

Foster Carers Training Policy in accordance with Regulation 17 of the Fostering Service Regulations (England) 2011 and Standard 21 of the Fostering Service National Minimum Standards 2011

Rochdale MBC Fostering Service are committed to providing quality training for all foster carers to ensure our foster carers are equipped to deal with many of the demanding and complex aspects of fostering.

Training for RMBC foster carers begins as part of the assessment process and prepares foster carers for the responsibilities that come with the fostering task.

Training for RMBC foster carers is accredited in hours
These hours can be made up through:-

- Pre approval training
- 1:1 sessions with supervising social workers, CAMHS workers, child care social workers, health visitors, other health professionals and other professionals working with and on behalf of the child,
- Foster carer training sessions, briefings and workshops,
- Accredited courses,
- Self-learning (from which carers are able to demonstrate learning and understanding).

PRE APPROVAL TRAINING

Skills to Foster Training

All recruited carers must attend the Skills to Foster training course, the only exceptions will be for those carers who have successfully completed the Skills to Foster training with another agency within the last 12 months.

All family and friends foster carers **MUST** be invited to attend the Skills to Foster training. However, whilst this is a recommendation by the fostering service, is currently optional for family and friends foster carers. There is an expectation that family and friends foster carers who do not complete the Skills to Foster training will go through the 'Family and Friend's Foster Care' leaflet with their assessing social worker to ensure they are aware of the expectations of their role.

Allegations Management Training

It is recommended that those applying to become foster carers have access to this training either pre-approval or within the first 3 months following approval.

The training looks at the allegations management process and the support available to carers during this time.

| Skills level | Minimum Expectation of Main Carer | Minimum Expectation of Linked Carer |
|---|--|--|
| Preapproval (advised but not required for Family & Friends carers) | 18 hours | 18 hours |

POST APPROVAL TRAINING

The training hours must be completed by carers of all skills levels and hours have also been identified for linked foster carers.

The minimum training requirement of all Level 1 Foster Carers in the 1st 18 months is to complete:

- Training Support Development Standards (approx 15 hours)
- Introduction to Safeguarding (classroom or online) (3 hours)
- First aid (classroom) (6 hours)
- Record Keeping (Good Practice Booklet shared by SSW to carer) (1 hour)

The minimum training requirement of all Level 2 Foster Carers in the 1st Year is to complete:

- Training Support Development Standards (approx 15 hours)
- First aid (classroom) (6 hours)
- Introduction to Safeguarding (classroom or online) (3 hours)

And at least an additional 4 hours from any of the following:

- Child sexual exploitation (briefing) (2 hours)
- Record Keeping (Good Practice Booklet which is done between SSW and carer) (1 hour)
- Food Hygiene (online) (3 hours)
- Allegations Management (3 hours)

The minimum training requirement of all Level 3/4 Foster Carers in the 1st year is to complete:

- Training Support Development Standards (approx 15 hours)
- First aid (classroom) (6 hours)
- Introduction to Safeguarding (classroom or online) (3 hours)
- Child sexual exploitation (briefing) (3 hours)
- Record Keeping (Good Practice Booklet which is done between SSW and carer) (1 hour)
- Food Hygiene (online) (3 hours)
- Allegations Management (3 hours)

In the first year

| Skills level | Minimum Expectation of Main Carer | Minimum Expectation of Linked Carer |
|---------------------|--|--|
| | | |

| | | |
|----------------|----------|----|
| Level 1 | 17 | 8 |
| Level 2 | 28 hours | 14 |
| Level 3 | 34 hours | 18 |
| Level 4 | 34 hours | 18 |

Subsequent years:

| Skills level | Minimum Expectation of Main Carer | Minimum Expectation of Linked Carer |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Level 1 | 10 hours | 5 |
| Level 2 | 15 hours | 7 |
| Level 3 | 20 hours | 10 |
| Level 4 | 30 hours | 15 |

These hours are the minimum allowed for carers to access, there is an expectation that RMBC Foster Carers will exceed the minimum requirement.

Post Approval/ Progression Training requirements for Level 3 and 4

Level 3 and Level 4 Foster Carers must have completed or be in the process of completing within 1 year

- Level 3 diploma.
- Fostering Changes and/or (27 hours)
- 6 week attachment course. (15 hours)
- Life Story Work (6 hours)

For those carers in the process of completing any of the required courses, timescales for completion must be included in their progression applications

Fostering Specific Courses available to all Foster Carers:

- Introduction to Safeguarding (classroom or online) (3 hours)
- First aid (classroom) (6 hours)
- Child sexual exploitation (briefing) (3 hours)
- Record Keeping (Good Practice Booklet which is done between SSW and carer) (1 hour)
- Food Hygiene (online) (3 hours)
- Sexual health (briefing) (3 hours)
- Cultural awareness (classroom) (3 hours)
- Health of Looked After Children (briefing) (3 hours)
- Life story work (classroom) (3 hours)
- Supporting the education of Looked After children (briefing) (3 hours)
- Preparation for adoption (briefing) (3 hours)
- Positive communications (briefing) (3 hours)
- RSPCA (briefing) (3 hours)
- Tax (briefing) (3 hours)
- Understanding Foetal Alcohol (briefing) (3 hours)

- Supporting Looked After Children with Literacy and Numeracy (briefing) (3 hours)
- Infant weaning (briefing) (3 hours)
- Medication (online) (2 hours)
- Child Development (classroom) (5 hours)
- E safety (online) (2 hours)
- Adoption briefing (2 hours)
- Mental Health Briefing (2 hours)
- Asthma (2 hours)
- Autism awareness (2 hours)
- ASD and sensory awareness (2 hours)
- Early Break (2 hours)
- Health Chats (3.5 hours)
- Children's Rights (2 hours)
- Attachment briefing (2 hours)

Specific Mother & Baby placement training will be available to those carers wishing to care for mother and baby placements.

Multilink carers will also be expected to undertake specific Moving and Handling and Risk Assessment training to support them with their specialist role.

Other courses are available through the Fostering Team and the Training and Development Team, Supervising Social Workers are expected to ensure information regarding the training available is shared with foster carers and nominations are completed in a timely manner.

Sessions with supervisory social workers/ other professionals:

This will include any work undertaken with Foster Carers which assists their learning and development, for example when looking at behaviour management issues, attachment, life story work, discussing regulatory or procedural changes, safer caring, confidentiality etc.

Following the discussions foster carers and supervising social workers will be required to complete the Foster Carers Learning Form which will identify the learning achieved, hours taken and any future requirements.

Own Learning

Foster Carers will need to evidence what they have learnt from any personal reading, research or courses they have undertaken and how this will benefit their fostering careers and contribute towards their continued learning and development e.g. reading an article on sibling attachment or reading the Munro Report or finding out information about Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder or global developmental delay.

Personal Development Plans

It is an expectation that applicants to foster will complete their personal development plan with their assessing social worker. This will outline the training they will undertake within the first year and where possible timescales for completion.

Foster Carers Personal Development Plans are to be updated at least annually and presented with their annual review. This should identify specific courses to be undertaken and where possible timescales for completion.

All foster carer specific training arranged by the fostering team is to be recorded on ICS on the carers tab and foster carers are expected to complete their own training log which is available from supervising social workers.

Failure to meet the expected training requirements may lead to a foster carer's approval being reviewed and amended accordingly i.e. level 3 or 4 carers not completing the required minimum hours will need to have their level status reassessed.

In these circumstances foster carers and supervising social workers will need to complete the foster carers Training Exceptional Circumstances Form from supervising social workers and which must be submitted to Fostering Panel alongside a Foster Carers Annual Review.