



**SEFTON MBC PEOPLE DIRECTORATE, CHILDREN'S  
SOCIALCARE**

**CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES  
FOSTERING STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

2018/2019

This Statement of Purpose is written as a description of fostering arrangements for children looked after by Sefton MBC. The Statement of Purpose is a requirement under the Fostering Regulations and Fostering National Minimum Standards. It is intended to provide a clear guide of the service for parents, professionals, the public, council members, and external organisations. To obtain a copy of the Statement of Purpose please contact the Fostering Service at Magdalen House, Stanley Road Bootle, L20 3NJ. Arrangements can be made for the document to be produced in larger print, Braille, audio or electronic format. Copies in alternative languages may also be obtained.

## **National Legislative and Policy framework**

Sefton Fostering Service is run in accordance with the principles outlined in the:

- Children Act 1989
- Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
- Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2013 (Amendments to the Children Act 1989)
- Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (2011)
- Children Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services (2011)
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010
- Care Planning and Fostering Regulations (Amendments) 2015
- The Disability and Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Children (Leaving care) Act 2000
- Training, Support and Development Standards (TSD) for Foster Carers

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- Training, Support and Development Standards (TSD) for Foster Carers

### FOSTERING SERVICES LOCATION

Sefton Fostering Service is based on the First Floor, Magdalen House, Trinity Road Bootle, Liverpool, L20 3NJ.

#### Service Manager

Peter Yates is the Service Manager for Corporate Parenting.

[Peter.yates@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.yates@sefton.gov.uk)

#### TEAM MANAGER

Team Manager is Maria Spatuzzi who has a social work and management qualification.

[maria.spatuzzi@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:maria.spatuzzi@sefton.gov.uk)

## **Principles, Aims & Standards of Care**

Sefton Council believes that all children needing substitute care should have the opportunity to live in a family. The Council's commitment and responsibilities to children and young people in its care is reflected in the Corporate Parenting Strategy which sets out Sefton Council's vision and commitment and explains how we, as the council, will be an effective and trustworthy and corporate parent for any child or young person who is in our care irrespective of their age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, faith or disability. Every good parent knows that children require a safe and secure environment in which to grow and thrive. Parents protect and support their children against the dangers and risks of life. Parents are ambitious for them and want them to reach their potential. Parents celebrate and share their achievements. A child who is cared for by the council has the right to expect everything from a corporate parent that would be expected from a good parent. Within the document is a pledge to children and young people and it reflects what children and young people told us what they wanted. The Fostering Service will ensure that Sefton's Pledge is embedded into practice at every level to drive up standards.<sup>1</sup>

The following aims and principles guide the practice of the Fostering Service:

- Whenever possible the child is kept within its own community, family and friendship network.
- Foster care is a partnership between the foster carers, supervising social workers and the child's social worker all working together with the child, their family and extended family (whenever possible). The focus will always be to achieve what is in the best interests of the child.
- The cultural, racial, linguistic and religious identities of children, their parents and foster carers will be respected in the development of the foster care service and in making and supporting individual placements.
- Children have the right to continuity in their lives in order to enable them to develop and maintain positive self-esteem and identity and to promote their physical and mental wellbeing and for them to achieve their full potential.
- The true cost of caring for a foster child must be met and foster carers given the opportunity to receive payment for their time, experience and skills
- Foster carers and social workers have a right to prepare for their role and a responsibility to use training opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills.
- Foster carers, social workers, looked after children and their parents must be able to call upon the placing agency for support.
- The responsibility of the placing agency to the foster carers, the purpose and goals of each placement and the responsibilities of all parties must be stated in writing.
- Formal decisions relating to an individual child's foster care should be taken in full consultation with them, their parents, and the foster carers.
- Foster carers, children and their parents should be able to challenge decisions and plans proposed by the fostering agency and be informed about how to make a

complaint or representation

- Foster carers should be consulted at every opportunity to develop and improve services to foster carers, their children, looked after children and their families.

In order to ensure every looked after child has a plan for permanence and following their three-month review, Permanence Planning Meetings are held once a week to ensure that children do not go into 'drift' whilst in a fostering placement. This has proved effective and has been in placement since 2010.

The Fostering Service is inspected against the Fostering Services National Minimum Standards. Managers, staff and foster carers all receive supervision, support and training to assist them in maintaining the Standards and as a means of them striving to exceed the Standards.

### **The Fostering Service**

Sefton's Fostering Service is committed to working in partnership with the community, the child and their family, the child's social worker and all other agencies in order to provide a high level of quality foster care to children looked after by Sefton. Thus, the fostering service provides and keeps the needs of children/young people central to its activities and in line with legislation and government guidance.

The fostering service is responsible for ensuring that foster carers have practical and emotional support, information, advice and training to provide a safe home and nurturing environment for children looked after. Decisions to accept or refuse applicants are based on clear eligibility criteria and are fully discussed with applicants.

The Fostering Service places high importance on the training and support of foster carers, regarding them as part of the professional team entrusted to provide and advocate for the physical, emotional and educational needs of children. The Training, Support and Development Standards (TSD) for foster care provide a national benchmark that set out what all foster carers shall know, understand and be able to do within 12 months of approval. The TSD standards form part of a foster carer's induction.

The training programme for approved foster carers offers an ever-increasing and comprehensive range of courses, ensuring that foster carers have the very best opportunity to be trained in the skills required to provide high quality care for children and young people. All foster carers including family and friend's carers and those offering short breaks are required to achieve the training, support and development standards (TSD) within the first 12 months of placement (or 18 months for Family and Friends foster carers). All foster carers will receive support and guidance to achieve this from their supervising worker and support groups. Learning and development opportunities are offered at introductory and intermediate levels allowing for the

ongoing development of foster carers' skills and knowledge base

There are two distinct fostering services offered by the team and these fall into the categories of mainstream fostering and Kinship care, connected persons known also as (family and friend's foster care).

Qualified social workers within the Fostering Service are registered with the Health and Social care professions (HCPC), and all staff is subject to three yearly DBS checks. All managers are suitably qualified and meet the minimum standards and regulations in relation to their experience and knowledge. Ongoing staff development is a priority of the fostering service.

The Fostering Service has a single point of referral and a duty office system that provides advice on all fostering enquiries, fostering placement issues regarding children aged 0 – 17 and support to foster carers. The team keeps up-to-date information on in-house foster care capacity and availability. The team is available from 9.00am to 5.30pm, Monday to Thursday and 9.00 am to 4.00pm Friday. For out of hour's emergency placements contact is made with the emergency duty social worker that is provided with information about foster carer availability. There is 24-hour support, 365 days a year to foster carers and this is provided by the Emergency Duty Service on T: 0151 934.3555

### **Status and Constitution**

As a local authority, Sefton MBC holds statutory powers and responsibilities in relation to fostering services and looked after children. Acting on behalf of the local authority, the Fostering Service actively endeavours to ensure that equality and diversity is incorporated into all aspects of service delivery. All prospective foster carers are recruited and supported on the basis of their ability to undertake the fostering task, and the needs of the service regardless of their age, race, religion, class, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

### **Organisational Arrangements and Management Structure**

The Fostering Service is located in Magdalen House, Trinity, Road Bootle. The Fostering Service along with childcare teams, who are also based at Magdalen House. There is a transparent senior management structure within the directorate for the management of the Fostering Service. Dwayne Johnson is the director social care and health. Head of Service is Vicky Buchanan.

There are clear arrangements in place in the absence of a team manager. On day-to-day issues the Lead Practitioner or the service manager Peter Yates can be consulted.

A pool of staff that is managed by an admin team manager provides administrative support for the Fostering Service. There is a panel administrator who is also responsible for the function of the panel and maintenance of the panel booking system

There is a marketing officer who is responsible in providing high quality responsive services to prospective foster carers; and also maintains and develops quality assurance systems relating to referrals; to provide relevant and current literature for applicants, also maintain and develop all forms of media promotions associated with the role including participation in regional events.

Social workers with case responsibility for children in foster care are in various teams such as, locality, corporate parenting.

### **Services Provided**

The Fostering Service is a generic team made up of qualified and unqualified staff. Qualified staff undertake foster carer recruitment, assessment, training, support, professional development and reviews. The team is responsible for assessing and supporting family and friends as carers and for Special Guardianship carers. There are processes in place so that the Fostering Service can continually improve effectiveness and efficiency, which in turn will improve service delivery and outcomes for children, their families, foster carers, social workers and other agencies.

Once foster carers are approved they are allocated a supervising social worker that will make regular home visits and telephone calls. Supervising social workers provide support to foster carers by offering information, advice, access to foster carer support groups and training opportunities.

The Fostering Service delivers specific and general training and also commissions training from other agencies including from the private sector. As well as delivering formal training for foster carers the supervising social workers take on the role of supporting foster carers with their professional development through the annual foster carer personal development plan.

Supervising social workers also have a role in ensuring children are safe and being cared for properly in terms of their health, education, access to leisure and having contact with their family (where appropriate). Thus, supervising social workers have a “monitoring and challenging role” as well as a supporting role.

Foster carer’s performance is monitored throughout the year by supervised, planned and unannounced visits and through an annual review. The reviewing process includes obtaining the views and comments of the foster carer and the fostered child and the carers own children. The Fostering Service developed the process for the independent reviewing of foster carers for their annual review. The Team also undertakes the following tasks:

- Viability Assessments
- Family and Friends Carers Assessments (Reg 24 connected persons) and support to family/friends as required by the Fostering Services Regulations
- Special Guardian Assessments and support to Special Guardians.

The Fostering Service has a responsibility in completing a response to the needs of local children and Sefton's commitment to ensuring that where children are unable to live with their birth parents, the first priority is to consider whether there is a suitable placement within their extended family or friend's network. The team is responsible for ensuring that children receive good quality care with extended family or friends and it provides preparation and training, workshops, support groups, individual supervisory and support sessions, a duty service, and financial support (as appropriate) during the assessment. The team is also responsible for supporting Special Guardians, where the support plan identifies a package of support over and above the financial support agreement. The supervising worker presents annual reviews, of friends and family carers, to the fostering panel.

### **Delegated Authority (DA)**

The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2010 & 2013 set out the principles of Delegated Authority in Foster Care placements.

A Placement Planning Meeting is held within 5 days of a placement being made and delegated authority will be discussed and managed according to Sefton's DA policy. Children's social workers are responsible for completing this form in partnership with the Foster Carer, their SSW, the child according to their age and understanding, birth parents and any other relevant stakeholders in the placement.

The SSW will ensure that this written information is given to the Foster Carer along with the Placement Information Record and a copy of the child's Care Plan.

### **Other Support to Foster Carers and Children Placed with Them**

Foster carers and the children placed with them are able to receive support from: the Leaving Care provision: Independent Visitors and Advocates Scheme: Children's Rights Service: Children's Participation Officer: Head of the Virtual School: Children in Public Care Team (Education): and nurses for looked after children (Health). The Fostering Service has access to a Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) who provides a service for children, foster carers and prospective foster carers; CAMHS also gives advice and support to social workers. Sefton also have their own Therapeutic team which consists of social workers who are also qualified in psychotherapy, therapy and counselling for children and young people who are looked after.

### **Types of Placement**

#### **Short term Fostering**

Foster Carers approved for short term can look after children, within the age range for which they are approved. If a foster carer wishes to look after a child long term there will be an updated assessment, with matching and Panel approval of the foster carer.

### **Emergency Placements**

There are foster carers who are available to take placements outside of normal office hours. Sometimes it is necessary to make an unplanned placement during office hours and the Fostering team may approach any foster carer if they have a vacancy and a match can be made.

### **Long term fostering**

For some children, who maintain close and significant relationships with their birth parents or relatives, long term fostering may be a more appropriate placement choice than adoption. Children placed with long-term carers tend to be older, whereas children under 10 years of age younger children are more their plan is for adoption.

### **Short breaks**

Sefton provides short breaks for children with profound or permanent disabilities through the Children with Disabilities Team or through specific residential care. The Children with Disabilities Team recruits their own day carers for families as well as supporting parents to access the direct payment scheme where they can purchase care where and when they want and from a provider of their choice.

### **Kinship Care (family and friends)**

These carers are part of a child's extended family or friendship network and as such are able to provide continuity of care and promote positive identity and self-esteem.

### **Staying Put Placements;**

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 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

### **Fostering Teenagers**

Many children/young people in care in Sefton are aged 11 or over, yet fewer

people come forward to offer to care for them. Therefore, many teenagers may not be living with Sefton carers, and will be away from friends, school and their local community.

Teenagers are often portrayed negatively and this may influence people's views about teenagers, however, caring for this age group is very rewarding because it is about growing young people into adults and helping them to discover their place in the community.

#### Parent and Child Fostering

This type of placement is for young people who have become parents at a young age who need support and guidance in caring for their own child. This has been identified as a key area for development and will involve Foster Carers with the appropriate training, skills and experience to manage a teenager and also have knowledge of child development.

#### Matching

We work to match children carefully to proposed carers as closely as possible in relation to their culture race and religion to ensure that children and young people in foster care have positive view of their own identity. Where this is not possible, we work to establish community links to address children's cultural needs and offer training for foster carers.

#### **Numbers, Relevant Qualifications and Experience of Staff**

The Fostering Service considers itself to be a learning environment and encourages student placements and continuous accredited professional development for all staff. The Team reports to the Service Manager. It has a full time Team Manager a Lead practitioner a team of admin support staff, a part-time recruitment and marketing officer post, a panel administrator. The Fostering Team is made up of qualified and non-social work qualified staff that recruit, assess, train and support foster carers. In addition to this the team undertake assessments of connected persons and Special guardianship, providing support as is appropriate to the level of need.

The Team Manager acts as the Fostering Panel Advisor and is supported by a Lead Practitioner to manage the day to day operational requirements. There are 10 social work posts within the current establishment and their roles are split with some social workers as dedicated assessors and some as supervising social workers, and the remainder undertaking dual functions. There are 4 placement support workers who provide practical support to looked after children and young people and foster carers.

All social workers in the Fostering Service hold professional qualifications (DipSW, CQSW, BA Hons in social work or other international accredited social work qualifications) and they are all registered with the HCPC All staff have DBS checks that are renewed on a three-yearly basis and references are held on file. Supervising social workers are experienced in undertaking assessments and they work under close supervision.

Managers have achieved or are in the process of achieving management qualifications, such as the Diploma in Management.

Maria Spatuzzi is the Team Manager of the Fostering Team. Qualified in 2004 (DIPSW) and holds the NVQ Level 5 in Management Award. Maria has extensive experience in fostering, working as a supervising social worker and assistant team manager.

## **Complaints and Allegations**

Sefton has applied a clear policy defining complaints and how they are dealt with. Children's Services complaints and representations procedure is described in the literature available for children and young people upon placement (Welcome Pack) and via the local authority Complaints Officer.

Anyone who receives services has a right to complain if they think that something that should have been done has not been done or that something has been done badly or incorrectly. We welcome complaints as an opportunity to learn lessons and put matters right. We also welcome comments or compliments as a way of learning about our practice and use them as an integrated part of our Quality Assurance processes. Information for carers on the procedures for dealing with complaints both by and about them, and about allegations of inappropriate behaviour is available through our complaint's procedure.

All allegations are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) located in the Safeguarding Service.

Following an allegation or complaint against foster carers, the case is presented to the Fostering Panel to ensure scrutiny and for recommendations as to the carer's suitability to continue providing care. In all cases the needs of the children remain paramount. All carers will have access to the Foster Talk advice line for support and will also receive support from their supervising social worker. An independent worker can be appointed to support carers through the process of investigation if required.

## **Recruitment**

Marketing and publicity staff that design and coordinate recruitment campaigns supports the fostering service. Generally, campaigns build on existing links with the local community to ensure the service recruits carers from a wide range of backgrounds. Throughout the year the service has run carefully coordinated campaigns, which include a wide range of media such as poster sites, leaflet-drops, community events, information sessions, transport and press advertising, digital campaigns which include Google, Facebook, and Twitter.

The Fostering Service has developed a range of materials in order to aid the recruitment of foster carers. The website provides a comprehensive and wide range of information for potential foster carers including a questions and answers page and it has an on-line application registration link. [www.sefton.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/fostering)

### **Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers**

Following an initial enquiry, applicants will first speak to a worker on the telephone that will collect basic information including details about accommodation, family composition and motivation. If both the applicant and the social worker are in agreement that the application should proceed, an appointment for a more in-depth discussion will be arranged. This will normally take place in the applicant's home.

The Fostering Service has introduced a two-stage process for fostering as per The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Regulations (Miscellaneous Amendments Regulations 2013).

If a decision is made to continue with a full assessment, the applicant will be invited to attend the Skills to Foster preparation groups to learn more about the fostering task. The preparation training is conducted over three days and includes the fostering role, values, legislation and regulations, attachment, behaviour management, recording, risks, allegations and safe care. The social worker will use the information gathered to write a report, which identifies strengths and competencies, as well as areas for further development.

On successful completion of the Preparation Group, potential applicants will meet with the social worker over a period of time to work together gathering evidence about their skills and knowledge which are relevant to fostering and to offer them advice.

The process involves discussing their own life experiences, including their childhood and relationships, and how they brought up their own children (if they have any) as well as discussion about their understanding of the fostering task.

Potential foster carers are vetted to ensure that any child placed with them is safeguarded. Vetting involves obtaining references from people that know them well, (including professionals, friends and family and ex partners) and having an Enhanced DBS check. In Sefton foster carers are also subject to a medical report at the time of their application and subsequent medical health checks of their health if it is of concern.

The report will be shared with the applicants before being submitted to the Fostering Panel with a recommendation for approval. The Panel will make a recommendation after considering the report and talking with the social worker and/or the prospective foster carers who are always invited and supported to attend Panel. The Agency Decision Maker makes

the final decision. The appeal process is the same if panel recommend the applicants are unsuitable to the ADM.

The safety of children is central to the delivery of the Fostering Service and underpins the Recruitment, preparation, assessment and continuing development of foster carers as well as the support and monitoring of placements.

Sefton's Children Safeguarding Board's Child Protection Procedures provide a Comprehensive framework for safeguarding the welfare of children and contain specific procedures for dealing with children missing from care, and allegations of abuse made against foster carers.

### **Annual Reviews**

The foster placement regulations require that foster carers are reviewed annually to consider their continuing suitability. Additional reviews can be completed at any time if there is a change in circumstances or an issue of concern.

The review is usually carried out at the foster carers' home. It is a two-way process in which the foster carers can express their views about the Fostering Service or other services with the independent reviewing officer. The Reviewing Officer (RO) chairs the review meeting and prepares a separate report of the meeting with recommendations.

Looked after children, over 5 years of age, in placement at the time of the Review will be consulted for their views through a specially designed consultation form.

A report of the First Annual Review or any review in response to a change of circumstance or concern is presented to Fostering Panel for consideration and their recommendation. Depending on the severity of the issue/concern, additional training/support may be provided in the first instance. However, the matter may be presented to the fostering panel. Panel will give the carer(s) an opportunity to express their views and will consider all the information provided to panel. The foster carer(s) will be provided with advice and support from Foster Talk which is an independent support service in these circumstances. If the fostering panel reaches a recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) that the carer(s) is unsuitable the ADM forms a proposed decision (qualifying determination). If this is to terminate approval a letter is then sent to the carer(s) stating this and giving reasons. The foster carer(s) then has 28 days within which to make representation to the decision maker or to apply to the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) for an independent review on behalf of the Secretary of State.

### **The Fostering Panel**

Sefton's Fostering Panel includes people with a wide range of experience and interests. The Panel is constituted according to the Fostering Services Regulations and has 10 members.

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There is an Independent Chairperson, Chris Dingley and the Deputy Chairperson is Maureen Hart; both of these people are suitably qualified and experienced to undertake their role. The Panel has representatives from health, education, a person who was once looked after and a foster carer from another fostering agency. The Panel Adviser is Maria Spatuzzi Team Manager Fostering Service.

The Panel considers new approval applications for short- term long term foster carers, family and friend's (connected persons) foster carers and the annual review of existing foster carers. Once approved by Sefton, foster carers can only work for this authority. We encourage and support applicants and existing foster carers to attend the Panel to which their report is presented.

The Panel makes recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker for Sefton. All decisions are notified to the applicants in writing. If applicants disagree with the decision they can follow the Representations/ Complaints procedure.

If a foster carer decides to resign, a brief report will be made to the Fostering Panel and their approval will be terminated and their name removed from Sefton's Register of Foster Carers. If the Panel considers that a foster carer is no longer suitable, the Panel can recommend to the Agency Decision maker that they are de-registered. The Fostering Panel produces quality assurance minutes to the Agency Decision Maker.

### **Support, Supervision & Training of Foster Carers**

Foster carers are managed (supported and supervised) by qualified supervising social workers from the Fostering Service. The supervising social worker's role covers a variety of activities including advice, training, practicalities of equipment and finance and assisting foster carers to carry out their task appropriately. The supervising social worker also has a responsibility to ensure that children are safeguarded whilst they are placed with foster carers and as such supervising social workers will monitor and check compliance against the foster carer's written agreement.

All foster carers are encouraged to attend support groups, which enable them to share experiences of fostering and for them to have a forum to network, socialise or raise any issues or good ideas. The Fostering Service's Training Co-ordinator has responsibility to co-ordinate and deliver a training programme for all foster carers that meet identified group and individual learning needs and responds to different learning styles. The Training Co-ordinator within the fostering team is able to provide information about specialised external training, self-study packages, videos, CD/DVD's or any relevant books or resources to help with the fostering task. Foster carers are required to maintain a Training and Learning Portfolio and are encouraged to include information about skills and qualifications from previous jobs/vocations, which can be used/adapted in their role as a foster carer. The Fostering Service's Training Co-ordinator will also deliver training to assist Foster Carers in

understanding the TSD Standards and provide the underpinning knowledge required to complete them.

There is a Training Calendar that is reviewed on an annual basis for foster carers and staff. A 'Payment for Skills' scheme (Foster Carers Career Progressions Scheme) has been developed that will recognise the skills, knowledge and experience of carers against an agreed set of competencies for each level. Appropriate training is in place to run concurrently with the requirement for the levels of skills.

### **Independent Support for Foster Carers**

Foster carers are eligible for individual membership of Foster Talk. Foster Talk provides foster carers with a comprehensive range of specialised support services that benefit the whole of the fostering household. This allows them access to advice and support, including legal advice, independently of the service. The Fostering Service will automatically on approval pay for the foster carer's annual subscription.

### **Sefton Corporate Parenting Strategy Children and Young People's Pledge:**

This is a list of our promises to all children and young people in care and to young people moving on from care to adult life.

#### **We promise you will have a named social worker who you know how to contact and who will keep in touch with you**

This means:

- You will have your social worker's address, phone number and email so you can contact them when you need to
- When you leave a message for your social worker we will make sure someone returns your call as soon as they can. We will try to do this within 24 hours
- Your social worker will keep in touch with you regularly to check you are ok – this will be every 4 weeks for the first six months and then at least every 6 weeks
- Your social worker will only be changed when it is completely unavoidable

#### **We promise we will involve you in all the decisions that affect your life**

This means we will:

- **Ask** you what you want

- **Listen** to what you say
- **Act** on what you have told us

We can't promise to do everything you ask, but when we can't, we will always explain why

**We promise that you will have a care plan that is up-to-date and meets your needs**

- This plan will include all the support you need, including any support to meet your religious, racial or cultural needs
- It will be written down and you will be given a copy of this
- It will be regularly reviewed – at least every 6 months
- The meetings to review the plan will be run by an independent person called an Independent Reviewing Officer
- You will know the name of your Independent Reviewing Officer and how to contact them
- You will be given copies of the notes from your review meetings
- We will make sure that your care plan contains all the positive things about you

**We promise we will do our best to find a home that suits you**

- This will be a home where you are cared for, feel safe and are supported
- We will take our time to find you a home that supports your needs

**We promise we will help you stay in touch with your family and any other people who are important to you**

- If you are not allowed to see someone, your social worker will make sure you understand the reasons why
- We will listen to your opinions when we are arranging contact with family and friends
- We will try to place you somewhere that is not too far away from family and friends if it is safe to do so

**We promise to help you to do the best you possibly can at school**

- We will give your school all the information they need to look after you properly
- If you do not make as much progress as you can we will give you extra help to catch up, both at and outside school

- We will make sure that you are involved in drawing up your personal education plan to support you at school and you will get a copy of this
- We will make sure you get a place at the best possible school for you
- If you have to move placement wherever possible we will try to keep you at the same school
- We will support you if you have problems at school

**We promise to encourage you to develop your talents, interests and hobbies and to support you to do things you enjoy**

- We will make sure that you have a leisure pass
- We will celebrate your successes and achievements
- We will support you to take part in hobbies and interests

**We promise to take an interest in your health and encourage you to be healthy**

- We will make sure you get regular health and dental check-ups
- You will be given the name, address, phone number and email for the nurse for children and young people in care who can give you confidential advice and help you to be as healthy as you can
- We will support you with any appointments you have or treatment you need
- We will give you information to help you keep yourself safe and healthy

**We promise to work with you to give you all the help and support you need to make a success of moving on from care to adult life**

- You won't be expected to move on from care before you are 18
- Whatever you decide to do when you leave school (whether you want to find a job, go to college or university or do something else) we will give you help and support to achieve this
- We will make sure that you have support to find suitable accommodation
- We will not move you on from care until you have found suitable accommodation
- We will stay in touch with you until you are 21 (or 24 if you are still in education)
- We will make sure you are involved in developing your pathway plan and you will be given a copy
- Your pathway plan will be regularly reviewed – at least every 6 months
- We will make sure you get information about leaving care well before it happens

- We will link you up with the Leaving Care Team who will offer you ongoing support when you do, eventually, leave care

**We promise we will work hard to sort out any problems or worries you have**

- We will make sure you know how to get an independent advocate. That's someone who will listen to you and work with you to get things stopped, started or changed
- We will make sure you have all the information you need to make a complaint, including the name and contact details of the Children's Complaints Officer
- We promise to take all complaints seriously and deal with them fairly and as quickly as possible
- We can't always promise to do what you ask, but we will explain the reasons why
- We will make sure that your social worker has the time to see you regularly

**APPENDIX 1**

**Fostering Service Management Structure**

Director of Social Care and Health  
Dwayne Johnson

Head of Children's Social Care  
Vicky Buchanan

Service Manager  
Peter Yates

Fostering Team Manager  
Maria Spatuzzi

Lead Practitioner  
Michelle Cunningham

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **The fostering Service**

First Floor  
Magdalen House  
Trinity Road  
Bootle  
Liverpool 3NJ

### **OFSTED**

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester M1 2WD  
Tel: 0300 123 1231  
email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

### **Foster Talk**

Oak Tree House  
Waterside  
Hanbury Road  
Stoke Prior  
Bromsgrove B60 4FD