

### **What is a Fostering Panel?**

Manchester's Fostering Panel meets weekly and makes recommendations concerning a foster carer's approval or re-approval, including when there has been a complaint or allegation or when a foster carer decides to retire or resign.

The Panel also considers fostering plans for looked after children and recommends whether they should be matched with specific foster carers.

### **Who sits on Fostering Panel?**

Panel members are mostly people who are independent of the Family Placement Service such as foster carers and adopters, representatives from Health in addition to Children's Services professionals. Fostering Panel is chaired by an Independent Chair Person.

Panel members represent a wide range of skills and expertise in child care and work together to give a balanced recommendation which recognises both the special needs of Looked After Children and the complexity of the fostering task.

Manchester Family Placement Service has separate Adoption and Fostering Panels.

### **The Panel meets Tuesday mornings at :**

Wenlock Way Offices (Ground Floor)  
Wenlock Way  
West Gorton  
Manchester M12 5DH

Tel: 0161 274 6287

### **Do I attend Panel?**

New Applicants for fostering are strongly encouraged to attend to have the opportunity to meet Panel members and ask questions.

The Panel members will already have had an opportunity to read your assessment report. Your assessing social worker will be asked to attend first to clarify any points and you will then be invited to join them and give your views. You may find this a bit daunting but Panel members will be very welcoming and your assessing social worker will be there to support you.

After you have attended, the Panel members will discuss your application with the assessing supervising social worker and the Chair will then make a recommendation after listening to everyone's views

Approved foster carers who are attending because of a complaint or concern will be able to bring a support person with them. A member of Manchester Foster Care Association may fill this role.

Your supervising or assessing social worker will let you know the Panel's recommendations.

### **The Agency Decision Maker**

The Head of Specialist Services in Children's Services is the Agency Decision Maker who receives the recommendations of the Fostering Panel and makes the final decision about your approval.

You will be informed of the decision verbally and in writing by the Family Placement Service.

Applicants and approved foster carers will receive written notification of any Panel recommendation confirmed by the Agency Decision Maker within 5 working days of the decision being made.

### Can I Appeal?

Yes, if you are a new applicants or an approved foster carer and are unhappy about the decision made about your approval or re-approval by the Agency Decision Maker, there are two ways to request a review of the decision:

1. Send your views in writing to the Head of the Family Placement Service within 28 days for further consideration. The Agency Decision Maker will then make a final decision.

Write to:

The Head of Service  
Manchester Family Placement Service  
Wenlock Way Offices  
Manchester M12 5DH

2. Or you can apply to the Secretary of State for the matter to be considered independently by the Independent Reviewing Mechanism who will make a recommendation to the Fostering Panel. The Agency Decision Maker will make a final decision taking into account all further information.

Contact:

IRM Contract Manager  
Independent Review Mechanism  
Unit 4, Pavilion Business Park  
Royds Hall Road  
Wortley  
LEEDS LS12 6AJ

Tel: 0870 034 6420

e-mail: [irm@baaf.org.uk](mailto:irm@baaf.org.uk)

[www.independentreviewmechanism.org.uk](http://www.independentreviewmechanism.org.uk)

You can choose one of the above two courses of action. The cost of having your case reviewed by the IRM will be met by the Family Placement Service.

If you are unsure of any about any aspect of Manchester Fostering Panel's role or have any questions about your approval or re-approval, please discuss with your assessing or supervising social worker.

Telephone number 0161 274 6287.



**MANCHESTER  
CITY COUNCIL**

**MANCHESTER FAMILY  
PLACEMENT SERVICE**

**THE FOSTERING PANEL**