

Introduction

Community Foster Care (CFC) recruits foster carers who share in our ethos and values in ensuring children and young people are at the heart of all that we do. We always work to achieve the highest standards of practice, it is therefore essential that our own learning and development is a continual process – ensuring that we promote and nurture the skills, knowledge, empathy and resilience needed to make a positive difference to the lives of the children we look after.

CFC is committed to continual improvement, to achieve this we must become skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge. Reflective practice underpins every aspect of our work, learning from our own experiences as well as sharing experiences of good practice with others. New knowledge and insights should be used to inform our day to day practice, providing space for new ideas, different perspectives and creative thinking.

Our learning and development programmes are based on evidenced informed practice with a particular focus on attachment theory and practice. This supports us to provide sensitive and appropriate care which can help children and young people recover from trauma and damage, helping them build positive relationships with others. Integrated into our approach is the concept of 'PACE' – Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy - (Dan Hughes) - as a way to ensure our care givers are able to support and attune with children and young people in a positive and enabling way.

Community Foster Care's Learning and Development Framework has been developed in order to provide minimum standards of competency for all approved Foster Carers. The Framework provides opportunity for carers to further develop their knowledge and skills, developing areas of expertise as they move through their fostering journey.

The Framework provides clarity around the core courses which are mandatory for all carers. Further specialist courses will be provided, informed by carer's individual personal development plans.

Methods of delivery

CFC will provide a range of courses, with the methods of delivery varying according to the course content and the topic covered. This is to provide the best opportunity for carer participation, recognising that carer's are required to manage training alongside other commitments. The courses can be delivered in 1:1 sessions with the Supervising Social Worker, via carer support groups, on line, face to face from an external provider or independent research/reading.

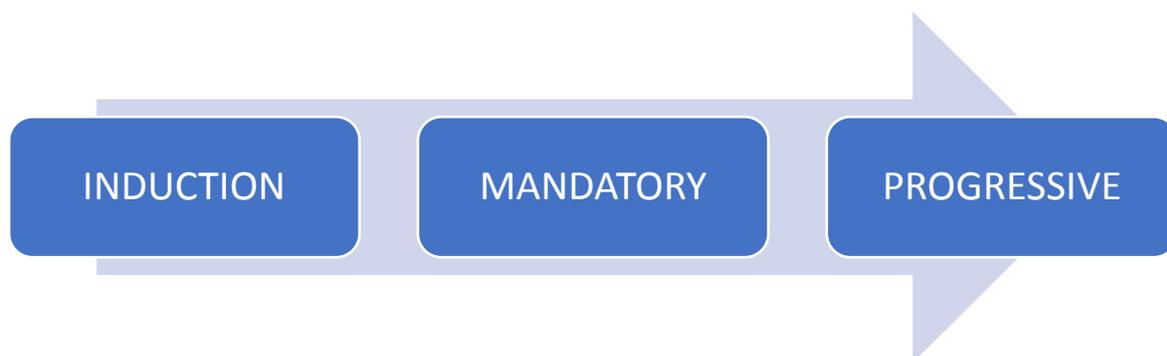
Foster carers and staff also have access to a range of resources (see appendix 1); which can be accessed at any point in order to support independent learning and continual professional development.

Role of Support Group

Carer support groups play an integral role within the agency. CFC has a strong value base; our ethos is to ensure that foster carers and staff feel that they are part of a mutually supportive and respectful community. Relationships are valued and support groups provide the space for these relationships to be nurtured and preserved. Support groups are essential if we are to have the opportunity to reflect and learn together as a group, sharing our own experiences and learning from the experiences and knowledge of others. As highlighted above, support groups will often be used as the vehicle for delivering training, either via presentation/discussion with CFC social workers or

presentations from external organisations/professionals. Support groups can often provide a more informal structure to training, sometimes allowing greater opportunity for discussion and group learning.

Expectations on Foster Carers – The Framework



Induction Training

All foster carers will be required to complete their induction training, alongside completion of the TSD portfolio within the first 12 months following approval. There are 6 induction courses which will complement and support the competency based TSD programme. Table 1 below details the induction courses to be completed as well as examples of how these courses may be delivered. The content and learning outcomes for each of these 6 courses is clearly defined (See Appendix 2).

Table 1

INDUCTIONS - Course	On-line	1:1	Support Group	Facilitated	Guided study
Induction into CFC		√	√	√	√
Safe caring, health and well - being		√	√	√	
Safeguarding – (to include all family members)	√	√	√	√	
Promoting Positive Behaviour (CFC Policy)		√	√	√	
Recording, Storing and Sharing (Managing) Sensitive Information		√	√	√	√
Medication (CFC Policy)	√	√	√	√	

Mandatory Training

As well as the initial induction, each approved carer will be required to complete a range of mandatory training courses of which there are 8 categories. These are;

First Aid	Promoting Educational Attainment	Child development
Safeguarding	Therapeutic development	Administering medication
	Equality and diversity	Staying put

Some of these categories lend themselves to greater flexibility in regard to the content and material covered. For example, Safeguarding training might include courses around On-line Safety, Child Sexual Exploitation or Modern-Day Slavery. The programme as detailed in Table 2 below, provides opportunity for carers to attend a variety of courses, broadening their knowledge and skills set whilst ensuring that all carers have a thorough understanding of the key issues within each of the 8 mandatory categories. As with the induction, the mandatory courses can be delivered using a variety of methods, this will depend upon the content to be covered, number of participants, accessibility etc. *(Please note, the frequency at which these mandatory courses are to be completed varies according to the category covered.)*

Table 2

MANDATORY CATAGORY	Subjects	Frequency	On-line	1:1	Support Group	Facilitate d	Guided study
First Aid	1-day emergency paediatric	3 years				√	
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSE • FGM • Managing Allegations • On line safety • Sexting/pornography • Prevent • Risk assessments 	All Carers to complete two topics to be covered per annum as minimum.	√	√	√	√	
Administration of Medication		Initially and then as required	√	√	√	√	
Promoting Educational Attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with schools • Understanding Attainment • Promoting Education at home 	Initially and then as required	√	√	√	√	
Staying Put arrangements		Initially and then as required		√	√	√	√
Equality and diversity		3 years	√			√	
Child development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour Support • Supporting Teenagers • FASD • Preparation for Independence 	All Carers to complete one topic to be covered per annum as minimum.	√	√	√	√	
Therapeutic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theraplay • Attachment and loss • Trauma / ACE • Secure Base • Therapeutic Parenting Skills • Self Harm 	All Carers to complete one topic to be covered per annum as minimum.		√	√	√	√

Progressive Training

Foster carer's will also have the opportunity to attend additional training to further develop their knowledge and skills in specialist areas. Progressive training will be informed and developed in line with the Foster Carers:

- Approval status
- Personal Development Plan
- Annual Review
- Needs of Children placed.

As such the courses considered within the Progressive arena will, by definition, not be standardised.

Examples of training may include:

- Mental Health First Aid
- Working with Birth families and Contact
- Clinical Procedures
- Autism/ Asperger's
- Communicating with Disabled Children
- Restrictive Physical Intervention
- Strategies for Managing Drug / Substance Misuse

Foster Carers Responsibilities

CFC expect that all carers will show commitment to training, to further progression and personal and professional development. Lifelong learning is an important principle and is fundamental, if CFC is to be successful in ensuring continuous improvement. Carers should take responsibility for their own learning, engage with training provided and utilise supervision with their SSW to identify training and learning needs and feedback about L& D opportunities. The Personal Development Plan (PDP) is a key document in recording training/learning completed, identifying any gaps in skills/knowledge and crucially providing space to reflect upon how learning impacts on practice and the experience of the children in our care.

(NB – **All** approved foster carers, includes both carers in households where there are two foster carers, irrespective of whether they are the primary carer).

The Personal Development Plan

All approved foster carers will have an individual Personal Development Plan. The Personal Development Plan is a key document recording training/learning completed, identifying any gaps in skills/knowledge and crucially providing space to reflect upon how learning impacts on practice and the experience of the children in our care. The plan should be updated throughout the year and discussed at regular intervals with the SSW. The plan will be presented at every carer's annual review, attendance at training will be discussed at review and any gaps identified. In circumstances when annual reviews are presented to foster Panel, the Personal Development plans will be

presented to Panel alongside all other relevant review documentation, carer's commitment to training and learning will then form an important part of Panel's overall consideration.

Published Annual Learning and Development plan

CFC will produce the learning and development plan annually – the plan will run from January to December and will be informed by analysis of carer's PDP's, the needs of the children in our care and the outcome of the annual foster carer survey. The plan will include all types of training and how to access and will ensure that all carers can satisfy the training requirements.

Carer's are also encouraged to identify other training opportunities, which should include independent study, which can be discussed on an individual, case by case basis with their SSW.

Ensuring a Record of Foster Carer Training

In addition to the PDPs providing a record of Learning and Development achieved by each foster carer. CFC will maintain a comprehensive record of this using the Training Module within Charms.

APPENDIX 1 - List of resources

Key Websites

Fostering

[The Fostering Network](#)

[Fosterline](#)

[Foster Care Academy](#)

Safeguarding Children's Boards

South

[Gloucester Safeguarding Children's Board](#)

[Swindon Safeguarding Children's Board](#)

[Bristol Safeguarding Children's Board](#)

[Wiltshire Safeguarding Children's Board](#)

[North Somerset Safeguarding Children's Board](#)

[South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board](#)

[BANES Safeguarding Children's Board](#)

North

[Lancashire Safeguarding Children's Board](#)

[Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board](#)

[Liverpool Safeguarding Children Board](#)

Research and Practice

[Research in Practice](#) - Supporting evidence-informed practice with children and families

[IRISS](#) – Iriss is a charitable company that promotes positive outcomes for the people who use Scotland's social services

[Dr Dan Siegal](#) – Inspire to Rewire

[Dan Hughes](#)

[Social Care Institute for Excellence](#) - Accredited training, consultancy, research and resources for the social care and health sectors from independent charity and improvement agency

Regulations and Standards

[Fostering Regulations](#)

[Fostering National Minimum Standards:](#)

Training, Support and Development standards for Foster Carers

[Training, Support and Development for Foster Carers \(TSD\)](#)

Podcasts

[Parent – Child Relationships](#) – Relationship|Attachment|Trauma|Families|Children

Online Training & Resources

- **Promoting Good Emotional Wellbeing**

[Mind](#) - Information and Support – lots of resources and links

[Mental Health First Aid with Young People Toolkit](#)

[NHS](#) – Every Mind Matters

- **Medication Administration**

[Online Administration of Medicine Training](#)

- **Working with Birth families and Contact**

[Working with Birth Parents Key Messages](#)

[Contact Guidelines](#)

[The Relationship between Foster Families and Birth Families Article](#)

- **Autism/ Asperger's**

[Online Autism Training](#)

- **Communicating with Disabled Children**

[Communicating with people with disabilities - Mencap](#)

[Working with Children with Learning Disabilities and/or who Communicate Non-verbally - Study](#)

[Sense – Total Communication](#)

- **Prevent Training**

[Prevent online training](#)

- **Strategies for Managing Drug / Substance Misuse**

[Government Guidance on managing Drug & Substance Misuse](#)

[Management of Substance Misuse – World Health Organisation](#)

- **Children's Rights**

[The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

APPENDIX 2

Foreword

Programme 1: Induction into CFC

Areas of Learning to be covered:

- Our Vision for Children
- Our History
- Our Brand
- Purpose and Values
- Aims and Strategy
- Management Structure
- Range of Services
- Equality and Inclusion
- Participation

Learning Outcomes

LO 1.1. Understand the organisation's Vision for Children

LO 1.2. Be aware of the organisation's Core Values and appreciate how you can embody these values in your role as an adopter or carer

LO 1.3. Be aware of the Management structure (locally and across the UK) and the full range of children's services provided by the organisation

LO 1.4. Appreciate the achievements of the organisation through its history

LO 1.5. Know the expectations the organisation places upon its people

LO 1.6. Understand the organisation's commitment to staff, volunteers, adopters and carers and how this effects you in your role

LO 1.7. Recognise, value and promote equality of opportunity and a positive attitude to diversity

LO 1.8. Be aware of the organisation's commitment to the active participation and involvement of service users and stakeholders

- Introduction to The Agency (core)
- Equality, diversity & inclusion (core)
- Human Rights of children in care (core)

Programme 2: **Safe caring, health and well-being**

Areas of Learning to be covered:

- Policies and Procedures
- Risk Assessment
- Administration of Medication in family setting
- Fire Safety
- Legislative Framework
- Food Hygiene
- Family & Personal Hygiene
- Infections and blood borne infections
- First aid
- Safer caring in the family home

Learning Outcomes

LO 2.1. Understand the organisation's Standards, Policies, Procedures and Reporting requirements in relation to Health and Safety for its adoption and fostering services

LO 2.2. Be confident and competent in participating in the risk assessment process

LO 2.3. Be aware of the legislative framework that governs Health and Safety in relation to adoption and fostering services

LO 2.4. Identify potential fire hazards in your home, be able to take remedial action and know what action to take in the event of a fire

LO 2.5. Be aware of the organisation's Policies, Procedures and Safe Practice as it relates to the administration and storage of medication

LO 2.6. Be aware of your personal and professional responsibilities in respect of Health and Safety, infections and hygiene

- Health & well-being (core)
- First Aid (core)
- Managing medication (core)

Programme 3: Safeguarding

Areas of Learning to be covered:

- Policies and Procedures: The Agency and local Safeguarding Boards & CPC's
- Legislative Framework and Principles of Best Practice
- Impact of Abuse and Indicators of Abuse
- Whistle Blowing and complaints
- Disclosures
- Safe Care Plans and Reviews
- Running away or Missing from care
- Sexual exploitation
- Communicating with children
- Radicalisation

Learning Outcomes

LO 3.1. Understand the physical, emotional, sexual and behavioural development processes of children and young people

LO 3.2. Recognise the effect of personal and professional values and feelings on how we respond to incidents of abuse and neglect

LO 3.3. Identify how practice in safeguarding in the organisation is guided by policies, procedures, standards and legislation

LO 3.4. Understand the key points of the organisation's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

LO 3.5. Be able to list the definitions, signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, sexual exploitation and risk of radicalisation

LO 3.6. Understand the principles of Safer Care consistent with current models of assessment

LO 3.7. Understand when and how to respond to causes for concern about abuse and neglect, including knowledge of required local authority/trust procedures

LO 3.8. Recognise the basic principles of good practice in recording and sharing information in relation to Safeguarding and Safer Care

Core: Health & well-being; Thinking therapeutically; safeguarding: anti-bullying, CSE/Missing from care, ICT safety

Advanced: anti-bullying; sexually harmful behaviour; ICT safety; substance misuse; CSE; missing from care; grooming; managing allegations; managing disruptions

Programme 4: Promoting Positive Behaviour

Areas of Learning to be covered:

- an understanding of what underlies children's behaviour
- knowledge of approaches and strategies to support children in managing their behaviour
- Awareness of the Agency's Behaviour Support Policy.
- Confidence in the use of behaviour support planning and risk assessments
- Understand the safe and appropriate use of touch, holding, physical contact

Learning Outcomes:

LO 4.1. Carers have good understanding the CFC's Behaviour Support policy.

LO 4.2. Carers will have an increased understanding about what underlies children's behaviour

LO 4.3. Carers will have learned approaches and strategies for supporting children to manage their behaviour

LO 4.4. Carers will be confident in the use of behaviour support planning and risk assessments

LO 4.5. Carers will have considered safe and appropriate touch, contact and holding

LO 4.6. Communication and listening skills with children and young people

- Therapeutic Approaches

Programme 5: **Recording, Storing and Sharing (Managing) Sensitive Information**

Areas of Learning to be covered:

- Report Writing and Record Keeping
- Information Sharing and Storage
- Data Protection / GDPR
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Accessing Charms
- Policies and Procedures
- Legislative Framework
- Use of and access to Information Communication Technology

Learning Outcomes

LO 5.1. Be familiar with the principles of best practice in relation to report writing and record keeping

LO 5.2. Understand the legislative framework governing data protection, information sharing and storing

LO 5.3. Understand and be able to articulate the difference between Privacy and Confidentiality and the rights and responsibilities inherent in this

LO 5.4. Understand and be confident in the use of the organisation's Policies, Procedures and Standards for data protection and information sharing and storing

LO 5.5. Understand the importance of relevance, proportionality and need-to-know in relation to information sharing

LO 5.6. Understand the concepts of Consent and Disclosure

LO 5.7. Appreciate the need to maintain clean, current, standardised data at all times

LO 5.8. Understand the organisation's Policies, Procedures and Standards for the safe and secure use and access to Information Communication Technology by staff, volunteers, adopters, carers and service users

LO 5.9. Consider the impact of all of the above on your personal and professional practice

- **Managing confidential and sensitive information (core)**
- **ICT/social networking (advanced)**

Programme 6: **Safe Administration of Medication**

Areas of Learning to be covered:

- Safe storage of Medication
- Administration of Medication
- Frazer Guidelines
- Recording
- Controlled Medications – Further implications
- Clinical Procedures
- Responding to Emergencies

Learning Outcomes

LO 6.1. Understand how and why medication needs to be stored safely

LO 6.2. Clear on good practice in the administration of Medication

LO 6.3. Understand Frazer Guidelines and the implications for consent

LO 6.4. Clear understanding of strategies and responses if things go wrong

LO 6.5. Understand the requirement to record the administration and provide this to the Manager