



Slough Children First IFA Out of Hours Support Policy

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Policy Summary:

This is the out of hours telephone support policy for SCF IFA foster carers.



A hands-on approach to help children in Slough be
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Out of Hours Support Policy

Relevant legislation and guidance:

The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, regulation 17 states:

“The fostering service provider must provide foster parents with such training, advice, information and support, including support outside office hours, as appears necessary in the interests of the children placed with them.”

National Minimum Standards 21.3 specifies:

“There is an effective out of hours advice and support service for foster carers.”

Out of hours advice and support:

Slough Children First IFA provides an Out of Hours telephone advice and support service to foster carers who are experiencing a difficult situation and need assistance outside of office hours. The service is for SCF IFA foster carers and for connected persons' carers looking after children and young people for SCF.

The telephone advice and support service is run solely by fostering staff who are qualified social workers, specifically for fostering issues. There is a main duty worker and a fostering manager to support and advise the main worker.

A member of the team will be able to:

- Talk to a foster carer through a situation they are experiencing.
- Provide advice and practical support over the phone.
- Speak to the child or young person which can often help de-escalate a situation.
- Identify an experienced foster carer to help, who may be able to come to the home to offer immediate support.

The remit of the service also extends to the Emergency Duty Service (EDS) on 01344 35199 who may contact the OOH service if a placement is needed for a child or young person before 11pm.

The Out of Hours (OOH) duty worker will look at the vacancy list and consider which carers are available to meet the child/young person's needs, considering the matching criteria. If a suitable match is identified the OOH duty worker will discuss the potential match with the duty manager and gain authorisation for the placement. The OOH duty worker will complete the IFA matching needs and risks assessment and provide a copy to the carers so that they are aware of any known risks. The safe care plan and individual risk assessment and management plan will be completed the next working day by the fostering duty worker.

The Out of Hours telephone advice and support service operates from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. Monday to Friday and from midday until 11 p.m. on weekends and bank holidays.

The telephone number for the Out of Hours Telephone and Support Service is 01753 690960.

If foster carers have an emergency outside the operating hours of the OOH service, they should contact the Emergency Duty Service to seek their assistance. The emergency duty service will liaise with the foster carers directly if a placement is needed outside of the hours offered by OOH advice and support service.