some of the most vulnerable children and young people.

Supervising Social Worker – Nicki Rowan

I have recently joined The Fostering Team from a Child Protection team in a Local Authority. My previous role has given me experience in all aspects of a child's journey through Social Care working from first referral all the way through to a child becoming looked after, remaining involved until they are 18. I have experience of completing holistic assessments using a variety of methods to communicate and engage both children, parents, and wider family members. My passion is building relationships and working alongside people, working in a restorative way which was instilled in my practice from my previous employment with the Local Authority. I have particularly enjoyed working with Foster Carers and the children they care for which is why I chose to work for an Independent Fostering Agency. My skill in relationship building is integral to my everyday practice and this helps to promote best outcomes for children when everyone works together.

Supervising Social Worker - Rebecca Woods

Rebecca has recently completed her BA Honours Degree in Social Work. She has previously undertaken her final year placement within a large fostering organisation holding her own complex caseload and successfully delivering high quality support and supervision for foster carers to ensure the stability of placements and nurturing relationships for both children and fostering families.

Rebecca is a confident advocate for children to ensure their individualised needs are being met in order to achieve to their fullest potential. Rebecca has a clear child-centered approach to ensure a child's or young person's wishes and feelings are being heard.

Office Manager – Christine Hadfield

Christine has experience of over 15 years within the fostering sector and has undertaken specific Panel training, as well as relevant fostering training, safeguarding advanced training, HR and administration work within his role.

Christine previously was involved in running a business and retains a specific interest in working with foster carers. She was raised within a fostering household and continues to offer support to her foster brothers and sisters.

Christine has a flair for organising fostering events and enjoys meeting carers and children. Her role involves compliance management and panel minute taking alongside managing the office across the organisation. Christine has a key function in supporting the registered manager.

Carer Liaison Officer – Lisaan Khawaja

Lisaan has held administration and marketing roles previously that have been linked to mental health and well as the care system. Lisaan has joined The Fostering Team to support in the ongoing recruitment of foster carers. Lisaan is particularly interested in supporting applicants throughout the process of their assessment journey so as to ensure this is as smooth as possible. Lisaan also assists with administration functions as well as supporting foster carers in accessing training and ensuring they are compliant with their training. Lisaan also enjoys supporting The

Fostering Team with social media.

Lisaan supports with organising of events and activities for our fostering families and particularly enjoys this aspect of her role.

9.3. Management and Supervision Arrangement

The Fostering Team align with the company procedure practice with regard to supervision in that:

All contracted employees commence their employment with a 6-month probationary period with a review at 3 months. This process is designed to provide high levels of support to practitioners enabling them to succeed and clear objectives to be set for career development.

In order to comply with the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 staff will receive supervision on a regular basis and we advise this to be at least monthly. New supervising social workers are supervised on a fortnightly basis for three months, following a successful probation this will then be reduced to monthly supervisions. supervising social workers are supervised by either senior supervising social workers or the registered manager. All staff have monthly clinical supervisions with our clinical psychologist. Any individual that delivers supervision will have received the appropriate training.

Supervisions take place in a confidential and calm environment that allow each participant to be actively involved in. Should a situation demand the need, virtual supervision may be undertaken to ensure both regulatory compliance and to ensure a staff members well-being is supported. This will be by use of Microsoft Teams with all staff members having access to guidance on using Microsoft Teams and have access to our IT department that can assist with this where required. Any staff member having a virtual supervision will be supported by their line manager. The last supervision form will be referred to visually, throughout the supervision and once the supervision form is completed this will be sent to the staff member via email within 24 hours.

There is a clear expectation in regard to all attendees uniting in the virtual supervision from a quiet, secure and separate space that will ensure no interruptions in order to assure confidentiality throughout the duration of the supervision.

All records of supervisions are stored securely on our Charms Database.

All staff have an annual appraisal that is informed via the usage of 360-degree feedback from a range of stakeholders that they are involved with. Personal development plans are formulated at this time.

9.4. Induction and Training

The Fostering Team ensure all new staff members take part in the wider company induction as well as fostering induction. This forms part of the 6-month probationary period and is supported through fortnightly supervisions prior to moving to monthly supervisions. Induction involves attending Skills to Foster Training, observing fostering panel, shadowing colleagues and undertaking both online and face to face training in line with the ongoing learning and development pathway plan during the course of their employment.

9.5. Quality Assurance & Training

The Fostering Team will adhere to the The Fostering Team Quality Assurance policy and Essential Standards. The approach undertaken ensures consistency in how we scrutinize and gauge our self-regulation process. All supervising social workers have access to in-house training as well as outsourced training specific to their role and areas of future identified development.

10. Recruitment, Approval, Training and Review

10.1. Recruitment & Approval of Foster Carers

Stage 1

Initial enquiry by interested person/s.

Stage 2

If at that stage it is identified that the enquirer does not wish to proceed, or the interested person/s do not meet the criteria then the enquiry will be closed.

Stage 3

1. If the interested person/s meet the criteria, then an initial home visit will be booked.
2. Once completed a home visit report will be compiled.
3. If the interested person/s wish to proceed and are deemed to be potential carers, they will be asked to fill out an application form and also will be advised of the necessary checks to be carried out. Agreement to this is then sought in writing. These checks are undertaken with: Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Department of Health and Local Authority amongst personal and professional references.

(Those interested person/s who fail to meet the criteria will be advised verbally and in writing.)

4. At this point the interested person/s become applicants and at Stage 1 of the assessment process.
5. The applicants will be asked to provide the names and addresses of six referees and will be required to have a medical, the results of which will be made available to the Agency Medical Officer. The applicants will then be invited onto the next "Skills to Foster" course.
6. DBS checks are carried out on the applicant(s) and all household members over the age of 16 years. Similarly, any identified back-up carers who have substantive contact with the looked after child(ren) will also need a DBS check.
7. The prospective carers attend the "Skills to Foster" course. If after this training the applicant/s feel that fostering is not for them then they need go no further and all paperwork will be filed. If the fostering team are not satisfied that applicant/s meet the criteria to continue, the applicant/s will be advised on this in writing and all paperwork will be filed.
8. At completion of Stage 1 and satisfactory outcome the applicants move into Stage 2 (although Stage 1 and 2 may be undertaken concurrently due to time checks take)
9. Those applicant/s who meet the criteria and wish to proceed will be allocated an Assessing Social Worker who will undertake a Form F assessment. This is a complex and at times intrusive assessment, unpicking applicant's life history, health, education,

relationships, experiences and includes all household members. The assessment also examines the applicant/s belief systems and personal values. In particular looking for evidence of an ability to provide an appropriate environment, personal attachment styles, ability to empathise and understanding of the expectations of fostering, ability to seek appropriate support and impact they may have on children and young people.

If at the end of the assessment the applicant/s feel that they do not wish to proceed, all of the paperwork will be filed.

If during the assessment some information comes to light, which would preclude the applicant/s from fostering then they would be advised of this immediately and the assessment will end. At this stage in the process the applicants have access to the IRM (Independent Review Mechanism). A short report is compiled by the assessing social worker and is presented to the fostering Panel containing the reasoning for the ending of the assessment (see Stage 1 and 2 Form F Assessment and Complaints Policy).

10. On the successful completion of all training, formal checks and assessment process, the applicant/s will be presented to the Fostering Panel for approval. The Panel will have before them the Form F Assessment document, which they will have considered before the meeting.

The Panel may wish to ask questions of the applicant/s. All applicant/s are required to attend the Panel.

11. The Panel will make a recommendation regarding approval. If they recommend approval, they will ask for the Agency Decision Maker at the fostering team to endorse the approval. Following this the applicant/s is officially registered as a Foster Carer for The Fostering Team. Applicants will be advised verbally of the Panel's recommendation which will be confirmed in writing within 7 days of Panel.

Applicant/s who are not recommended for approval will be advised verbally at Panel and also in writing within 7 days. Applicant/s will be fully informed of the reasons given by Panel for the decision and also will receive information about the Independent Review Mechanism if they are not happy with the outcome.

10.2. Foster Carers' Training

The Fostering Team work on the premise that fostering is a complex and demanding role. The fostering team is committed to ensuring that their foster carers are trained to the highest standard in order to meet the needs of the children and young people placed in their care. Training is delivered in a variety of ways including face to face, online and virtual training.

Training is provided in order to:

- Ensure foster carers have their skills enhanced in providing for children and young people in their care;
- Improve carers' knowledge base and develop and refine skills;
- Establish a positive framework of values which promotes equality;
- Encourage carers to reflect on issues such as discrimination and its effects on the wider community as well as individuals. To recognise that the children we care for often suffer discrimination and need to be nurtured in such a way as to counter this discrimination;
- Ensure that all foster carers are competent and confident in safe caring and in protecting children and young people from harm;

-
- Encourage foster carers to take responsibility for their own professional development through training and continuing to build up their portfolio of competencies;
 - At The Fostering Team we will ensure that as part of the post approval of foster carers that they are inducted onto and complete the Training, Development and Support Standards (TDS) work booklet and are supported in doing so by their allocated Supervising Social Worker – further details are contained within the Carers Handbook as well as the Learning and Development Calendar.

Training incorporates the following key elements:

- First Aid
- Safeguarding
- Behaviour Management
- Reporting & Recording
- Safe Caring
- Health & Medication
- Risk Assessment
- Equality & Diversity
- Education
- Contact
- Missing from Care
- Allegations & Complaints
- Health and Safety
- Children's Rights
- Child Development & Resilience
- Promoting Independence
- Internet safety
- Attachment
- TSD workshops

Further training includes

- Self-Soothing
- Secondary Trauma
- Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children
- Specific areas of disability
- Caring for a Sexually Abused Child
- Parent & Child Placements
- Domestic Violence
- Self-Harm
- Caring for Children with Complex Needs
- Working with children who have suffered trauma
- Managing and promoting contact
- Advanced Safeguarding
- CSE
- Anti-Radicalisation and Extremism
- Autistic Spectrum
- Life Story work

Within The Fostering Team, we access MindEd online training as well as training via The Training Hub online, which fully compliments our organisational therapeutic approach. Online training is undertaken by carers and staff across the organisation and enables training accessibility for difficult to reach carers and those unable to attend during daytime. This is further

complemented with training being delivered by the Supervising Social Workers and Registered Manager via Carer Forums and through other online means. The training list is not exhaustive and is developed and added to as research and legislation develops and changes.

10.3. Annual Review Process

The annual review is used as a tool to evaluate and monitor both the care afforded to children and young people by foster carers whilst appraising the foster carers practice during the year of fostering and encouraging foster carers continual development.

The foster carer's review is chaired by an Independent Chairperson and subsequently presented to the fostering team's Panel for the review of the foster carer's continued registration at first review and in 5th year of approval. Reviews also take place for specific purposes outside of the annual review process timeline, these may be following an allegation or serious concerns being raised.

11. Inspections

11.1. Inspections

OFSTED have a legal responsibility to inspect all Independent Fostering Agencies to monitor the quality-of-service provision and levels of care provided. Ensuring compliance with Legislation and the National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations 2011.

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Tel. No: 0300 123 1231

The Fostering Team's historical Ofsted Inspection Report can be accessed via the following link:
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report>

12. LSCB – Local Safeguarding Children Board

12.1. LSCB – Local Safeguarding Children Board

A Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a multi-agency cluster based within every local authority. The role of the LSCB is to:

- Monitor and manage what is completed by each member of the LSCB to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their governing area
- To ensure that each organisation is efficient in their role
- To publish policies and procedures pertaining to child protection within their area
- To represent organisations such as the police; health services; probation services and the local youth offending team as well as CAFCASS (Children and Family Courts Advisory and Support Service)

The Fostering Team 's LSCB is Stockport Safeguarding Children Partnership, the following link pertains to this.

<https://live-iag-static-assets.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/Safeguarding/Children/Stockport+Children+Safeguarding+Arrangements.pdf>

Review of Statement of Purpose:

It is a requirement under The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 3. (1 a-b) (2 a-d) (3a) (5) that the Statement of Purpose if fit for purpose and Regulation 4 (a) requires the Statement of Purpose to be kept under regular review.

At The Fostering Team, we ensure this is undertaken on a minimum of an annual basis. When it is appropriate to revise the Statement of Purpose we must do so and send HMCI (Ofsted) a copy of the revised document within 28 days.