Fostering to Inspire

Statement of Purpose
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Introduction

Fostering to Inspire is an independent fostering provider and this Statement of Purpose has been developed in accordance with appropriate legislation and guidance contained in the Children Act 1989, Care Standards Act 2000, the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 (amended 2013) and Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards 2011.

Fostering to Inspire was founded in January 2017 and was developed to provide high quality, family-based care for children and young people who are looked after by the Local Authority. Fostering to Inspire is working in collaboration with The Fostering Network, aspiring to become a Mockingbird Family Model accredited service. We recruit, assess, train and support caring and committed foster carers (satellite and hub homes) to provide the best possible care to promote family-life and positive outcomes for our children and young people.

Fostering to Inspire are currently based in Wakefield, West Yorkshire and support families principally across Yorkshire but with opportunity to expand by developing regional hubs where we provide residential children’s homes for a number of Local Authorities.

Fostering to Inspire sits within the legal entity Homes2Inspire Ltd a leading children’s home provider. Homes2Inspire Ltd is owned by the national charity Shaw Trust. (Fostering to Inspire was formally part of the Prospects Group which was acquired by Shaw Trust in 2017). The charity through its various divisions provides a range of services and support to children and young people providing tailored education, employment and training and a range of other products and services to support them at all stages of their life.

The social purpose of the company ensures that any surplus created by delivering high quality services is used to develop new services and or to support more children and young people.

Fostering to Inspire achieved a judgement of ‘Good’ at their most recent Ofsted inspection in October 2018.

This Statement of Purpose, has been developed in accordance with the appropriate statute law and with the Fostering Services Regulations and includes:

- A statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service
- A statement as to the services and facilities provided by the fostering service
Our Vision

Discovering Potential: Achieving Success

Our Mission Statement

We will focus on the needs of our children and young people and put them at the heart of everything we do. We aspire to provide a long-term commitment to promoting safe, healthy family life that promotes positive choices and inclusivity for our children and young people.

Our Values

Achieving Impact – supporting and encouraging our children and young people so that they can recover from past trauma and abuse; to grow their emotional and developmental well-being and develop skills to achieve their potential.

Working Together – to value and promote the contribution of all our staff, foster carers, children's resource workers, children and young people. We work together with birth families and kinship carers to provide a secure base and extended family for children and young people on the edge of care or in foster care.

Delivering Change – foster carers and staff are trained and supported to manage the individual needs of children and young people. We are committed to pursuing the best possible outcomes for everyone we work with and strive for excellence in all we do.

Valuing Colleagues – we create opportunities for everyone to develop their skills, share knowledge and experience, thereby contributing to our success.

Promoting Diversity – to act fairly and ethically, recognising diversity, enabling and supporting access to opportunities for everyone to achieve their potential.
Our Aims

To strictly adhere to the statutory and exceed regulatory requirements.

To recruit, assess, train and approve a group of committed foster carers to provide safe, high quality family care and support for all our children and young people and their birth families.

To provide relationship-based planned and crisis respite care with specific carers that prevents placement disruptions, provides a safe space for relationship building, and reduces caregiver burnout.

To ensure foster placements are made with careful matching, considering the children and young people’s needs and the foster carers’ experience and skill-set.

To promote and develop the emotional, and practical health needs of our children and young people.

To be committed to quality assurance and innovation in the way we work with families, foster carers, local authorities and other important stakeholders.

Our Objectives

To provide a diverse group of foster carers who can provide safe, well supported foster care placements for children and young people.

Fostering to Inspire is working in collaboration with The Fostering Network, aspiring to be a Mockingbird Family Model accredited service.

We recruit our foster carers (satellite and hub carers) with a view to them being part of a constellation of carers. Constellations of approximately 6 – 10 families will provide mutual support and a sense of belonging akin to an extended family. Each constellation will be supported by an experienced foster carer, Fostering to Inspire supervising social worker and a childrens resource worker.

Each foster family will have an allocated supervising social worker who visits and undertakes supervisory visits and offers advice and assistance in respect of support services.

Each foster family will additionally be able to utilise a 24-hour support service provided by experienced, qualified staff who know the carers and the children and/or young people they have in placement.

Any issues of incidents regarding safeguarding are dealt with immediately and in compliance with our safeguarding policy and procedure.
To provide opportunities to promote education, and personal interests so our children and young people achieve the best possible outcomes now and in the future.

We use the five ‘Every Child Matters’ outcomes (Be healthy, Staying safe, Enjoying and achieve, Make a positive contribution, and Achieve economic wellbeing) in our supervisions with foster carers so we are able to monitor a child/young person’s progress in placement. We recognise the importance of recognising and monitoring outcomes for our children and young people so they may reach their potential.

To recognise the importance of equality and diversity to promote a child/young person’s identity and self-worth.

We work within an equal opportunities environment and ensure our children and young people have access to foster carer services which recognise and address their needs in terms of gender, religion, ethnic origin, language, culture, disability and sexuality.

To support and enable participation and consultation of our children and young people.

We promote inclusivity in everything that we do. We recognise the importance of the child’s voice and we ensure our children and young people are involved and have a say in their care. Our supervising social workers recognise the importance of our children and young people and ensure they see our children and young people regularly to build positive working relationships. We also enable our children and young people to build a positive working relationship with childrens resource workers who act as mentors and a ‘listening ear’. Our children and young people are encouraged to attend decision-making meetings and can be supported by their foster carer, hub carer, supervising social worker and/or childrens resource worker.

To support and promote preparation for independence.

We recognise that many children and young people in placement are from the older age band and therefore we value and recognise the importance of life skills work and building resilience. All our staff, and carers are trained in providing young people with the necessary skills to prepare them for independence.
To build positive working relationships with all our service users including children and young people, foster carers and local authorities. We work in an open and transparent manner and value honesty and integrity.

We understand the importance of care planning and working to agreed timescales as stipulated in our children and young people’s Care and Placement Plans. We additionally value and promote positive working relationships with birth families. Familial contact is integral to a child/young person’s identity and we work to promote contact with birth families where it has been deemed safe and in the child or young person’s best interests.

To offer our foster carers and staff quality and relevant training opportunities that meet the needs of our children and young people.

We offer our foster carers a programme of training courses from the early stages of their fostering journey. From Skills to Foster, to induction courses and courses for our more experienced carers. We additionally offer training for our identified specialist carers. We recognise the importance of trauma and attachment and as part of their first year all our carers complete training in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Families (TCIf).

All our carers complete their Training and Development Standards within their first 12 months.

Our staff including panel members have access to staff learning and development programmes. All staff are trained in TCIf.

To value our workforce and provide effective and supportive leadership within the organisation.

We are part of a wider charitable organisation, Shaw Trust, and we have clear strategic aims for our service so that staff members have clear goals and expectations that are supported by managers to deliver outstanding services to children and young people. We are committed to quality assurance and are always striving to improve our practice.
Introduction to the Mockingbird Family Model (MFM)

Fostering to Inspire have an aspiration and is committed to incorporating the Mockingbird Family Model into our service provision. The agency, in partnership with The Fostering Network is working towards accreditation. Our policies and procedures have been adapted to ensure the model is implemented to a high standard and our carers each have the requisite training.

The Mockingbird Family Model is an approach to supporting foster carers and children and young people placed with them, which brings together clusters of between 6 and 10 satellite homes to form a constellation.

For further information concerning the Mockingbird Family Model please refer to www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/mockingbird.
Our Service Provision

Foster Carers
We will recruit a blend of experienced foster carers/individuals with very relevant personal or professional experiences and foster carers from diverse backgrounds who can offer high quality family care to children and young people aged 0 to 18 from the local authority. All carers will be supported by Fostering to Inspire to provide quality care and support through regular supervision with qualified, experienced supervising social workers and a system of peer support, which includes respite provision.

Types of placements provided are:

Short Term Placements
We recognise that these may vary in their duration and are often linked to further assessments of the child and other family members, in connection with court proceedings. Many carers consider longer term leading on from short-term placements.

Long Term/Permanency Placements
Foster carers can take individual children or sibling groups on a long-term basis whose Care Plans stipulates permanence. These placements are carefully matched and ratified in conjunction with the responsible local authority.

Respite/Short Breaks
Many carers can provide respite (emergency or planned) placements either on a regular basis or one-off holiday breaks. Such placements can take place during the week or over a weekend.

Sibling Placements
Foster carers can provide care for sibling groups. Additionally, due to our aspiration to have constellations of carers our capacity to take sibling groups across several families will allow for siblings to be part of an extended family thereby increasing contact opportunities.

Solo Placements
If the placing authority requires the child to be the only child or youngest/oldest child in placement this would need to be specified at the referral stage to enable the placement to be matched accordingly. This type of placement may involve a higher fee element.
Parent and Child/Children
We can provide foster carer placements where parents receive support and
guidance to help develop parenting skills with very young children. Foster carers
can also assist local authority social workers with their assessments by providing
information relating to parenting capacity.

Unaccompanied Children and Young People
Foster carers undertake essential training that would allow them to care for children
who arrive in the UK without a family or guardian.

Emergency Placements
Foster carers can provide placements at very little notice from the local authority.

Children with Complex Needs
Foster carers can provide care for children who have complex needs relating to
disability, health needs or behaviour. These placements usually include enhanced
packages of support and may involve a higher fee element.

Staying Put
We recognise the importance of continuity and continued family life for our young
people moving into independence. Carers are prepared to consider Staying Put
placements. Fostering to Inspire are committed to supporting our carers who choose
to offer Staying Put placements to young people. We are additionally committed to
considering Shared Lives for young people with additional needs who require longer
term placements into adulthood.

Standards of Care:
On approval, each of our fostering families undertakes an induction and are given a
foster carer handbook outlining their role and expectations of the service. They are
additionally asked to sign up to our professional Code of Conduct, practice training
and development agreements and our Data Protection and Confidentiality Policies.

Foster Home and Environment:
Our foster carers provide a safe, clean, stimulating environment for our children and
young people. They have their own bedroom (unless it has been agreed with the
local authority that they can share with a same sex sibling or for temporary holiday
accommodation). Our carers understand the importance of promoting education,
health, leisure activities, culture and identity. Each child and young person has
access to safe IT use and internet access.
Safeguarding:
Foster carers undertake regular relevant training including Child Protection & Safeguarding, Safer Caring and Managing Allegations, De-escalation and Child Sexual Exploitation. They understand the risk of complaints and allegations and each fostering household has a Family Safer Care Policy. After the placement of a child or young person Individual Safe Care Policies are formulated in accordance with the Care/Placement/Pathway plan and in consultation with the local authority children’s social worker.

Health:
All children and young people are registered with a G.P., dentist and optician. Our carers carefully record and monitor medication.

Fostering to Inspire promote healthy lifestyle that includes a healthy diet and regular activities that help build self-esteem, confidence and resilience in our children and young people.

Education:
Our carers understand the importance of promoting education that meets the needs of our children and young people to attain their potential. Each child and young person placed with Fostering to Inspire carers has a Personal Education Plan (PEP) and our carers are expected to be involved in its formulation and monitoring.

Contact with Birth Family:
Foster carers understand the importance of regular, safe contact with extended family members and they are prepared to encourage a child/young person’s attendance at contact sessions. Transport to and from local contact events can be provided through negotiation with our foster carers.

Our Children and Young People

Children’s Guide:
Fostering to Inspire have a clear commitment to the welfare of children and ensuring the ‘inclusivity’ of our children and young people in decisions that affect their lives. We have a Children’s Guide that is given to each child and young person entering a Fostering to Inspire foster placement. The guide outlines our service provision, how their wishes and feelings are important to us, answers to frequently asked questions and how to access the complaints procedure.

Participation and Consultation:
Childrens resource workers work with our supervising social workers and foster carers to offer a befriending service to our children and young people. Childrens
resource workers will be instrumental in offering a listening ear and helping the supervising social workers promote a sense of belonging for our children and young people.

Fostering to Inspire recognise the importance of participation in developing the service provision so that inclusion, and consultation are at the heart of everything we do. Care Leavers offered the service a unique insight into the lives of looked after children and they were instrumental in the shaping and development of the services provided by Fostering to Inspire.

Examples of how our Care Leavers and fostered children and young people contribute to Fostering to Inspire:

- Involvement in the recruitment of staff and foster carers
- Development of the Children’s Guide and other service resources
- Involvement in training of new and experienced foster carers

Support Groups:

Fostering to Inspire recognises the important contribution our birth children and looked after children can offer to both each other and to the development of our quality service. A support and participation group is run by children’s resource workers and supervising social workers on behalf of our children and young people. The agenda for these groups is agreed in conjunction with the birth and fostered children and young people.

Our children and young people’s achievements are also recognised within an annual celebration event. Our foster carers are encouraged to nominate for awards thereby ensuring our children and young people are given opportunities throughout the year to succeed.

Support Services Provided

Fostering to Inspire have a commitment to provide our foster carers, children and young people the best possible support to promote family inclusion and placement stability.

Payment of a fostering allowance:

All our foster carers receive competitive allowances to offer our children and young people quality caregiving. Foster carers are advised by their supervising social workers what part of their allowance should cover caring for the child/young person.

Fostering to Inspire are a registered member of The Fostering Network and we work in collaboration to become an accredited agency delivering the Mockingbird Family Model.
We ensure all our foster carers are also members of The Fostering Network and are covered by legal protection insurance. The fostering service additionally offers independent support to foster carers who are subject to allegations.

**Allocation of a Supervising Social Worker (SSW):**

Each fostering family has an allocated supervising social worker. The SSW undertakes supervisory visits designed to offer opportunity to discuss the progress of our children and young people in placement, any safeguarding/safe care concerns, and training and development opportunities. We strongly believe in reflective practice and our experienced SSW’s are skilled in developing foster carers’ professional skills and practice.

The frequency of our supervisory visits will be dependent on need and experience of our carers but will be at least monthly and our SSW will additionally provide a weekly telephone or Skype/FaceTime call with each carer.

**Matching and Placement:**

Each referral from local authorities is given careful consideration by the service. Placements are only offered and agreed following careful matching, taking into consideration the child/young person’s needs and the experience and skills of the foster family. Consideration is also given to the importance of the child/young person remaining in school and having continued contact with extended family members.

Our foster families working together offers a greater opportunity for siblings to remain in regular contact even where they do not live in the same fostering household. We endeavour to ensure siblings, who cannot live together are placed with foster carers who have a working relationship with each other.

Our foster carers and supervising social workers understand the importance of care planning and being proactively involved in meetings such as the placement planning meeting and subsequent looked after child reviews.

Our supervising social workers and childrens resource workers ensure they visit our children and young people regularly to build a positive working relationship but also to seek their wishes and feelings. Our foster carers are also trained to advocate professionally and appropriately on behalf of our children and young people.

**Training and Development:**

All foster carers must be committed to the ideology of providing an extended family for our children and young people. They additionally must recognise the importance of peer support and having a consisted respite provider for their fostered children/young people.
Fostering to Inspire is committed to investing in training and development of both our carers and workforce as we recognise the importance of learning to support the best interests of vulnerable children and young people. Supervising social workers ensure the foster carers’ training and development needs are an integral part of their supervisory visits. The following is an example of the face-to-face and online training provided by Fostering to Inspire:

**Pre-approval Preparatory Training:**

A three-day Skills to Foster™ course including the topic areas: What the foster carer does; identity and life chances; working together; safer caring; understanding the needs of Looked After Children and transitions takes place during the assessment period.

Carefully selected induction training programmes must then be completed in the first 12 months following approval and this includes the Training, Support and Development Standards (TSDS).

All carers are trained in **Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Families**. The social work model is used in our practice and is integral to the care we provide our children and young people.

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Families is a training programme that provides foster carers with ideas and therapeutic skills to help a child or young person who has had a difficult start in life.

The TCIf programme contains the latest ideas of trauma, attachment, brain research and practical techniques to help children.

- Effects of trauma on children
- Creating a safe and secure environment
- Understanding stress & knowing ourselves
- Communicating and responding to children
- Negotiating rules and expectations
- Using consequences
- Emotional intelligence
- De-escalation of aggression
- Crisis intervention

Other course for our foster carers includes:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- First Aid
- Safer Caring & Managing Allegations
- Attachment and Understanding Behaviour
- De-escalation and Managing Difficult Behaviour
- Equality and Diversity
- Communicating with Children
Annual Reviews and Fostering Panel:

All foster carers are reviewed each year by an independent fostering reviewing officer. Consultation with carers, children and young people as well as local authority social workers is made. The first annual review is presented to the fostering panel.

The review provides an opportunity for the service and carer(s) to reflect on the past year and plan for the year ahead. The review recommendations are presented to the Agency Decision Maker for final approval.

Where Fostering to Inspire have concerns regarding the continuation of approval, whether via an investigation or quality of care, the concerns will be discussed initially in an annual review meeting and any recommendations will be considered subsequently by the fostering panel.

Following a decision not to approve or de-registration by the Agency Decision Maker, the foster carer has the right to appeal to the service or the Independent Review Mechanism to challenge the decision.

When foster carers either retire or resign from Fostering to Inspire, this is reported to the fostering panel and formally recorded in the panel minutes.

Support Groups:

When our families become part of a constellation, a monthly families meeting will take place which will include fostered children/young people and birth children. The aim of this group is to build positive relationships and strengthen the effectiveness of the constellation in supporting each other and looked after children and young people.

Foster carers additionally have monthly meetings whereby carers can share practice issues, gain peer support, and receive information from the service provider. The meetings are arranged by their supervising social workers.

Foster carers, children and young people meet regularly for events and fun activities generally organised by the service provision in collaboration with the foster carers and their fostered and birth children.

Out of Hours:

We have an “Out of Hours” 24 hours / 7 days a week support and advice telephone service for foster carers. In exceptional cases, and if required, the duty worker will visit the foster carers’ home.

There is additionally a senior manager available to ensure the out of hours’ worker has access to a manager in the case of an emergency.
Recruitment and Assessment of Prospective Carers

Fostering to Inspire are committed to an open and transparent recruitment strategy and process that hopes to attract, assess, train and approve high quality foster carers. We recruit experienced people with a relevant skill-set to our experienced homes. Our carers also come from diverse backgrounds that offer different strengths and experience for our children and young people. We have policies and procedures for the safe recruitment of carers.

Suitability criteria includes the following:

Experienced carers / Hub Home Carers:

We expect our experienced carer to be available on a full-time basis as they will be paid a fee.

Experienced carers must have some fostering, or other relevant experience and have a good understanding of vulnerable children and young people’s developmental needs.

Experienced carers must have at least 2 spare bedrooms.

Experienced carers must not have birth children under the age of 11 years.

New Foster carers:

We expect at least one carer in the household to be available full-time as a primary carer or have the flexibility to work part-time and be able to prioritise the fostering task.

Foster carers must have at least one good sized spare bedroom.

Carers may be single, married, in a civil partnership or living together. If our prospective carers are in a relationship, they must have been living together and have a stable relationship. Driving is desirable but is essential for urban carers.

Application and Assessment:

All enquiries are carefully screened, and initial visits undertaken by experienced, qualified supervising social workers. Our childrens resource workers may also be part of the screening process to assess motivation and suitability to foster.

Those carers invited to apply by Fostering to Inspire complete an application form together with accompanying check documentation. All assessments are conducted
by qualified social workers. As part of the assessment the prospective carers are expected to complete a 3-day preparatory training event; Skills to Foster. Our experienced carers will also be expected to attend additional training specific to their role and responsibilities.

The assessment will include information such as individual background histories, previous relationships, support networks, interviews with everyone in the household and any adult children living independently, family lifestyle including identity and religion, motivation to foster, parenting skills and relevant experiences.

Alongside the assessment, all statutory checks and references are processed to establish suitability to foster including a full health medical and an enhanced DBS in accordance with Schedule 3 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011.

**Foster Panel Approval:**

In line with the Fostering Services Regulations 2011 each assessment report and first annual review report are presented to Fostering to Inspire independent panel, which is held at the Wakefield office. The Panel is made up of at least five members who have a variety of expertise and knowledge including health and education, being foster cares for another provision, or having the experience of being a care leaver.

The Panel provides an independent quality assurance role, considering the approval of applicants and continuation of foster carers’ approval. The Panel makes a recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker (Sue Tribe) who subsequently makes the final decision to approve.

Each panel member undertakes training relevant to their role and the service additionally provides an appraisal process to review individual practice and progress.

Following approval foster carers are informed in writing of their approval and their status including age range and number of children.
Staffing Structure

Shaw Trust and Fostering to Inspire employs a highly experienced and qualified workforce, who have worked in a variety of settings including the local authority, and the private/public sector. Fostering to Inspire employs qualified social workers who have a vast knowledge and experience of the fostering sector both with local authorities and private providers.

Key Personnel and Management Structure:

- **Chris Luck**
  - Chief Executive Officer (Shaw Trust)

- **Jacqui Oughton**
  - Chief Operating Officer (Shaw Trust)

- **Paul Cook**
  - Managing Director (Homes2Inspire Ltd)

- **Jayne Vose**
  - Responsible Individual (Fostering to Inspire)

- **Claire Ferris**
  - Registered Manager (Fostering to Inspire)

- **Business Support Administrators**

- **Supervising Social Workers**

- **Childrens Resource Workers**
Responsible Individual – Jayne Vose

Qualifications

BSC joint Hons Combined studies, PGCE and Post Graduate Diploma in Human Resource Development (Training and development pathway), Level 7 NVQ in Strategic Leadership and Management.
Level 3 Safeguarding
Home office Registered WRAP/Prevent Trainer

Experience

In April 2010 Jayne joined Doncaster Council’s workforce as the 16-10 director advising on borough strategies for post 16 and moved into the post of Head of Service Learner Engagement in June 2012. In this post Jayne developed the variety of services for vulnerable young people leading on the delivery of improved services. Leading on safeguarding in Education for the Borough, contributing to the prevent and CSE agenda across South Yorkshire.

In July 2016 Jayne took up the post of Regional Director for Prospects Services, a position that has enabled Jayne to deliver Prospects Aspiration to transform lives by inspiring people and developing potential to more children and young people across Yorkshire and Humber than ever before.

In Jayne’s career she is most proud of enabling of the teams she has led to deliver pro-actively services which are focused on and delivering real needs-based results for young people, families, communities and which ultimately benefit business and local economies.

Agency Decision Maker (ADM) – Sue Tribe

Qualifications

1987 – 1989 CQSW & Diploma in Social Work
2007 – 2009 Advanced Therapeutic Drum Therapy Training
2009 – 2010 Family Constellations Therapy Training
2011 – 2012 PG cert in Trauma Studies

Experiences

Sue Tribe has been a qualified social worker since 1989. She has worked as a General & Paediatric Nurse, Residential Social Worker, Social Worker within Child Protection, Mental Health Social Worker, Specialist Probation Officer / Treatment Manager and Consultant Project Manager. Sue currently works as an Independent Consultant/Trainer. Sue is the chair for a Fostering panel and chair for a couple of Fostering and Adoption Panels.
Registered Manager – Claire Ferris, Fostering Manager

Qualifications

- 1991 – 1994 LLB (Hons) Law
- 1994 – 1995 Diploma in Legal Practice (with Commendation)
- 2001 Certificate in Counselling
- 2014 Level 5 in Leadership and Management

Experiences

Claire has been a qualified social worker since 1998. She has worked as a solicitor in Family Law, as an Education social worker, child protection frontline social worker, as a CAFCASS officer, a deputy area manager and recruitment manager within independent fostering agencies and as a regional service manager for BAAF.

Fostering Supervising Social Worker – Kellie Banks

Qualifications

- 2008 – 2011 Degree BA Social Work
- 2014 – 2015 Post Qualification Award Social Work

Experiences

Kellie has been a qualified social worker since 2011. She has over 10 years’ experience of working within social work and social care. She has worked within the fostering agency since 2018 and has good working knowledge of current legislations and frameworks relevant to social care and fostering.

Fostering Supervising Social Worker – Sarah Garnett

Qualifications

- 2003 – 2006 BA (Hons) English Studies
- 2009 – 2001 MA Social Work

Experiences

Sarah has been a qualified Social Worker since 2011. She has worked as a frontline Social Worker in Child Protection, an independent Social Worker in the capacities of expert witness and fostering assessor and a Recruitment Social Worker for an independent fostering provider.
Childrens Resource Workers

Qualifications and Experience

Each of our childrens resource workers will have experience of working with children and young people. They will have either achieved or are working to achieve a form of qualification such as an NVQ. Fostering to Inspire will support the childrens resource workers in achieving success.

Experiences

Each of our mentors will have some personal experience of the care system that they will use and share in their work to benefit our looked after children and young people.

Business Support Administrators

The fostering service is supported by appropriately qualified business support administrators.

All staff employed by the fostering service will have an induction. They will have monthly supervision with their line manager and an annual appraisal. Each staff member will have a Personal Development Plan detailing relevant training undertaken and their aspirations for future training opportunities that will aid their professional development.

The fostering service is inspected by Ofsted in accordance with the Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and the National Minimum Standards. The first inspection was undertaken in 2018, resulting in a judgement of ‘Good’, and subsequent inspections will take place thereafter three-yearly. Copies of Ofsted reports are kept on the Ofsted and Fostering to Inspire websites.

Contact details for Ofsted:

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
URN: 1259729

Statement of Purpose
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1 Red Hall Court
Wakefield
WF1 2UN

Tel: 01924 792 184
Email: enquiries@fosteringtoinspire.co.uk
Website: www.fosteringtoinspire.co.uk

Head Office Address:
Shaw Trust House
19 Elmfield Road
Bromley
Kent
BR1 1LT

Tel: 020 8315 1500
Website: www.prospects.co.uk

Complaints:

We have a complaints policy and procedure, in line with the Fostering Services Regulations 2011.

If you wish to make a complaint or have any concerns about a child in care with Fostering to Inspire or otherwise, please contact:

Claire Ferris – Complaints Officer & Registered Manager
Please also see Appendix 1 for full details of our Complaints Procedure.

Safeguarding:

For any Safeguarding matters, please contact our Designated Safeguarding Officer – Claire Ferris, Registered Manager.

Compliments:

We are always happy to receive compliments about our service, and/or workforce including carers. If you wish to make a compliment, please contact our Registered Manager, Claire Ferris.

Email: claire.ferris@fosteringtoinspire.co.uk
Tel: 07850 504 085
Addendum to Statement of Purpose

COVID-19 BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN – Version 1

The current situation with COVID 19 is placing unprecedented pressure on the services that we collectively provide for children, young people and families. We are grateful to all staff and foster carers for the excellent support they are providing to children and young people in this difficult period. As an independent fostering agency, we are a regulated service that needs to support children and young people in their respective foster placements. We are committed to the welfare and well-being of all our foster carers, children, young people and staff.

We are facing a very difficult period and work practices to deliver our service have had to change due to the severity of the restrictions placed on the public by the Government in an attempt to contain the Covid-19 virus, reduce the pressure on the NHS and ultimately to save lives.

A business contingency plan has already been written and distributed to all Fostering to Inspire staff and foster carers. Within this document there was practical advice in terms of the signs and symptoms of the Corona virus, staying safe and reporting concerns/illness. This business continuity plan will focus specifically on the practical arrangements and expectations on staff and foster carers on how we should support and manage foster placements whilst also staying safe and reducing risk.

The Business Continuity Plan is an addendum to the agency’s Statement of Purpose. It is shared with the Regulatory Body and available on the agency’s website.

**Managing the Risk of Transmission**

The Government have issued instructions that people should stay at home in order to keep themselves, and others safe. There are exceptions to this rule, and this applies to keyworkers, and exceptional/emergency services.

**Social distancing measures** are steps you can take to reduce the social interaction between people. This will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

They are:

1. Remain at home, leaving only to:
   - Shop for necessities as infrequently as possible
   - Undertake one form of exercise each day. e.g Run, Walk, Cycle, alone or with members of your household
   - Obtain medical support
   - Provide care or help for a vulnerable person
• Travel to and from work, but only where this is absolutely necessary and cannot be done from home

2. Do not meet with friends or family who do not live in your household

3. Avoid non-essential use of public transport

4. Avoid gatherings of more than 2 people unless you live in the same household. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media

5. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services

6. Try to maintain 2 Metres (3 steps) from each other when in public

To support the agency manage this situation and a co-ordinated approach to respond to the needs of our most vulnerable children and young people, we ask that you communicate regularly with your supervising social workers so that together we can ensure that no child or young person is without support.

Where foster carers do need to leave the house for reasons other than those listed above, we ask that you think clearly about the reason, and seek advice from your SSW where there is uncertainty.

All suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 affecting staff, foster carers, children and young people MUST be communicated to the agency and to the respective local authority social worker, where appropriate.

**Service Provision**

*Supporting Foster Carers*

We have acted quickly in terms of managing the risks to staff within the agency. Decisions were made at an early stage that all staff should re-locate to their homes in order to work remotely.

Our SSWs will continue to correspond their respective fostering families with the same level of support albeit this will now be undertaken remotely. Foster carers will be encouraged to use video technology so a personal connection can be maintained with their SSW. SSWs will undertake all welfare calls, visits and supervision sessions at the same level as they were previously. Conducting such meetings with children in placement will be understandably a challenge. Foster carers are asked to make as best arrangements as they can in difficult circumstances. Meetings can take place in ‘bite sized chunks’ where necessary.

All ‘visits’ by SSWs to our fostered children will also now take place remotely via video technology.
All unannounced visits to foster homes will be suspended until the end of May 2020. This will then be reviewed.

All meetings including fostering panel, disruption meetings, placement planning meetings, annual review meetings etc will take place remotely via video technology. In respect of local authority led meetings such as CLA Reviews, LADO Allegations Management Meetings, Child Protection Strategy Meetings etc requests are to be made by staff that they attend via video technology or by telephone conferencing.

All face-to-face social events between foster carers are suspended. Foster carers should be encouraged to stay connected via their respective Whatsapp communication groups. Reflective Practice Group Meetings will continue to take place via group video conferencing technology. Carers should also be encouraged to meet using other group video conferencing apps such as Zoom, Facebook, Houseparty etc.

*Education*

Subject to existing Public Health advice, vulnerable children and those of key workers are able to attend school where they well and a school is open. For some children and young people, the safest place for them to be is in school. For others, remaining at home will be in their best interests. These decisions will be based on individual circumstances, which may change as the situation develops. Close liaison with LASWs throughout will be central to these decisions. Foster carers will be supported in their decisions taken using Delegated Authority. If your school is closed then please liaise with your respective SSW who will contact the LASW who could seek to redirect you to a local school in your area that your child, or children, can attend.

The Department for Education is clear that there is no expectation of a continuation of a normal curriculum offer in schools that are open. Foster carers will be supported to make decisions using Delegated Authority. All vulnerable children should have access to a school place, but where it is agreed with the LASW that they remain at home, care not education is expected. First and foremost, we want children to be involved in decisions and be in safe, supportive family environments. Drawing on existing support networks, as would be the case in any challenging circumstances, will be of the utmost importance.

The Fostering Network has recently issued (24.03.20) the following advice in relation to:

*Contact*

*In light of the new rules around social distancing, all regular face-to-face contact between family members living in different households should cease. This is to prevent the spread of infection. Whilst we recognise that it is hard managing children’s expectations, it is very important for many children that they can continue seeing and speaking to their family, and particularly any relatives who may be unwell. Therefore, we expect all children in foster care to continue to be supported to maintain contact with their birth families and to be able to spend time with their siblings, in any way they can, for example through daily or regular phone calls, video chats, the use of social media platforms or other means. We would only expect*
face-to-face contact to be taking place, in person, in the most extreme cases, for example, the death of a relative. Foster carers will need support to help children to keep in touch. We know that lots of local authorities and fostering service providers are exploring new ways to help families to stay in touch and will look to share good practice in the near future.

Respite

Given the Government’s advice around social distancing, respite for fostering households will cease for the foreseeable, unless in extreme cases where the stability and continuity of the placement is at risk. We recognise that this will have financial implications for some respite carers. However, we believe that those individuals have valuable skills that could be put to use elsewhere in the system given the current demands on capacity, either as additional support for foster families, or as emergency carers for example. We would encourage respite carers to approach their agencies to see how they can be most useful and for fostering services to draw upon the experience and skills of respite carers when looking at how they can continue to best support children and their foster families.

Recruitment

The fostering agency will continue to recruit new foster carers. The child protection system is likely to become overwhelmed and it is imperative we can continue to bring through new foster carers.

Advertising will continue as will telephone screening by SSWs. Where an initial visit is recommended this will be undertaken via video technology. Prospective foster carers should be asked to take the interviewing social worker on a virtual tour around their home.

Assessments

The assessments of new foster carers will continue. Checks and references will be undertaken remotely, and responses will be requested via email.

Prospective foster carers will need to undertake Skills to Foster prior to going to panel. The agency will review practice and deliver this via video technology, where possible.

Prospective foster carers will conduct their home study with their assessing social worker via video technology.

In respect of medicals, GPs currently do not have the capacity to undertake fostering medical assessments. As a result, applicants will be asked to complete the AH2 as usual, a self-certification document and the medical advisor will be asked to review and comment for the purpose of panel. A medical assessment will be undertaken in retrospect when we are able to complete.
**Emergency Service Provision**

**New Placements**

For those carers who have vacancies, referrals will be considered as usual.

When children are placed, consultation between the foster carer and the SSW should take place as to whether the SSW needs to be there when the child arrives. For new carers accepting their first placement it is expected a SSW will be present when the child/young person arrives (see risk management).

All Placement Planning Meeting should be requested and conducted via video technology.

**Emergency Support for At Risk Placements**

We ask that foster carers keep in regular touch with their SSWs during ‘difficult’ times with their foster children / young people. It is important to be proactive in such circumstances rather than being reactive to a situation that has evidently been building for a few hours/days. It is undeniable the ‘lockdown’ expectations may place undue pressure on households and foster carers need to seek advice and assistance at the earliest opportunity.

The Out of Hours service will continue as usual.

Where a visit from a SSW is deemed necessary a risk assessment should be carried out (see risk management).

**Risk Management**

**Staff visiting foster carer homes**

These visits should take place in exceptional circumstances and should be agreed with the Registered Manager. An assessment of the staff member and foster carer’s health and whether they fall into any of the high-risk categories (see risk assessment) prior to a visit being agreed.

A risk assessment should be completed and signed off by the Registered Manager.

All visitors to foster carer homes must follow social distancing and hand washing protocols.

**Suspected or confirmed Coronavirus in the foster home**

Where possible isolate the individual in a part of the house whereby their illness can be maintained. For the others in the home to stay away from the individual as much as possible. For the home to be sanitised and cleaned and for household members to regular wash their hands.
For the SSW to be informed as soon as possible and the information to be relayed to the LASW.

Health advice dictates the following:

If you have coronavirus symptoms:

- do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital
- you do not need to contact 111 to tell them you’re staying at home
- testing for coronavirus is not needed if you’re staying at home

Please plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home and consider what can be done for vulnerable people in the household.

If you feel you cannot cope with symptoms at home, or the condition gets worse, or the symptoms do not get better after 7 days, then use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

**Staff with suspected or confirmed Coronavirus**

Staff are to inform the Registered Manager of their illness. They must follow the above guidelines in respect of isolating themselves in their home and seeking medical advice and attention where appropriate.

The duties of the ill member of staff will be undertaken by the remaining staff members in the agency. If it is an SSW who is ill, foster carers will be informed accordingly and an alternate support mechanism will be implemented.

The local authority, and Regulated Body should only be informed if the service provision is seriously compromised

**Risk Assessments**

A risk assessment should carried out prior to staff member visiting a foster carers’ home.

Consideration should be given to:

- The seriousness of the situation – is a placement at risk of breakdown, for example
- Will the presence of a SSW assist with the well-being of a child/young person?
- Whether the people involved fall into any of the high-risk groups:

  Broadly, there are four risk groups:

  - **Over-70s**, regardless of any medical conditions.
  - **Under-70s who have an underlying health condition** - in other words, adults who are advised to have the **flu jab** every year on medical grounds.
This group includes people who have:

- Long-term respiratory or lung disease, like asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- Long-term heart disease, like heart failure.
- Long-term kidney disease.
- Long-term liver disease, like hepatitis.
- Diabetes. Long-term neurological conditions like Parkinson’s disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), cerebral palsy, or a learning disability.
- Problems with their spleen like sickle cell anaemia, or have had their spleen removed.
- A weakened immune system, either as a result of a medical condition like HIV or AIDS, or as a result of medications like corticosteroids or chemotherapy.
- A body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above (being severely obese).
- Pregnant women.

- People with complex health problems - this group includes people who:
  - Have had an organ transplant and take medication to suppress their immune system.
  - Have cancer and are currently having active chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment.
  - Have blood or bone marrow cancer (like leukaemia, lymphoma and myeloma) and are at any stage of treatment.
  - Have severe respiratory/lung conditions like cystic fibrosis or severe asthma that requires admission to hospital or treatment with corticosteroids.
  - Have severe diseases of the body systems, like severe kidney disease that is managed with regular dialysis.

• Can social distancing measures be put in place during the visit?
• Hand washing or sanitising regularly
• Does the visit have the agreement of the Registered Manager?

The risk assessment should be recorded on CHARMS.

Prevention

Advice from NHS staff at the Princess of Wales hospital - what we can do to help ourselves and the children/young people we care for:

Experts suggest doing this simple verification every morning:

• Breathe in deeply and hold your breath for 10 seconds.
• If this can be done without coughing, without difficulty, this shows that there is no fibrosis in the lungs, indicating the absence of infection.
• It is recommended to do this control every morning to help detect infection.
The virus hates heat and dies if it is exposed to temperatures greater than 80°F (27°C). Therefore, hot drinks such as infusions, broths or simply hot water should be consumed abundantly during the day. These hot liquids kill the virus and are easy to ingest. Avoid drinking ice water or drinks with ice cubes.

Ensure that your mouth and throat are always wet, never DRY. You should drink a sip of water at least every 15 minutes. WHY? Even when the virus enters water or other liquids through the mouth, it will get flushed through the oesophagus directly into the stomach where gastric acids destroy the virus. If there is not enough water, the virus can pass into the trachea and from there to the lungs, where it is very dangerous.

For those who can, sunbathe. The Sun's UV rays kill the virus and the vitamin D is good for you.

The Coronavirus has a large size (diameter of 400-500 nanometers) so face masks can stop it, no special face masks are needed in daily life.

If an infected person sneezes nearby, stay 10 feet (3.3 meters) away to allow the virus fall to the ground and prevent it from falling on you.

When the virus is on hard surfaces, it survives about 72 hours, therefore when hard surfaces such as doors, appliances, railings, etc. are touched, hands should be washed thoroughly and/or disinfected with alcoholic gel. The virus can live nested in clothes and tissues between 6 and 12 hours. Common detergents can kill it. Things that cannot be washed should be exposed to the Sun and the virus will die.

The transmission of the virus usually occurs by direct infection, touching fabrics, tissues or materials on which the virus is present.

Washing your hands is essential.

The virus survives on our hands for only about 10 minutes. In that time many things can happen, rubbing the eyes, touching the nose or lips. This allows the virus to enter your throat. Therefore, for your good and the good of all, wash your hands very often and disinfect them.

You can gargle with disinfectant solutions (i.e. Listerine or Hydrogen Peroxide) that eliminate or minimize the amount of virus that can enter the throat. Doing so removes the virus before it goes down to the trachea and then to the lungs.

Disinfect things touched often: mobile phone, keyboard, mouse, car steering wheel, door handles, etc ....

Plan written by Claire Ferris, Registered Manager
25.03.20