



This is how *WE* do it

KINSHIP CARE/CONNECTED PERSON

LEVEL 2 WORKBOOK

Name

Date submitted

Why is this needed?

This workbook describes a little bit of the journey you have gone on alongside the children to help them settle and grow in your care. Achieving Level two as a foster carer shows you have gained experience and can put that into words. By the end of the booklet you will have taken a bit of time out to think and explain some of the ways you have been planned and intentional in your approach to giving your family member(s) the loving care they need and deserve.

“The children are doing well with us, it wasn’t by accident it was through hard work and never giving up”. (Jess Parr)

“Seeing it all written down, I can see the children have done well and realise we have done a lot together”

Why is a different booklet needed for kinship families?

Fostering for a family member is different. This booklet was designed alongside kinship families to help reflect their experiences and make it more user friendly.

“We aren’t caring for lots of different children and so can’t talk about the whole range of fostering experiences but we have cared for our niece and nephews for 6 years now. We know a lot about what they have needed and how we made that happen whilst caring for them in our home.” (Jess Parr)

It is important that kinship families stories are told not through a mainstream fostering lens as it distorts it. It can also add to a sense of frustration of not being visible or valued. (Angela Siteo)

When should I fill this in?

When you have a plan to work towards Skills Level Two. The children need to have been living with you for some time so you can speak about their experience

How do I fill it in?

Please jot down examples of how you have been caring for your family member. Ideas are provided to prompt you. You may have other ideas. These prompts are just to assist.

Do I need fostering experience to fill it in?

To complete the Level 2 portfolio you will need to have completed Level 1 - Training Support and Development Standards and have a good level of fostering experience.

Who needs to fill it in?

The booklet should reflect the views of both carers if you are. Noting who has put forward the view in brackets would be useful.

What if I get stuck?

Your supervising Social Worker can help you think of examples as they will have an understanding of what you have been doing. Some carers try filling in a section and then send it off to the Training Development Officer to look over and advise. Some carers prefer to attend one of the workbook workshops to work through the booklet Others prefer to complete the document and send. Angela Siteo (Training Development Officer) worked with Kinship carers to put this document together and is very happy to advise and support you with completing it.

Who will sign off the workbook?

It will then be checked and signed off by the Training Development Officer.

What was it like filling it in?

“My partner and I got through the level 1 workbook and found it quite enjoyable to fill in and list. You don’t realise how much you’ve accomplished and achieved with your looked after children until questions are asked. When we looked at workbook 2, it was a lot more detail oriented, to be honest, we found it quite daunting. We kept putting it off and putting it off. Eventually, we had some free time, a rare thing, and we both sat down and read through each question and thought about our answers carefully. Workbook 2 is more in depth definitely, but it just makes you think about each stage and scenario of your looked after children differently. It took us quite a while to fill in, but it was rewarding to do so. In a way, it made us question different methods we were using to raise our looked after children and think differently. Once we got started answering the questions, we flew through it! Now we’ve completed it, it’s a relief. We can focus on the courses provided now and look forward to attaining level 2 pass.” (Chris Gwynne)

Examples One

1.1 Working with others

Working with others to organise their education

J has just started nursery on the 22/2/21, we eased him into it with a shorter week then he went up in time to 18 hours a week in preparation to his full time government funded 30 hours which starts 12/04/21.

We have liaised with the council and the Nursery to ensure this was completed in the appropriate time frame as expected.

We have a work book for J’s nursery that tells us what he has been doing day by day, and challenge when it’s not been recorded, as this gives us a better idea of how he’s doing. We have a very good relationship with the staff and inform them if he has not slept too good the night before, on the very rare occasion he needs a nap. H is not at nursery yet, we have spoken to her health visitor to see if she can attend after she turns 2. Until she does we ritually do numbers colours and ABC’s.

Example Two

1.1 Working with others

Working with others to organise their education

When the children were first placed in our care they were in a school around 12 miles away from our home, with a commute which took around 40 mins each morning at night. One child was only 3 years old and attending nursery, the other had just turned 4 and was in reception. This meant long journeys with young children in busy traffic. This was very tiring for them and they often fell asleep in the car on the way home after a busy day in school. This was interfering with their bedtime routine so we had to look at schools closer to us.

Once we knew the children were not going back to birth parents we found a school around 5 minutes from us. We worked closely with the children to plan to introduce them to their new teacher and class mates. With close work with the school and social workers the children are now settled and love their new school and friends. We have annual PEP meetings and make sure the children's needs are met.

1. Health



How are you addressing these aspects of parenting?

Please give examples (or how you have an understanding of them)

1.1 Bringing about significant improvements in daily routines and healthy living

- Supported children with their sleep / bedwetting / soiling / obesity

1.2 Monitoring and supervising diets

- Monitored special diets e.g. coeliac, allergies / intolerances etc.

1.3 Dealing with serious health issues

- Managed significant episodes of ill health or ongoing medical conditions or physical disability
- Supported a child to manage their condition?
- Monitored their medication or symptoms?

1.4 Supporting their mental & emotional wellbeing

- Worked with counsellors/school mentors/CAMHS/
- Supported children with low mood/self-harm

1.5. Key tasks of foster/carers to promote health

- Taking practical steps to promote their health
- Registered children for services?
- Gained advice/spoken to/emailed medical professional?
- Recorded advice given and actions taken?

2 Education



How are you addressing these aspects of parenting?

Please give examples (or how you have an understanding of them)

2.1 Working with others to organise their education

- Transported the child to school
- Informed teaching and pastoral staff about the child's need
- Attend school events
- Supported a school/nursery /playgroup transition
- Worked with learning mentors, portage, educational psychologist

Challenged decisions/plans about your child's education

2.2 Supporting improvements in attendance

- Prepared child for school
- Supported child to establish a routine to help them
- Identified reasons child struggled at school
- Considered needs of preschool children to support attendance and involvement in playgroup

2.3 Promote achievement

- Supported child's access to personalised services
- Spotted and highlighted areas of developmental delay
- Planned for use of grant money e.g. pupil premium grant
- Considered what toys/books/equipment is are needed to promote learning at home



3 Social Emotional and Behavioural Development



How are you addressing these aspects of parenting?

Please give examples (or how you have an understanding of them)

3.1 Identifying delay in their social & emotional development

- Reported to other professionals about the children's emotional needs
- Sought advice from speech and language service
- Discussed progress with Health visitors

3.2 Managing emotional and behavioural difficulties

- Supported children who have been neglected/ abused

3.3 Praise

- Reflected on the role of praise and reward in encouraging positive behaviour

3.4 Promoting activities

- Supported child to attend activities sport, play, music, drama, art etc



4 Identity



How are you addressing these aspects of parenting?

Please give examples (or how you have an understanding of them)

4.2 Helping them to understanding their story

- Spoke to workers or other family members about common explanations
- Answered questions about their family and why they live with you
- Answered questions about their future plans
- Supported them to call previous foster parents
- Listened to and reassured child as they talk about traumatic memories
- How have you helped them understand how the dynamics of the family have altered

4.2 Gathering memories

- Helped children and young people to collect, understand and value special items to cement memories or relationships
- Noted down stories /comments

4.3 Seeking out specialist support

(support with life story work, play therapy, counselling)

- Sought out organisations that can help a young person with their identity issues
- Supported children or young people with their racial, sexual or birth family identity

4.5 Challenging discrimination

- Supported foster child who are experiencing discrimination
- Supported a child who was targeted at school for being looked after or being different?

Public attitudes to children in care & care leavers



5 Contact /Family time



How are you addressing these aspects of parenting?

Please give examples (or your understanding of them)

5.1 Supporting contact

- Offered transport for time between foster children and parents (or significant others).
- Observed contact
- Recorded child's behaviour and comments
- Reported findings

5.2 Reviewing plans

- Considered the balance between children's and birth parents rights
- Considered the balance between children's immediate and long-term needs
- Captured the wishes and feelings of the child in relation to contact
- Recognised the competing needs of children in a sibling group

5.3 Managing expectations

- Prepared children for contact (prepared activities, photos etc)
- Prepared adults for contact
- Drawn up contact plans/agreement
- Discussed expectations for virtual/online contact

5.4 Managing challenges

- Sought support or mediation where there was a difficulty in contact or arranging contact
- Ended contact (when supervising) when not in child's best interest
- Requested care planning meeting to resolve complex issues
- Reported issues of risk where birth family are not keeping to the agreed plans for the child



6 Selfcare / Developing independence



How are you addressing these aspects of parenting?

Please give examples (or your understanding of them)

6.1 Promoting independence

- Helped children to gain skills in decision making and negotiation; practical household skills budgeting and managing money; cooking, cleaning etc.
- Supported children with Pathway planning
- Supported children young people in transition from being looked after

6.2 Promoting decision making

Encouraged children in placement to become involved in decisions

e.g. holidays, days out, clothing, decorating, house rules, celebrations, events etc.

6.3 Helping child's voice to be heard

- Helped a child have their say in a meeting or at school
- Acted as an informal advocate
- Accessed an independent advocate for a child in your care
- Supported children to become involved in consultation
- Encouraged child to fill in questionnaires or share their views for their looked after children review, foster carers annual review or service reviews



7 Joint working



How are you addressing these aspects of parenting?

Please give examples (or your understanding of them)

7.1 Maintaining good communication

- Written records which separate fact from opinion
- Written records which indicate triggers for behaviour
- Passed on information to social workers about significant incidents or difficulties experienced by children
- Used professional meetings to air disagreements
- Used support from fostering service/ children's social worker to resolve sensitive matters

7.2 Decision Making

- Used the Decision Making tool (delegated authority) to clarify roles in relation to decisions.

7.3 Support for yourself /others

- Asked for support
- Reflected on opinion of birth parents needs and responses
- Offered support to another carer
- Taken an active role in support groups

7.4 Supporting development of the Fostering service

- Replied to Annual Fostering Service Survey
- Shared your experience at skills to foster training or information sessions,
- Attended working groups
- Attended recruitment events



8 Attachment



How are you addressing these aspects of parenting?

Please give examples (or your understanding of them)

8.1. Responding to attachment behaviour

- Planned for and managed a child's separation anxiety from you

8.2. Being sensitive to a child's emotional needs

- Identified a child's hidden emotional need
- Recognised when 'attention seeking' behaviour is based in a child's sense of insecurity

8.3. Managing emotions

- Helped a child regulate or manage their emotions
- Soothed a child to calm down and gain control of their emotions

8.4. Repairing the relationship

- Taught child it is OK to say sorry
- Reminded child that you will take good care of them even if you do not agree with an action they have taken
- Helped them cope with their sense of shame



9 Self Development



How are you addressing these aspects of parenting?

Please give examples (or your understanding of them)

9.1 Self Care

- Sought help to support you or a child
- Seeking out ways to you can support your own mental wellbeing

9.2 Continuing to learn

- Identified training you would benefit from
- Learning from feedback to change/improve your practice
- Put into practice an idea from a training course
- Developed your understanding of children's needs

9.3 Supporting your family/friends to adjust to life as fostering family

- Recognised the impact that fostering has had on your family
- Helped your family to integrate a new child into your unit
- Support your family/friends to balance their own needs with those of a child or young person
- Taken steps to take to address conflict and disagreements

10 Safeguarding Children/safer care



How are you addressing these aspects of parenting?

Please give examples (or your understanding of them)

10.1. Being proactive in health and safety issues

- Put in place plans to reduce risk in your home

10.2. Understand that is vital quality information/planning

- Promoted a child's wellbeing by requesting further information/meetings to take place

10.3. Promoting children's skills to keep themselves safe

- Educated child on risks and how to manage them

10.4. Being aware of key policies

- Missing policy

10.5. Protecting children from abuse

- Recognised possible occurrence of abuse
- Identified a potentially abusive or risky situations
- Taken measures to protect the child/YP

10.6. Accessing advice internet safety

- Find information for the Child exploitation and Online protection agency
- Share messages about online safety
- Put on blocks on devices
- Agreed digital agreement for the family
- Play educational games with children to support their knowledge of online safety



