

Sefton Council 

Sefton Fostering Service Annual report 2017–2018

April 2017 – March 2018



Sefton Fostering Service Annual report 2017–2018

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Introduction

This report provides information about the Fostering Service and outcomes for children and young people looked after by Sefton M.B.C, from 1st April 2017/ 31st March 2018. The purpose of the annual report is to inform the public, elected member's, partners and staff of the progress and developments in the Service during this period.

The government has published Statutory Guidance for local authorities in February 2018. The guidance sets out the role of local authorities and the application of corporate parenting principles, which is set out in section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

It states that local authorities must have regard to the seven needs identified in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 when exercising their functions in relation to looked-after children and care leavers and also former relevant children.

The seven principles for corporate parenting:

- To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people.
- To encourage children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.

Recruitment of Foster Carers

In what are challenging times nationally in respect of fostering recruitment our recruitment team have continued to work together to produce marketing material and recruitment activity which is fresh, modern, and continually updated. Our challenges remain placement sufficiency and placement stability. Placement stability is impacted by availability and choice of placements and the skills of available foster carers. We strive to continue with an active and energetic recruitment campaign to attract prospective foster carers to Sefton, and we will continue to work in collaboration with Knowsley Council to maximise our recruitment efforts.

Telephone enquiries were previously routed through a Regional Fostering Front Door system, that employed two social workers taking enquiries for eight local authorities including Sefton who were available to respond to callers who wanted more information. A review of this system showed a poor return in terms of enquiries and outcomes, and during the year Sefton reverted to having the enquiries within our own

- To consider the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people.
- To help children and young people gain access to and make the best use, of services provided by the local authority.
- To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for children and young people.
- For children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work, and
- To prepare children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The detail of what Sefton must do to effectively care for looked after children and young people and our care leavers is addressed through existing legislation, regulations and accompanying statutory guidance.

The principles are intended to encourage local authorities to be ambitious and aspirational for our looked after children and care leavers. Sefton Council wholeheartedly endorse these principles and the Fostering Service is a key element in this work.

provision which allows us to have more control along with a cost saving. Targeted Facebook advertising is ongoing throughout the year and is refreshed for each campaign.

We continue to run information events throughout the year. The number of events has been increased and attendance has been steady. The information events are held alternatively in the North and South of the borough involving foster carers in the recruitment process.

Economic necessity may mean all adults in a family need to work; adult children remain at home longer; families may have less physical space and these, and other issues, together, all have an impact on the capacity of families to foster.

We will endeavour to approve at least 15 households in 2018/19 and to have specific targeted recruitment to meet the particular needs of complex older children, siblings and parent and child placements.

Fostering Enquiries 2017 – 2018 Progressions

Stages	Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Pre Stage	Enquiries	33	51	30	19	28	26	33	13	9	40	13	7	302
Stage 1	ROI	5	8	8	6	6	4	6	2	2	5	1		53
	IV	4	5	5	4	3	3	4	2	1	3			34
Stage 2	Assessments	4	0	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	2			11
	Approvals	2	0	2	In progress									

Total enquiries 302

Total Approvals - 10

Pre-Enquiry –202 Enquiries closed

Closure Reasons * See below

Withdrawn (184 Total)

- 105 No Further Contact
- 55 Information Only / May Return
- 4 Financial Reasons
- 5 Applying to Adopt
 - 4 Remaining / Proceeding with another agency
- 1 Personal Reasons * (see below for detail)

Currently going through a divorce

Currently pregnant

Unable to commit to travelling as single carer

Needs permission from Landlord to foster

Decided to wait until children are older

Husband does not want to proceed

Change in family circumstances

Enquiring about SGO

Family Illness

Hours of work not compatible with fostering

Recent Bereavement

Unsuitable / Terminated (18 Total)

- 2 Child protection concerns
- 5 No spare room
- 5 Undergoing building works / moving
- 6 Other * (see below for detail)

Recent separation from partner

Currently undergoing IVF

Want to foster 0-5 but smoke E – Cigarette

Currently serving Community Service

Currently undergoing counselling

Recently moved in with partner

53 progressed to Registrations of Interest (ROI)

34 Completed Initial Visits (IV)

(19 ROI closed before Initial Visit) *See below for closure reasons

- 13 Unable to contact
- 1 Financial Reasons
- 3 Need more time to consider
- 2 Other* (see below for detail)

*Current working hours not compatible with fostering
Concerns about son*

Status of Enquiries that progressed to Stage 1 – (34 Initial Visit)

- 21 Closed *see reasons below
- 11 Progressed to Stage 2
- 2 Open / Ongoing

*Closure Reasons – Stage 1 (21)

Withdrawn (12)

- 1 Needs More Time to Consider
- 6 No Further contact
- 1 Financial Reasons
- 3 Ill health
- 1 Proceeding with another agency

Unsuitable / Terminated (9)

Concerns with family

Going through disciplinary action in work

Undergoing counselling

Spare room unsuitable for fostering

Only moved 6 weeks ago

Family too young advised to come back in 6 months

2 x Current hours of work unsuitable for fostering

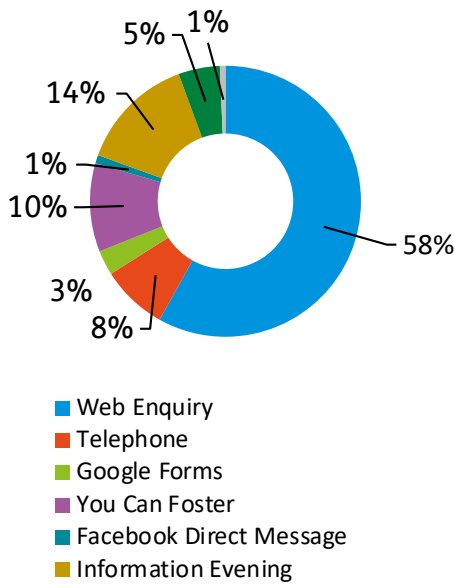
Pet hygiene issues

Status of Enquiries that progressed to Stage 2

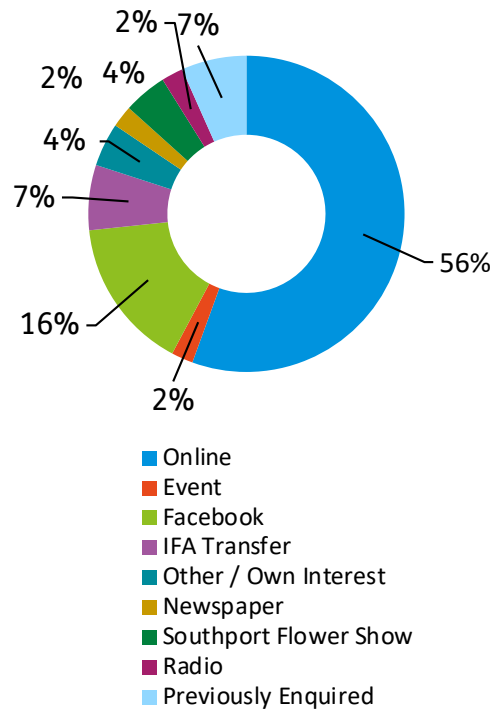
- 11 Progressed to assessment
- 4 Approvals

2017 - 2018

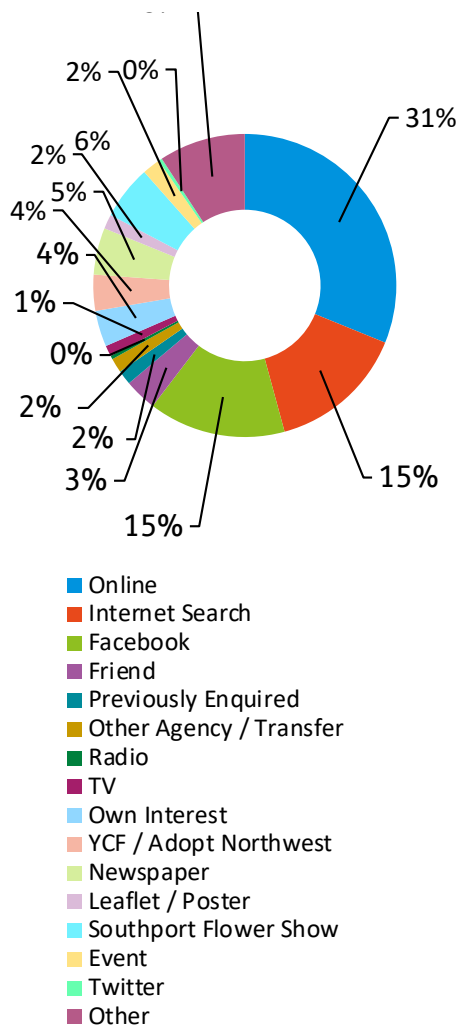
Method of Enquiry



Source for Enquiries that progress to ROI



Source of Enquiry



In April 2017, the Government launched a call for evidence to seek views on the current state of foster care in England and how it could be improved to achieve ambitious outcomes for children and young people. This consultation received over 300 responses. Submissions received were from a range of individuals. Approximately half of all responses were from individual foster carers, whilst other individual respondents included social workers, health practitioners, academics and consultants. A small number of submissions were directly from care-experienced young people and care leavers, as well as organisations bringing together the views of groups of children. Around 20 local authorities and 20 independent fostering agencies contributed to the call for evidence whilst approximately one sixth of all submissions were from organisations, ranging from small charities providing specialist services to large national organisations.

The Fostering stocktake questions

1. The types of fostering that are currently provided, to understand the full range of provision which is available and when and for which young people it is best used
2. What works best within fostering settings to improve outcomes for the children and young people placed

3. What improvements could be made to the way that fostering provision is commissioned, delivered, regulated and inspected to improve outcomes and value for money
4. The status, role and function of foster carers in relation to other professionals as part of the team working with a child in care
5. How the experiences of young people can be improved when entering foster care, transitioning between placements (between carers or into other settings), and leaving foster care
6. Any other issues which might contribute to better outcomes for children.

Sefton's Response

- Robust systems remain in place to ensure that children only become accommodated by the local authority when it is their best interest and no safe alternatives exist. The types of fostering placements currently provided in Sefton are mainstream foster care/kinship care, emergency/ respite. The placements are best used for children/ young people coming into care and also during care proceedings /long term fostering/plan for permanence /SGO, CAO
 - Fostering settings have proven to work best for children/young people placed when carers have been provided with all the information about the child/young person prior to the placement. Children/young people's engagement in education enhances the chance of placement stability which is also key for looked after children. Structure, routine and continuity and a loving and stable environment for children/young people in care are key component of the fostering experience. Foster carers need to continue in their development by attending training to best support them with looking after children/young people. Support through visits by the child's social worker and supervising social worker ensures that the child/ young person is happy settled and keeps the social worker informed of changes and developments. To maintain placements, it is important that children receive timely assessments and their plans are regularly reviewed.
 - The cost of providing placements is a significant budgetary pressure and is the subject of ongoing work to develop effective but cost-efficient provision; this is particularly important in relation to externally commissioned arrangements. Participation in regional collaboration arrangements is intended to improve the procurement of children's care placements and in externally commissioned arrangements. Capacity issues in the Fostering Service inevitably increases the number of children placed with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA) but they are also struggling to meet the needs of more complex young people leading to children and young people being placed in all children in out of area residential placements.
 - There are higher expectations of foster carers to be treated as professionals in the care planning process -to be kept up to date on the progress of any court proceedings and any changes to the child/young person's care plan.
 - It is important to ensure that the child/young person has a voice and is included in their care plan especially prior to any move, that they have the opportunity to say goodbye to the current foster carer, have a more planned ending, and in some case may keep in touch with the foster carers when the placement has ended.
 - In order to safeguard children/young people, partnership working and good communication is key, and improved outcomes for children/young people can only be delivered and sustained when key people and agency's work together.
 - In keeping with good practice and regulatory requirement, the authority continues to place as many children as possible close to their home locality.
- As young people move towards adulthood they will be allocated a Personal Advisor and foster carers are involved in the formulation of a pathway plan.
- The Fostering Network report that the increased demand for children and young people in care services coupled with the drastic cuts to local authority budgets due to austerity measures has placed a growing pressure on the care system in England. The number of looked after children/young people is now at its highest point since 1985 and the demand for placements varies significantly across **the country**.

Staffing and accommodation

The Fostering Service has continued to be based at Merton House Bootle; however, along with other Social Care Teams including the Corporate Parenting Teams and the Leaving Care Team will be moving the short distance to Magdalen House in Bootle in mid-June. This is a move from a rented building to one that Sefton owns and is part of a wider strategy to create a more agile and responsive workforce. The team is staffed with experienced staff and management. The proximity to the looked after children's teams continues to be helpful in promoting good planning for children/young people in care.

Agile working is being introduced across the service. Agile working has been described as a way of working in which it empowers its staff to work where, when and how they choose – with maximum flexibility and minimum constraints – in order to optimise our performance and deliver “best in class” value and customer service. It uses communications and information technology to enable staff to work in ways, which best suit, their needs without the traditional limitations of where and when tasks must be performed. It is based on the concept that work

is an activity we do, rather than a place we go. With the technology available, there are numerous tools to help us work in new and different ways. The aim of agile working is simply to create a more responsive, efficient and effective organisation, which ultimately improves business performance and increases customer satisfaction.

During the past year the Fostering Team has reduced its staffing complement by two full-time equivalent social workers as part of the Councils wider proposals for financial restraint. This has been managed so as not to impact on the support provided to foster carers and looked after children/young people.

In April 2018, the Adoption Service became part of Adoption in Merseyside (AIM), a regional adoption agency made up of four local authorities and voluntary partners. Their main base is now at the Hutt in the Halewood area of South Liverpool, although through agile working they retain a presence in Sefton and remain in close contact with the Fostering Team to ensure smooth transitions when children are moving on to their adoptive placements.

Team Managers Action Plan

At the beginning of October 2017 Sefton's Children's Social Care implemented a Service redesign. The design is aimed at reducing caseloads in some areas and to create caseload equilibrium across the service, increase management oversight and decrease transition points for children resulting in less change of social worker and improve capacity for relationship-based social work. Team managers attended a Team

Manager Development Day to review progress and learn from single agency and multiagency audit since January 2017 and agreed how to respond in the new arrangement. In response, Team Managers developed a Team Manager Action Plan, which aimed to address key issues and improve performance and quality. This action plan is reviewed regularly against future data and audit findings to assess progress and impact.

Specific Fostering Targets - Retention of foster carers

Sefton currently has 89 mainstream fostering households, comprising of 73 couples and 16 single carers, with a total capacity of 236 children placed in short-term and long-term placements as of March 2018. There are 66 Connected persons/ kinship households, 108 carers, 42 couples, 24 single carers. Our foster carers do a good job in supporting children and young people who do not move placements frequently and as a rule they stay with their carer(s) until either the outcome of care proceedings or if the care plan is for them to return to the care of birth parents or alternative family members. This year has seen an increase in the number of children becoming looked after, 170 the previous year compared to 236 this year.

The importance of retention of foster carers in Sefton is critical. The fostering network reported that in 2017 on average a service will lose 10% of carers annually through retirement, adopting, changing career, and deregistration. While our data does not show this level of carers formally ceasing to foster, there is an increasing trend for foster carers to step-down from fostering to staying put placements without formally ceasing their registration as foster carers. It should be emphasised that this is still a very important contribution to supporting a young person on their journey to adulthood.

The Fostering Service responds promptly and efficiently to issues and concerns raised by foster carers. Communication includes newsletters

throughout the year, emails, phone calls about events and opportunity's. Supervising social workers visit carers to support them in their role, assessing the support needed prior to each new placement which contributes to increasing carers confidence and capabilities in taking children with high needs. Despite its rewards, foster care can be a very demanding vocation. Sefton Fostering Service recognises this and understands good outcomes for children/young people can only be achieved when foster carers feel valued, supported and equipped to provide the stability, love and care that children/young people need when they may have experienced neglect, harm, or abuse.

The Fostering Service has continued to make and embed improvements in the quality of report writing,

Placement Stability

Placement stability continues to be a critical factor in offering an effective Fostering Service and is crucial to ensuring that we deliver good outcomes for every child/young person in our care. As a service, an improved understanding of the reasons why placements end will be used to help us improve our practice in relation to robust assessment and supervision of foster carers, identification of future

Staying Put

Staying put is the term used to describe a situation in which the Local Authority support young people to remain living with their foster family after they are 18, until they are fully able to live independently. This is a great benefit to young people leaving care and enables them to transition to adulthood normally with the safety net other young people enjoy. Both locally and nationally there is an inevitable impact upon available foster placements as young people remain living within families. The arrangements can also bring different complexities to foster families who effectively have an adult living with them but are

Allegations

The total number of allegations made by children/young people in foster care this year was eight. Two of the allegations took over 21 working days to respond to. Analysis of these established that this was due to delay in a Police decision regarding their involvement and awaiting the outcome of a Police investigation.

Being subject to an allegation and subsequent investigation is enormously stressful and distressing for foster carers. For some foster carers, it may

supervision and foster carer reviews to evidence carer's ability and skills to meet children/young people's needs. Foster carers who have not met required standards following support and training have been referred to Sefton's Fostering Panel and on occasions have been deregistered.

Improvements in practice have continued and over the past year placement stability meetings are now embedded in the culture of the service and have become a "to do task"

Performance data is now reliably available and teams have continued to embed good performance monitoring and management to create a sustained positive trajectory of improving performance.

vulnerabilities, and pro-active pre-emptive support for children/young people and their foster carers in the future.

The Fostering Service continues to work jointly with other professionals and foster carers to support placements and to progress children/young people's care plans.

still required to meet fostering standards for children/young people. There is a limited statutory guidance in relation to staying put arrangements and as a service we continue to review how we provide a supportive but proportionate service. Sefton continues to support young people who have Staying Put arrangements, and during the year additional training was provided to foster carers to help them better understand the complexity that these arrangements can bring, as well as the financial and practical support available to facilitate the transition.

threaten or impact upon their family and career in addition to their role as a foster carer. The supervising social worker supports the carers through supervision and provides them with information about the process and progress of the investigation. Sefton also provides independent support for foster carers, spot purchased through Foster Talk.

The team are more aware of the need to hold a review following an allegation. There is awareness that good

practice dictates that foster carer reviews include the supervising social worker. On the whole foster carers feel there is stability in the Fostering Service and also recognise that the department are trying to make improvements to the service and recognise the role

Foster Talk

Sefton purchases individual membership of Foster Talk for our foster carers and their families, including free social work, financial and legal advice. Additionally, it importantly provided carers with access to free legal support and legal representation should they be in a position of being criminally investigated or charged for an issue resulting from their fostering, such as an allegation by a child/young person.

Resource Maximisation

Due to the continued rise in the number of children/young people coming into care, independent providers continue to provide a key resource. In addition, the needs of some children/young people dictate the need to access solo or specialist placements. Wherever possible placements are sought within or nearby to Sefton, along with links with school, leisure activities and contact with family and friends. A fortnightly resource panel oversees and considers all requests

Fostering Panel

Fostering Panel meetings continue to take place monthly, with an independent chair, and a panel advisor (Fostering Team Manager). The panel chair is annually appraised by the agency decision maker (ADM). Panel members are also appraised by the panel chair together with the panel advisor. A newly appointed Independent chair was appointed following the retirement of the last panel chair.

Panel Administration

The panel has received a high standard of administrative support, which has been instrumental in developing processes to ensure that the panel papers, minutes and time keeping are adhered to.

Connected persons applications to panel provoke much thought and debate because the issues they throw up alongside the significant needs of the children/young people that they will be caring for. Panel has the task of balancing the needs of specific children/young people, the complexities of the family and wider family relationships as well as any risk factors that there may be inherent in the situation. Panel give consideration to whether the placement is

foster carers play. There are regular meetings of foster carers to which managers including senior managers are invited to speak about different aspects of fostering support and the development of the Service.

The service regularly receives positive feedback from foster carers about this service.

A goal of the service this year is to work with managers and the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) to work to reduce the elements of delay which is within our control and influence.

for a placement. The Fostering Service intends to contribute to this process through the development of a specialist recruitment programme, known currently as the 'Teen Scheme' and aimed at creating a small pool of salaried carers who will receive additional training and support to provide placements for young people who would otherwise be placed out of borough often in residential care.

The Fostering Panels continue to be held monthly, discussions are lively, thorough and well balanced. The ADM undertakes a thorough analysis of all panel recommendations and the supporting documents prior to making a recommendation. There was one example of the ADM changing the recommendation of panel during this year.

for short-term/long term panel also frequently need to be mindful of any legal proceedings running alongside applications to panel and on occasions panels work is superseded by legal decisions.

26 First Annual Reviews were presented to panel during the year representing a slight increase in first annual reviews from the previous year when 23 were presented. Panel have continued to encourage carers to attend their first review and moving forward will be tracking data on attendance.

Observers

Student social workers, members of staff on induction, members of senior management and prospective panel members have all joined panel to observe. Panel welcomes observing at meetings. It is an excellent

way to see how panel works and helps to demystify the process, particularly for those who will present cases to panel for the first time.

Independent Review Mechanism

If carers or prospective carers are unhappy about recommendations made by the fostering panel and decisions made by the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) they can appeal the decision through two

mechanisms. One is a request for another Fostering Panel to hear issues again and another is for the case to be referred to the IRM. In this financial year Sefton had no cases taken to the IRM.

Training

Sefton continues to have a comprehensive carer training programme that we add to and update ensuring ongoing opportunities for our carers to develop knowledge, skills and keep up to date with developments in practice, research and legislation.

We have delivered regular training courses in the last year. Our training calendar is tailored to meet the needs of foster carers. Our foster carers overwhelming feel that the training delivered is relevant, useful and helps and supports them in their role as foster carers.

Training attendances

There have been 566 training attendances over 55 courses this year. This compares with 450 attendances in 2016-2017 over 49 courses, with an increase in attendance and more courses being introduced for 2017/18. As a service, we continue to be responsive to carers needs by developing our training and listening to carers views on which courses are crucial in assisting them in their fostering task. We continue to use foster carers as co-facilitators on the Transitions and Endings course which helps make the training responsive to carers needs, reflect their lived experience and respond

to the messages from research. A high percentage of foster carers have completed their TSDS workbook.

Last year saw the first foster carers conference which was a huge success, the conference involved guest speakers which the foster carers found extremely beneficial and workshops set up with different topics that the carers could attend two out of the four provided. Due to the success of the conference, this is programmed again for the next year. Below some of the comments from foster carers who attended the conference and training.

Foster carer's comments

Fostering Conference April 17 Key Speaker Tania Bright

“Tania Bright was absolutely amazing. I liked all the talks, good insight into the service. Nice food. I liked everyone being in the same room so I could talk to whoever I needed easily”

“Thought the care leavers sessions were Brilliant”

Parenting a child who has been sexually abused June 17

“I thought the course was excellent and I feel more equipped to deal with a child who may have been sexually abused”

The table below indicates the numbers of reports that have been dealt with by Sefton’s Fostering Panel compared to the previous four years.

Assessments of foster carers	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Assessment of foster carers	44	57	61	22
Number of Connected person assessment	30	45	47	21
Number of mainstream assessments	14	12	14	10
Annual review of foster carers	23	23	23	26
De-registration of mainstream foster carers	25	28	12	9
Other reports, i.e approval changes, termination of assessments Extension for the time limited Regulation 24 assessments reports.	21	34	25	12

This financial year it has been a busy period for the fostering panel, with a steady flow of assessments being presented to panel with most of the activity being Kinship assessments.

124 viability assessments were completed within this year a slight increase compared to 115 the previous financial year. We again recognise this is a high rate compared to those approved to care for

children/young people and less approved under a Special Guardianship Order. There were 19 Special Guardianship Orders granted in 2017/18 a positive outcome for children/young people living with relative friend carers.

There were 35 Regulation 24 placements assessed compared to 24 last year an increase to the number of children placed with relative/friends.

Exemptions

Due to the number of children/young people coming into care, Sefton has placed children with experienced foster carers who are already within their approval status and require an exemption to allow them to take above their usual fostering limit. This requires a report to panel and oversight by the ADM

Registration as a foster carer usually limits the number of unrelated children who can be cared for at any one time to three.

An ‘exemption’ refers to the powers given to local authorities to exempt a foster carer in England from the requirement to register as a children’s home to care for more than three unrelated children.

Regardless of the foster carer’s terms of approval, if more than three children are placed with a foster carer and the children are not all siblings of each other, this requires an exemption to the usual fostering limit (Sch. 7 CA1989) as above. Sefton have used this service to place children coming into care in an emergency where there has not been time to consider a match. If a fostering service provider decide to approve a foster carer, they must give the carer notice in writing of any terms on which the approval is given [Reg 27(5)(a)]. However, there is no legal requirement for any terms to be agreed. If no terms are made, the foster carer will be approved to foster any children, taking account of the constraints of the usual fostering limit.

Placement Breakdowns from 01/04/2017/ 31/03/2018

- The total number of children/young people moved as a result of placement breakdown was 23.
- Four breakdowns were the result of foster carers wishing to retire and wanting to return to work.
- A sibling group of four was placed with a carer who subsequently felt unable to continue with the placement.
- A sibling group of three were placed elsewhere at the carers request due to an historical allegation against their partner who was asked to leave the placement.
- One young person was moved following an allegation against a grandparent which although unfounded then refused his return.
- A sibling group of two were moved due to their behaviours and the impact on the other children in placement.
- Seven teenager placements broke down due to behaviour which included aggressive behaviour, missing from care, criminal activities, and alcohol/drug issues.

It is recognised that these behaviours are often a symptom of their pre-care experiences and we work hard to avoid acting in a way that disrupts young people's positive behaviour and support networks.

The Service recognises that due to pressure on placements young people are sometimes placed with foster carers who are outside of their 'comfort zone'

Disruption Meetings

During 2017/18 the Fostering Service continue to hold disruption meetings so that all professionals involved can review what has occurred in such situations and assist the fostering service in learning any lessons from placement breakdowns alongside supporting foster carers and looked after children/young people in placement.

and more importantly their skills and abilities, in caring for the older child.

The 'Teen Scheme' will further address this issue by making sure that children with additional needs can be matched with carers who have the level of skill and enhanced support to sustain their placements.

As corporate parents, we recognise the impact of unnecessary placement moves. Research shows the importance of stable and nurturing placements that can directly influence the child/young person's ability to recover from the abusive and neglectful experiences they have previously had.

The Fostering Service Looking ahead 2018/19

- Our challenges remain placement sufficiency and placement stability. Placement stability is impacted by availability and choice of placements and the skills of available foster carers, and by the quality of assessment and care planning and the quality and consistency of support offered to carers. These are challenges which require a whole service approach and require Fostering Service to support and influence colleagues as well as develop and improve the service directly provided.
- To continue to provide a comprehensive good quality foster carer service to all children/young people looked after by Sefton.
- To provide looked after children/young people with a positive experience of family life, which promotes their physical, emotional, developmental well-being, and happiness in an environment in or close to their community.
- To continue to work in partnership with partners across children's services as well as with health, education, and other allied professionals to achieve the best outcomes for children/young people in foster placements.
- Continuation in working in partnership with foster carers to enable them to provide warm, safe and caring family environments, so that children/young people's emotional health and development is promoted.
- To guide and work in partnership with foster carers so that they understand the importance of working and co-operating with schools, to ensure access to available opportunities to promote children and young people's attendance and their academic achievements.
- Maintaining positive relationships with foster carers to ensure participation in practice and Service Improvement.
- Refreshing, revising and driving forward an energetic recruitment campaign to attract prospective foster carers to Sefton Councils Fostering Service.
- To continue the positive collaboration work with Knowsley Council in the recruitment of foster carers for both Councils.
- Reviewing and developing foster carer support groups to include specific groups for connected carers.
- Reviewing the foster carers annual review process.
- The Teen scheme was not fully achieved during 2017/18 although progress was made to set the foundations for this which should begin in operation 2018. The teen scheme will endeavour to fully utilise a pool of recruitment foster carers specifically for young people with very complex needs.
- To continue to review targeted recruitment for specific areas.
- Continue to provide advice, information and guidance to those wishing to foster for Sefton.

- Sefton’s fostering service continues in its commitment to increase the numbers of foster carers for all ages of children/young people especially for teenagers and sibling groups.
- For our foster carers and young care leavers to continue to be actively involved in foster care recruitment.

Maria Spatuzzi
Fostering Team Manager

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