

# Southampton Fostering Service

## Statement of Purpose

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Preface by Robert Henderson  
Executive Director Wellbeing (Children & Learning)

## Why Foster with Southampton City Council?

Being a foster carer is an amazing and beautiful thing. Offering love, kindness and care to some of our most vulnerable children, helping to rebuild their lives and heal some of their pain and trauma. Fostering is a thing of real value and something the whole city should value and celebrate. There is nothing more rewarding than helping to change children's lives for the better and helping them be the best they can be. Making the world we live in a better place!

As a foster carer, you can make a real difference to a child's life, providing them with a safe nurturing home where they can be supported to reach their aspirations and succeed in life.

As these children's parents we are ambitious for them, loving these children and caring for them as if they were our own.

As their corporate parents we want children who are looked after by us to be living in loving foster families in their local communities, where they feel safe, confident and have a sense of belonging through into adulthood – a place where they can call home.

It's a big commitment to become a foster carer, but extremely rewarding and worthwhile. The rewards are enormous, some of our foster carers have been fostering for over 30 years!

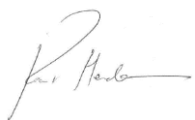
By becoming part of our fostering service, you will be contributing to the provision of a high-quality service, which gives best value for the city. We are a non – profit making organisation, committed to placing our children close to their home communities within Southampton.

We will provide support and guidance from our highly experienced team of fostering staff, and access to a wide range of specialist support services and training to develop your skills, knowledge and expertise. We will treat you with respect that you deserve as a foster carer.

Our ambition is to be a 'fostering friendly' city and to this end we continue to invest in the service and work with businesses and organisations across the city to promote fostering and value our fostering community.

Keen to know more? Call us on 0800 17 18 18 18 and learn how you can be part of our fostering family.

Thank you for taking the time to find out about fostering in Southampton.



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## OUR VISION

**To provide every child that we care for with a safe, secure,  
nurturing family-based home in which they can thrive.**

## Introduction

This Statement of Purpose sets out the aims, objectives and service arrangements of Southampton City Council's Fostering Service.

It has been written in accordance with the requirements of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011, the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011 and amended regulations, to explain how the service strives to improve outcomes for children and young people in the care of Southampton City Council.

The Statement of Purpose is intended to be a useful source of information for foster carers, Supervising Social Workers, Child Care Social Workers, children, young people and their families, City Council staff, elected members, professionals in other agencies and members of the public.

## National legislative and Policy Framework

Southampton Fostering Service is run in accordance with the principles and practice outlined in the:

- Children Act 1989
- Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
- Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2013 (Amendments to the Children Act 1989)
- Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards for Foster Care 2011
- Children Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services 2011
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010
- Care Planning and Fostering Regulations (Amendments) 2015
- The Disability and Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Training Support and Development Standards (TSD) for Foster Carers

## Policy Statement

**Southampton Fostering Service believes that a child looked after by Southampton City Council should be able to enjoy the same quality of life and opportunities as any other child.**

Southampton Fostering Service recognises that children's needs are best met by their family, where it is safe to do so, and is committed to placing children who are not able to remain in their own family in an appropriate alternative family placement wherever possible.

We will provide the best possible family-based care for children and young people who are unable to live within their own family for whatever reason. We are committed to placing children and young people within their local area, for them to maintain contact with families and friends, to continue at the same school and thrive within their community wherever possible.

We recognise that being separated from parents for any length of time, will inevitably have a detrimental effect on most children's wellbeing. In addition, many children who become looked after, will have had adverse childhood experiences prior to coming into foster care. Their mental health needs may be complex and their need for understanding of their past is essential. We are committed to engaging with other professionals in the assessment of the needs of children and ensuring that these are understood and prioritised.

We are committed to enabling siblings to remain together wherever possible and promoting positive contact with family members.

Children with disabilities are recognised as children first. The same principles of service apply, while accepting that additional support services will be required to meet all their needs.

We recognise the transition into adulthood is a major step requiring positive daily living support and enhanced connections with the adult world of opportunity and responsibility. We are committed to facilitating young people 'Staying Put' with their foster carer into early adulthood wherever possible.

Each child/young person will have access to services that recognise and address their needs in terms of gender, religion, ethnic origin, language, disability and sexuality.

Placement decisions will consider the child/young persons assessed racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic needs and match these as closely as possible with the ethnic origin, religion, culture and the language of the Foster Carer.

All children and young people will be carefully matched to highly skilled and well-trained foster carers, who are able to meet the individual child's emotional, social, behavioural, cultural and religious needs, ensuring that the child remains at the heart of all we do.

Of paramount importance is the child's /young persons' safety and welfare which is actively promoted within all foster placements. Children and young people are safeguarded from significant harm within fostering placements.

## Service Aims and Objectives

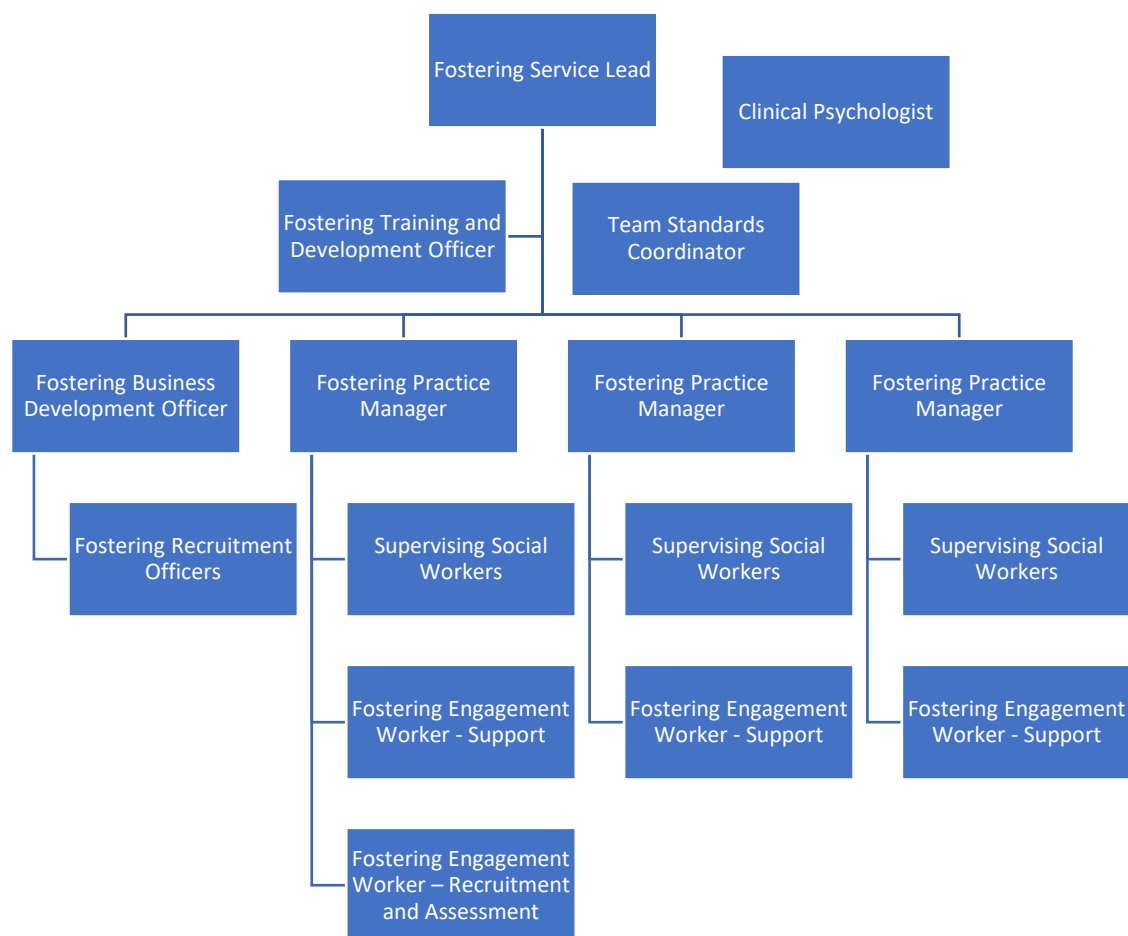
The main aim of our Fostering Service is to provide safe, high-quality foster care placements for our children and young people that value, support and encourage them to grow and develop as individuals. We aim to ensure that children, young people and foster carers feel heard, valued and engaged in the work that we do.

### **This will be achieved by:**

- Recruiting foster carers from within our diverse community and from the child's kinship network, whichever best meets their needs.
- Offering a timely, robust and thorough recruitment and assessment service to ensure that fostering enquiries are welcomed from all parts of our community and treated fairly, regardless of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, relationship status or culture.
- Providing a comprehensive training and development programme that is reviewed and revised regularly, looking at new and innovative ways of enhancing learning, professional and personal development of our foster carers.
- Providing a comprehensive support offer to our foster carers; including therapeutic and support groups, 24/7 support via EDT, breaks from caring and dedicated supervising social workers to work alongside each foster carer to provide high support and high challenge through regular foster carer supervision.
- Recognising the value, skill and commitments required of foster carers and treat them, their families and homes with respect. Therefore, we are committed to providing our foster carers with appropriate financial provision which reflects their skills, knowledge and dedication to the children in their care.
- Encouraging participation from our service users; listening to our children, young people and our foster carers and taking on board their feedback. Working in close partnership with the Southampton Foster Carers Association as a valuable 'critical friend' to improve and develop the Service as a whole.
- Maintaining a robust reviewing process to monitor and supervise the care afforded to children and young people by our foster carers, to ensure that all children are kept safe and free from harm, their needs are met, and their aspirations encouraged.
- Promoting multi-agency working and developing partnerships which will progress the needs of the children and young people we care for and supports the care provided by foster carers.

## Our Fostering Service

The Fostering Service sits within Southampton Children's Services Department and is under the overall leadership and direction of the Head of Service and Director of Children's Services.



Alongside the dedicated Training and Development Officer there are two main workstreams:

1. Recruitment – the recruitment, assessment and approval of mainstream foster carers. This is covered by both the Business Development Officer and the Fostering Practice Manager with the lead for assessment. A dedicated Fostering Engagement Worker is being appointed to support those prospective foster carers going through the assessment process.
2. Support and Compliance – the day-to-day support and supervision of mainstream and fully approved connected foster carers. All Practice Managers are responsible for ensuring that all foster

carers are supported, supervised and are compliant with the Fostering Regulations and the National Minimum Standards for Fostering.

## The Recruitment Workstream

Staff working within the recruitment workstream, have the key role in promoting the need for foster carers within Southampton and the surrounding areas, who can meet the needs of children most likely to need foster care.

The Service has a Fostering Recruitment Strategy, developed in partnership with foster carers, staff and the Communications Team within Southampton City Council, which sets out the key aims, objectives and priorities.

The Service aims to ensure that all people who are interested in becoming foster carers are welcomed without prejudice, responded to promptly and given clear information about recruitment, assessment, approval and support services. In addition, they will assess applicants in line with National Minimum Standards in a timely and robust manner, paying attention to safeguarding and keeping the child at the heart of the assessment.

The Fostering Business Development Officer, together with the Recruitment Officers, the Fostering Engagement Worker and the qualified social workers undertaking the Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessments are responsible for:

- Marketing, advertising, communications and publicity in partnership with the Communications Team.
- Arranging regular recruitment events, information events and pop-up recruitment stands at local community events, charity events and larger regional events such as Southampton Pride and the New Forest and Hampshire Show.
- Processing initial enquiries.
- Undertaking initial home visits.
- Providing the Skills to Foster training.
- Creating partnerships with local businesses to provide outreach and sponsorship.
- Completing all Fostering assessments within six months of the application (including the pre stage checks, Stage 1 checks and references and the Stage 2 assessment), using the widely recognised Coram BAAF Form F assessment framework



## Support, Supervision and Compliance Workstream (including Specialist Placements)

The Service offers supervision and support to all approved foster carers, both mainstream and connected foster carers. All fostering households are allocated a named Supervising Social Worker who works alongside the children's social workers and the Placements Team to help ensure that children, young people and foster carers have the best fostering experience.

Supervising Social Workers will:

- Provide regular supervision and support visits in line with the fostering task and an annual 'unannounced' visit, to ensure that foster carers continue to meet the Fostering Regulations and the National minimum Standards for fostering.
- Assist with any issues that arise from a placement, such as finances, equipment, transport, contact, education and health as well as helping to manage the impact of caring for a child that has experienced trauma and is likely to have complex emotional and behavioural needs.
- Get to know the foster carers and understand their individual learning needs and encourage them to increase their skills and knowledge and engage with their Personal Development Plan by signposting them to training and development opportunities.
- Support the foster carers in attending meetings, providing written reports or giving evidence in Court.
- Conduct the annual foster carers review and provide constructive feedback to the foster carer to encourage personal and professional development.
- Provide support to other members of the fostering household including any birth children or other relatives who are involved in the fostering task.

The Supervising Social Worker is also responsible for:

- Ensuring that foster carers are provided with the relevant policies and procedures, understand and comply with these.
- Ensuring that the foster carer adheres to the Foster Carer Agreement.
- Ensuring that the care afforded to a child or young person is in line their Care Plan.
- Ensuring that safeguarding statutory checks and references (Police checks etc.) are carried out on any person who becomes a member of your household and regular visitors to the household.

The child is central to the work of the Supervision and Support Service and we aim to help all foster carers to provide an environment which encourages 'therapeutic parenting' using the key principles of the PACE parenting approach.

Fostering Engagement Workers work alongside the Supervising Social Workers to provide additional support to foster families and also hold regular supports groups within the community for our foster carers.

In line with the fostering regulations we will review foster carers' suitability to continue fostering on at least an annual basis. We aim to ensure this is a constructive experience; an opportunity to reflect on and develop foster carers' skills. We are supported in undertaking the review by an independent reviewing officer.

Southampton Fostering Service welcomes any opportunity to celebrate and value our foster carers and the work that they do. The Service also works collectively with the Southampton Foster Carer's Association and the numerous social events they organise.

Supervising Social Workers will ensure that their own professional development is updated in line with Southampton City Council's vision, practice framework and focus for the children in its care. This will enable them to provide foster carers with the most appropriate and useful support.

### Specialist Placements

Southampton Fostering Service hopes to develop the existing specialist placements available to children and young people. At the present time these comprise Parent and Child Placements and UASC but the hope is to recruit foster carers able to care for children with highly complex physical and learning disabilities, those who specialise in young people where contextual safeguarding risks are high and specific placements for teenagers.

The introduction of The Fostering Network's Mockingbird Model is also an area that the Service wishes to progress with.

### Connected Foster Carers

Connected Foster Carers are those people, usually from within a child's family, who become approved foster carers for that child. These foster carers play an essential role in enabling children and young people to be brought up within their own family and community.

Connected Foster Carers are supported and supervised in the same way as all Southampton Foster Carers and have access to the same support and learning opportunities.

The assessment of connected foster carers is undertaken by a specialist team within the Intervention and Complex Assessment Service, which sits within the wider Safeguarding Service. The separation of the Connected Carers Assessment Team and the Fostering Team happened in September 2022 as part of the Destination 22 programme and the work being undertaken within the Service to ensure children and young people remain within their own families and communities unless it is unsafe to do to.

Relative, friend or kinship carers are required to meet the same rigorous standards as mainstream applicants, although there is some discretion within the assessment for these carers, where it is in the best interests of the child for whom they wish to care. Consideration is given to the established relationship the child may have with this person and the opportunity for the child to be brought up within their birth family.

Connected carers will be treated with respect and the difficulties within the family or network that have led to the child being in the care of the Local Authority, will be acknowledged without prejudgment.

Some connected carers are approved as foster carers for a specific child on a temporary basis and will go on to either become a fully approved foster carer, be granted a Special Guardianship Order in respect of the child, or in some cases the child returns to their parents' care.

**Fostering  
Southampton**

Making a difference

### Private Fostering

Private Fostering now sits within the Southampton Young People's Service. A dedicated social worker co-ordinates the Private Fostering referrals, assessments and support for Southampton City Council.

## Types of Fostering in Southampton

Foster carers can be approved for several different fostering tasks. The main ones are:

### Short Term and Emergency Fostering

Short term foster carers look after children or young people for a limited period while the care planning for the child is undertaken by the child's social worker to establish if the child can return to their birth family or if an alternative permanent placement is needing to be sourced. Short term can be anything from a few days up to two years. Several children will achieve permanency through Adoption or through Special Guardianship Orders. Short term foster carers play a crucial role in preparing the child for permanency and for providing consistent care through a period of uncertainty.

Emergency (same day) foster carers are contacted during the daytime and in the evening to provide care to children who may be distressed and need a lot of re-assurance, comfort and acceptance. Children can stay longer with their emergency foster carer but usually this is for a time limited basis moving the child either back to their birth family or to a short-term foster placement.

### Respite Care

Respite care provides an approved foster carer with a break from fostering and will be undertaken as part of the child's Care Plan. This can be an on-going arrangement whereby the child returns to their 'respite' foster carer once a month and/or in the school holidays, or sometimes it will be a one-off arrangement. However, it is of vital importance that the child has introductions to their planned break carer prior to the care commencing.

### Long Term Fostering

Long term fostering is when a foster carer makes a commitment to provide a child with a 'forever foster family' which means until the child is 18 years of age and is expected to continue under a Staying Put arrangement. All long-term matches of children with their foster carers are undertaken at the Fostering Panel with each child receiving a certificate to confirm their status within their foster family.

Connected foster carers are automatically approved as long-term foster carers for a specific child.

### Parent & Child Fostering

This is a specialist area of fostering whereby a parent and their child lives with the foster carer. The Parent and Child foster carer's primary responsibility to ensure the welfare and safety of the child placed with them, but they also support and help the parent to bond with their child and develop their parenting skills in order that they can parent with confidence. Parent and Child foster carers receive additional financial rewards and specialist training.

### Staying Put

We are committed to supporting young people and foster carers to make the transition from fostering to 'Staying Put' where appropriate. This transition demonstrates the care and commitment that many of our foster carers have for young people and the important role that they have in enabling the young person to become a successful and confident adult.

A dedicated worker within our Placements Team provides advice, guidance and support to foster carers transitioning to become 'Staying Put' providers and to our colleagues in the Pathways Team, supporting our Care Leavers.

## Placement Matching

Placement matching means placing children with a fostering family who can meet their needs. This includes considering the wishes and views of the child, the child's birth parents and significant relatives. Placement matching will consider the child/young person's assessed racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic needs and match these as closely as possible with the ethnic origin, religion, culture and the language of the Foster Carer. When placing children, proximity to schools, family and friends is taken into consideration. If the most appropriate match is not available at the time of placement, a child is placed with the most appropriate carers, until a better match is found.

Placement matching is undertaken alongside our Placements Team who are responsible for finding suitable homes for children where they are unable to live within their family or wider social network.

## Our Practice Framework

Our vision is that Southampton is a city where children and young people get a good start in life, are able to fulfil their potential and become successful adults who are engaged in their communities

Southampton City has developed a Practice Framework for working with families which sets out the key theories, values, principles and approaches that inform the way we work with children and families, and how we work together as professionals. Systemic practice is our overarching approach. It focusses on the whole family system rather than the individual and promotes the belief that families have the capacity to change. Challenges that impact children and young people are seen to exist within the context of relationships, rather than being located within individuals.

We have adopted the following four relationship-based approaches to underpin our systemic practice:

- Restorative Practice
- Trauma Informed approaches
- Motivational interviewing
- Strengthening our families

We aim to help all foster carers to be relationship-based, strength based and restorative in their practice. We support our foster carers to provide an environment which encourages 'therapeutic parenting' through trauma informed approaches, such as PACE and the Solihull approach. This will support carers to understand how decisions affect relationships and be supported to make positive change for children and young people.

Fostering can be an emotional journey for both the adults and the children and young people and by supporting a systemic approach we can help to create better relationships.

## Working Together

The Fostering Service works with a range of other services, teams and departments to ensure good quality care for the children looked after by Southampton City Council. The Service works as partners with agencies and services in specialist fields such as social workers, health and education professionals as well as with children, children's parents and wider family members.

Foster carers work as part of a 'team around a child'. As part of the professional multi-agency team around the child you will have contact with differing professional colleagues whom, will be working with our foster carers to ensure that the child in placement is supported, have their needs met and achieve positive outcomes.

As part of the wider directorate of Children's Services, the Fostering Service also works to develop robust policies, procedures and protocols to benefit looked after children, foster carers and others that they work with,

### The Fostering Panel

The Fostering Panel considers the approval of all new carers and existing carer's reviews.

The panel will make recommendations on foster carer's terms of approval including type of fostering, number of children, age and gender of children.

The 1989 Children Act sets the 'usual fostering limit' to three children, unless the children are siblings to each other. In certain circumstances, the Fostering Service may consider placing children outside of the usual fostering limit on exemption. With the carer's agreement, whenever this applies, the exemption will be formally recorded and presented to panel. Consideration will also be given to what additional support the carers may require.

Any other variation of approval is risk assessed to ensure the needs of all the children in the households are met. A return to panel will be actioned to ensure there is independent scrutiny and oversight.

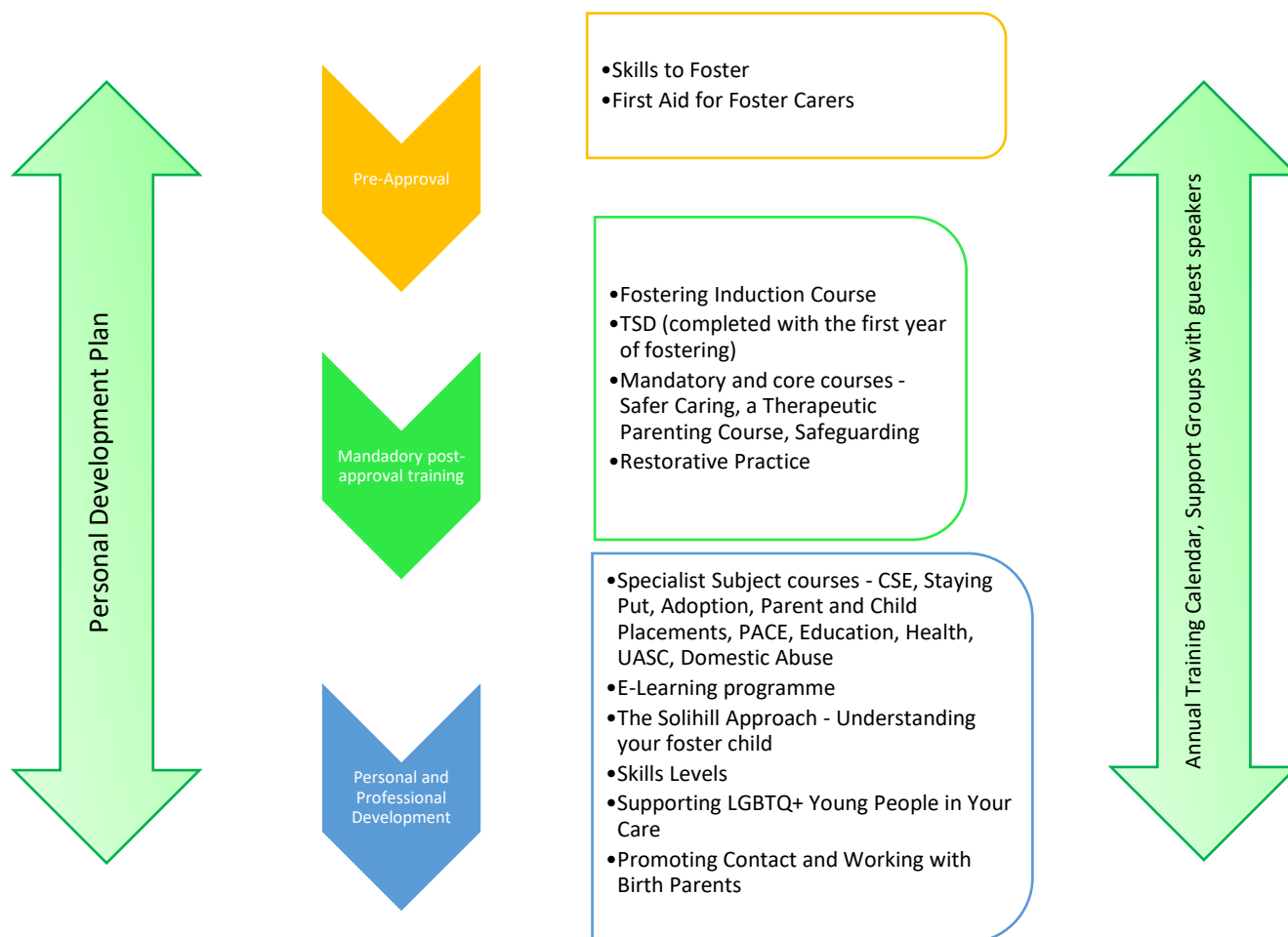
If the plan is for the child to remain with carers on a long-term basis, a matching report is written identifying how the proposed carers can meet these needs. This report, together with the carer's annual review are presented to panel if the child is under 12yrs or directly to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for those over 12yrs. Once the decisions are confirmed these are sent in writing to the carers and the child receives an individual letter and certificate.

The panel hears all cases where there has been significant concerns in terms of safeguarding, quality of care or allegations made.

A foster carer's review following a change of circumstances, or a request to significantly change their approval terms will also be referred to the Fostering panel. They will also recommend as appropriate, the termination of an approval. Panel will also consider Appeals to recommendations.

The Fostering Panel's recommendations are considered by the Agency Decision Maker who makes the final decision.

## Learning and Development Pathway for our foster carers



### Southampton Foster Care Association (SFCA)

Southampton Foster Care Association act as an independent voice for carers, arranging social events and acting as advocates for carers with the City Council and Fostering Service raising issues such a finance, service development and any matters of concern to its members.

Upon approval all foster carers are sent a welcome letter from the Chair of the Association. The Fostering Service Lead meets with members of SFCA on a monthly basis and with the chair and vice chair at least bi monthly.

## How to make a complaint or challenge a decision

### Comments, dissatisfaction and complaints

We acknowledge that, despite our best intentions, things do sometimes go wrong. When this happens, we want to put things right. We want our customers' comments, compliments and complaints to better understand how they view our services and to use these valuable opportunities to learn and improve for the future.

Southampton Fostering Services recognises that children, their families, and foster carers are best placed to identify the strengths and deficiencies of the fostering service and are integral in informing changes and developments needed to ensure continuing improvement.

Comments, complaints and compliments are received in the spirit of open communication and it is hoped that most can be dealt with quickly and at a local level. More serious, or formal complaints are dealt with in accordance with Southampton Children's Services Complaints Procedure.

Southampton City Council has a designated Complaints and Resolutions Team which records all complaints made about the Council and coordinates the investigation.

Details on how to make a complaint can be found at [www.southampton.gov.uk/council-democracy/have-your-say/comments-complaints/complaints](http://www.southampton.gov.uk/council-democracy/have-your-say/comments-complaints/complaints)

The Complaints Procedure involves three stages:

- Stage 1 – the complaint is dealt with by the Service Leader within 10 days. If the complaint is not resolved the matter goes to Stage 2,
- Stage 2 – An independent manager will be appointed to investigate. This should take no longer than three months. If the complainant is still not satisfied, the matter goes to Stage 3.
- Stage 3 – a referral is made to an Independent Review Panel can be requested who will consider the complaint and make recommendations to the Director of Children Services. The Director will then confirm the outcome in writing.

More serious or unresolved complaints can be referred to the Ombudsman. In addition, complaints about the Fostering Service can be made directly to OFSTED, their contact details are at the end of this document.

### Allegations

Allegations against foster carers or other members of the carers household (including other foster children) may result in a formal investigation under the provisions of Section 47 of the 1989 Children Act. Allegations against any adult working with a child are monitored by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Further information can be found in the Managing Allegations Policy.



Southampton also provide carers with support via subscription to Foster Talk to provide independent support and advice through these difficult processes.

### Challenges to Decisions Regarding Suitability to Foster

If a prospective foster carer is assessed as unsuitable to become a foster carer before having a formal application accepted, they can ask for the Fostering Service Lead to review the decision.

If the Service Lead upholds the decision, the enquirer(s) can ask to refer the decision not to proceed to the Head of Service for a final decision.

If a formal application to foster is accepted by the Fostering Service and doubts regarding suitability subsequently arise, the applicants can insist that their assessment is presented to the Fostering Panel.

If the Fostering Panel recommends that the applicants are unsuitable and this is supported by the Agency Decision Maker then the applicants can refer the matter to the Independent Review Mechanism for Fostering, which reviews decisions made by Fostering Agencies.

### Compliments

Southampton Fostering Service is also pleased to hear from foster carers, children, young people and their families when they have enjoyed exceptional service from staff who may have gone 'that extra mile' to help when additional support is needed.

### How we monitor and evaluate the fostering service

We are committed to ensuring the Fostering Services operates in a culture of continuous improvement and has made significant changes to improve the quality of service delivery and internal processes

- The performance of the service is reviewed and assessed on an annual basis and reported via the annual report.
- There is an annual safeguarding audit completed by the Quality Assurance Service; which evidences quality of practice, support and compliance with the NMS and regulations.
- The Corporate Parenting Committee receives and scrutinises the annual report on the performance of the Fostering Service.
- The professional agency advisor provides support, advice and quality assurance to the Fostering Panel. The advisor manages the panel arrangements, facilitates Panel training needs and supports the Independent Panel Chairs. The Fostering Panel Advisor will also feedback any learning points raised by the Fostering Panel.
- Monthly performance and quality assurance meetings to review fostering performance data and feedback from audits, compliments and complaints to improve the quality of practice and service delivery. This feeds into the service wide improvement board.
- Quarterly quality assurance/audit workshops are undertaken to ascertain the quality of social work practice and service delivery and to inform Fostering Service improvements.
- Quarterly meetings with Fostering Panel Chairs to review quality of practice, reports and lessons for learning.
- Analysis of disruptions which have taken place through disruption meetings.

- Identification and analysis of Looked After Children in Southampton, which will inform and influence our recruitment strategy.
- The Child or Young Person's Care Plan Reviews, along with the function of the Independent Reviewing officer, has a quality assurance role.
- Feedback from the Fostering Independent Fostering Reviewing Officer who chairs foster carer's annual reviews.
- Southampton Children's Services Improvement Board provides helpful scrutiny, challenge and oversight to quality and delivery of the Fostering Service.

### Feedback from Service Users

The views of children and young people receiving a service are sought through a variety of methods, including feedback from the Advocacy Service, lessons from disruptions, outcomes from complaints, children's view expressed in statutory reviews and through the through the Mind of My Own app. The views of children, young people and Foster Carers inform service planning.

Written feedback is requested from the child's social worker as part of the Foster Carer's review and at the end of each placement.

Newly approved Foster Carers are requested to provide regular feedback regarding the assessment, transition and support process.

Southampton Voices Unite (Southampton in Care Council) contribute to the Skills to Foster preparation training for Southampton applicants by attending a session and taking questions. All participants attending the course find this a useful part of the preparation training

We will continue to work closely with Southampton Voices Unite with the service development, including our Fostering Ambassadors when recruiting foster carers, child friendly foster carer profiles to assist with the matching process

Southampton Fostering Service aims to gather feedback from applicants throughout their approval process and from approved carers and their own children during their fostering career.

### We do this through:

- Our Annual Fostering Service Survey and the 'you said we did' comments.
- Feedback requested by the Fostering Panel on views of applicants on the assessment process.
- Questionnaires following the Skills to Foster preparation course for perspective foster carers and all post-approval training.
- The statutory Care Plan reviews which ensures that the child/young person's and birth parents views are fully explored.
- Direct work with children/young people which provides an opportunity for them to explore their feelings and give their views – the Birth Child Group also enables this feedback to be obtained via a fun and activity-based group session
- Feedback from carers attending training courses and shared through joint meetings with our training officer to develop training programmes and individual course as required

- Regular supervisions with the allocated supervising social worker so that managers can identify any shortfalls and address this promptly
- Quarterly 'Meet and Greet' engagement sessions for all foster carers to meet with senior managers from Children's Services to discuss matter of concern or ideas for improvement
- Foster carer consultation on key changes in policy and service developments and general foster carer satisfaction through questionnaires and network support meetings.
- Close working with the SFCA, whereby we attend monthly committee meetings, hold consultations sessions to gain feedback and support social events

### Finding out more

Want to find out more about our Fostering with Southampton City Council? We have a range of information about our Fostering Services on our website, including 'myth busters', case studies and videos.

Visit us at [www.southampton.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.southampton.gov.uk/fostering) or call us on 0800 5 19 18 18

### Useful Contacts



Ofsted is responsible for the regulation and inspection of Children's Social Care Services including Local Authority Fostering Services.

Ofsted

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Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



The Children's Commission for England is Anne Longfield OBE. She speaks up for children and young people and has unique powers to help bring about long-term change and improvements for all children, particularly the most vulnerable.

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### **Southampton Fostering Service – useful contacts**

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