

Manchester Family Placement Service

Anti-smoking policy and guidance for foster carers and prospective adopters

Manchester Family Placement Service Smoking Policy

For foster carers and prospective adopters

Manchester City Council gives high priority to the present and future health of looked after children. All Manchester foster carers and adopters are entrusted with the health of the children and young people in their care and are in the best position to improve children's health and wellbeing.

There is now medical evidence that clearly demonstrates the negative effects of second-hand tobacco smoke (or passive smoking) on children's health.

- Second-hand smoke is a cause of childhood respiratory disease, cot death, middle ear disease and asthmatic attacks, and can increase the risk of developing lung cancer and heart disease in later life.
- Tobacco products are among the top causes of poisoning in children, and smoking materials (lighter fuel, matches and lighters) are the main causes of fire deaths in the UK.
- Children and young people are more susceptible to the damaging effects of smoke because their lungs are smaller and their immune systems are less mature.
- Children who grow up in a household where adults smoke are three times more likely to become smokers themselves than if cared for by adults who do not smoke.
- Adults who are regularly exposed to other people's cigarette smoke have a 20% to 30% increased risk of lung cancer and heart disease.

Manchester Family Placement's position:

- **Children and young people who may already have neglected or impaired health prior to becoming looked after should be given every opportunity to improve their health in a smoke-free home.**
- **No child under *two* years of age will be placed with a foster carer or prospective adopter who smokes.**
- **All approved foster carers and prospective adopters will be expected to maintain a smoke-free home.**
- **Approved foster carers and prospective adopters who continue to smoke in the presence of children and who do not maintain a smoke-free environment will have their continuing approval reviewed by the relevant Family Placement Panel.**

All foster carers and prospective adopters will be expected to sign the Smoke-Free Home Agreement attached to this leaflet and return it to their supervising social worker.

Manchester Family Placement Service appreciates the skills and abilities of all its foster carers, including those who smoke, but children's current and future health must be our primary consideration.

We also acknowledge the difficulties involved in giving up smoking and that while some people can give up easily, others take a lot longer.

If you require help and advice about stopping smoking, speak to your GP or pharmacist, or contact one of the helplines listed below.

Manchester Stop Smoking Service

Specialist support from trained professionals to help people of Manchester stop smoking or to prevent them from starting. Tel **0161 205 5998** for further information or to speak to a trained adviser, or visit www.stopsmokingmanchester.co.uk

Manchester Stop Smoking – Support for Young People:

One-to-one support

Access to nicotine replacement therapy

Telephone **0161 205 5998**

Call it Quits

This is an NHS smoking helpline offering information, advice and support to those who are giving up smoking or who have given up and do not want to start again.

Telephone **0800 169 0169** or visit Gosmokefree.co.uk

Smoke-Free Home Agreement

- I/we agree to maintain a smoke-free home and ensure that all members of my/our household, including visitors, do not smoke in my/our home.
- I/we will ensure that no child placed in my/our care is exposed to passive smoking at home or in a private vehicle.
- I/we will discourage children and young people from smoking and will promote the health and financial benefits of not smoking.
- I/we understand that my/our continuing approval will be reviewed at the relevant Family Placement Panel if I/we do not maintain a smoke-free home.
- I/we have received and read Manchester Family Placement's Anti-Smoking Policy.

Signed Foster carer: _____

Signed Foster carer: _____

Date: _____

Please sign and return to your supervising social worker.