

Parent and Child Foster Placements – Policy, Procedure and Placement Preparation

October 2020

To be reviewed October 2022

1. Parent and Child Foster Placements Policy - Introduction

This policy refers to the placement of children with their parent(s) in parent and child foster care.

It aims to ensure that all foster carers, supervising social workers, parents and children's social workers have the same understanding about the placement tasks they are required to undertake, and the legal basis for doing so.

In all cases placements will be sought with 'in house' carers who have been approved as parent and child foster carers and completed the relevant training (unless an out of area placement has been identified for specific care planning reasons).

This policy should be implemented, and a parent and child placement used when;

- A pre-birth assessment or child and family assessment recommends this form of placement and
- it is recommended by a legal planning meeting
- It is directed by the court during care proceedings and the local authority agrees with the direction.
- All parent and child foster placements need to be approved by the service leader with responsibility for the plans for the child.

Types of parent and child fostering

- **Assessment placements** – these usually last for last around 12 weeks and involve completing an assessment report of the parent's ability to care for their child. The author of this assessment is identified in the placement planning meeting (but social worker/ foster carer/ family support worker may all contribute)
- **Pre-birth placements** – to help prepare the parent for the birth of their child by supporting them to understand their own needs and the needs of their baby
- **Parenting support placements** – these are offered to parents who need help with learning how to provide basic care, safety, warmth and guidance for their child. This type of placement can also be offered if the parent needs a safe place to live

2. Legal Context

There are three scenarios that apply to parent and child fostering, with different implications depending on the regulations that apply.

2.1 Parent Looked After, Child Looked After

Where the parent is under 18 and is looked after by the local authority and the child is also looked after by the local authority, each will be subject to all the requirements of the:

- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010;
- The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011.

2.2 Parent looked After, Child not looked after

During Care Proceedings it could be that the child of a looked after parent under the age of 18 is placed with them, in a foster placement, under the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 (Placement of child in care with parent). The requirement of the 2010 Care Planning Regulations will apply to both parent and child, but the 2011 Fostering Regulations will apply only to the **parent**.

2.3 Parent not Looked After, Child Looked After

In this situation the parent could be either under or over the age of 18, and only the child will be subject to all the requirements of the 2010 Care Planning and 2011 Fostering Regulations. The regulations in relation to placement with parents will not apply, and the parent will be considered as part to the fostering household. In this situation the parent, if under 18, will have been assessed but not identified as a child in need in her own right.

3. Policy

Parent and child foster care shall be made equally available to the mother or father of the child where appropriate, and when appropriate and achievable to the parents together.

Stockport Children's services will consider both the parents and child's right to family life, but the child's welfare and rights (including the right to safety from harm) will always be the paramount concern. A key element of the placement is the safe and nurturing care of the child.

Stockport Children's Services will appoint a Parent and Child Placement Champion and identify a specialist IROs (Lesley Bunyan and Carolyn West) to provide oversight and consistency to placements.

Parent and child foster placements can provide evidence of parenting skills and help identify parents learning needs. They can offer parents the opportunity to experience

modelling of good parenting practices and support with learning new parenting skills within a fostering family that safeguards the child.

Parent and child foster placements will not be treated as the primary means for assessment but provide a framework for the relevant professionals to structure their assessments. The foster carers will provide observational evidence and analysis through daily recording sheets.

The roles of the child's social worker, supervising social worker, foster carer, IRO (and/or Parent and Child Champion) and other professionals working with the family should be clearly defined in **Parent and Child Placement Agreement** as should the placement objectives and desired outcomes.

Should the placement be terminated by Stockport Children's Services due to a serious breach of the placement agreement, or the wellbeing of the child being compromised, or the parent(s) have left the placement, the expectation is that the child will be moved to a child only placement. Continuation of the parent and child placement solely for the child will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

4. Placement Finding

In all cases, placements will be sought with 'in house' foster carers in the first instance.

There are a number of in-house foster carers who are approved as Parent and Child Foster Carers. All of these carers are experienced foster carers and who have completed Parent and Child training. Newly approved foster carers will not be approved as Parent and Child carers unless they have previous experience and skills within this field. It is acknowledged that the role of a Parent and Child Foster Carer is a skilled task.

The aims and objectives of the Parent and Child training course provided to Stockport Council Foster Carers are -

- To provide a good understanding of the background legislation, principles and procedures involved in this type of fostering.
- To examine the impact of parent and child placements on fostering households
- To consider knowledge and skills needed to assess parenting in this setting
- To identify service and personal action plans to support best practice.

This training is available on a regular basis to Stockport's foster carers and the aims and objectives are regularly reviewed.

Only if a suitable in-house Parent and Child placement cannot be identified will agreement for an Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placement search be sought. In exceptional circumstances and where ordered by court, a residential parent and baby placement may be sought.

The child's social worker will complete a Placement Plan making a request for a Parent and Child Placement. The placement request would ordinarily be made following a legal planning meeting. The completed Placement Plan will need to be authorised by the social work team leader and service leader before the fostering service are able to begin search for a suitable placement. Once the Placement Plan has been received by the fostering service the placement search will commence.

If the fostering service are unable to identify a suitable in-house placement a request will be made to the senior management team seeking permission for an Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placement search to take place. If approval is given the placements team will begin this search.

If a suitable Independent Fostering Agency placement is identified the Form F and any additional documents shared by the Independent Fostering Agency will be shared with the fostering duty manager. The fostering duty manager will have oversight of the identified placement and offer their advice regarding the suitability of the placement advice.

Upon a placement being identified the details of the identified placement will be shared with the social worker and team leader. If time allows it is essential that the social worker visits the identified carers and the placement prior to introducing the parent and child to the placement. It is good practice for the Placement Planning Meeting to take place prior to the placement commencing. The parent needs to be fully included

5. Process and Flow Chart

Requirement for PLACEMENT identified via

- Pre-birth assessment/ social work assessment and
- Legal Planning Meeting and/or
- Directions from court



Placement request made via completion of a **Placement Plan**- purpose of placement clearly identified

Authorised by social worker team leader and service lead to head of service/ principal lead

Social worker informs specialist IRO and Parent and Child Champion of likely placement



Authorised Placement Plan sent to Fostering Service to enable search to commence



Social worker ensures parent has copy of parent booklet on Parent & Child Placements and explains aim of placement



Foster placement identified
Referral form, background record and other relevant paperwork given to foster carer.
Meeting between 'Parent and Child Champion', social worker, supervising social worker and foster carer to clarify expectations, ensure placement match and to consider the **Preparation for placement agreement meeting checklist**



Introductory visit to foster placement for parent

Accompanied by most appropriate professional support who can support relationship building between parent and foster carer (e.g. Leaving Care worker, Pure Insight, Family Nurse partnership, social worker)



Additional meetings between parent and foster carer- with another appropriate professional - to relationship build, and gather further information on placement check list prior to Placement Planning Meeting



Formal Placement Planning Meeting – (prior to baby born if relevant and possible)

Parent and Child Placement Agreement/ Contract drafted

Shared with legal / children's guardian/ parents solicitor

Assessment process, visiting frequency and review process agreed – clarify roles of additional professionals (health visitor, family nurse partnership, family support worker). Key members of assessment process to attend review meetings



Placement made



Inform Child Health Team



First **placement review meeting** held within 5 days – further clarity of roles of additional professionals and visiting frequency established



LAC review within 20 working days

6. Placement Planning Guidance

Using the information gathered from the **Preparation for Placement Agreement Checklist** a Parent and Child Placement Planning Meeting must be held to establish the expectations of the social workers, the parent, the carer and any other professionals involved and to draw up a **Parent and Child Placement Agreement** (contract). The assessment, review process and anticipated placement length will be explicit in the contract. Copies should be sent to all attendees and the child's Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

The meeting should be chaired by the Champion for Parent and Child Placements, the specialist IRO, or the social worker's team leader.

The following should be invited

- Parents
- Social worker
- Foster carer
- Supervising social worker
- Any other professionals working with the family

7. Role and responsibilities of the foster carer

- Parent and child foster placements are a specialist type of fostering where a parent and child is placed with a foster carer at the time when they need extra support. This is so they can learn to cope with parenthood in secure and safe environment. It can be mother and baby/child, a father and baby/child or mother, father and baby/child. In some cases, there can be more than one

baby placed or there could be more than one child, it is not necessarily always a baby.

- Prior to placement, and within the placement planning process, the foster carer will be made aware of any safeguarding issues that may impact on the parent's ability to care. The Local Authority's expectations on them to check on the safety of the child in placement will be clarified in the preparation for placement checklist and placement agreement. They should intervene at any time they assess the level of risk to the child from the parent to be detrimental to their welfare. This will be communicated to the child and fostering social workers as soon as is practical and recorded in diary notes as a significant event.
- Foster carers are required to maintain daily recordings noting observations of the parent's ability to respond to their baby's needs, manage the routine, managing the practical tasks of washing, ironing, shopping, budgeting etc. These observations will inform any parenting programme or assessment that has been agreed. The foster carer will be expected to be open and honest about the parent's strengths and difficulties when recording their observations and the parent must be given the opportunity to read and comment on these observations. In addition, foster carers will keep their general daily recordings in respect of the overall placement and an in respect of any other children/young people in placement. Foster carer feedback will always be included in the Placement Review meetings
- There are a number of reasons why a mother and baby/parent and child cannot remain in their own home and may come into a foster care setting. This may be due to them having no experience of parenting and needing to learn skills in a supportive environment, to concerns about a parent's own self-care or needing a place of safety.
- Other reasons may be a parent has a learning disability or is struggling with their parenting skills. In many cases, they may be a young parent and therefore need an intensive package of care to assess but also help teach and support with their parenting skills. Sometimes a parent has had a child removed previously because of abuse or neglect or there has been a misuse of or they are withdrawing from substance abuse.
- There are a range of reasons but the desired outcome for a parent and child is that where possible children are best placed within their own families, this is the underlying principle of the Children Act 1989. The mother or father can be any age, if they are under 18 they may be a looked after child themselves.
- As a foster carer, the aim is to help develop the parent(s) full potential to achieve a level of parenting to enable them to move on with their children. The foster carers' role involves identifying support needs through assessment and then effectively implementing strategies that meet these learning needs. They also have to provide a detailed picture of the parent's ability to care for their child/children and do this through observations, interactions and recordings.
- The foster carer(s) will be expected to offer guidance and assistance to the parent in managing the care tasks for the baby. This may include direct instruction or modelling, it may include responding to questions, or it may include practical support such as accompanying the parent to parent/baby groups, health visiting clinic, shopping etc. Foster parents are to model

parenting and then observe this. The placement should provide a safe and friendly environment to provide supervision and support to the parent, to improve and consolidate parenting skills.

- The foster carer will be expected to promote and encourage the independence skills of the parent, i.e. to show the parent how any technical appliances work so that they are able to use cooking and cleaning facilities appropriately, show the parent how to manage money, i.e. shopping, budgeting, paying utility bills and life skills. If the placement progresses positively it must be expected that the parent demonstrates less reliance on the foster carers support.
- The role of the foster parent is also to provide an opportunity for enhancing the self-esteem and social skills of the parent, to support him/her in coming to terms with past trauma, to promote his/her independent living skills and to ensure a positive experience for the parent and child.
- The foster carer should promote and support the key attachment between child and parent, seeking support from the health visitor and early year's workers to ensure that this task is promoted accordingly, i.e. the use of baby massage and play etc.
- To support the parent's emotional wellbeing and to give the parent some free time. Foster carers may be asked to baby sit one evening per week (subject to pre- placement discussion and placement agreement). At least 24 hours' notice will be given by the parent.
- Foster carers will provide 24-hour support to the parent and child when required and transport the parent and baby when appropriate, i.e. to contact and health appointments. It must be acknowledged that not all foster carers drive or have access to their own vehicle. It may be that support from children's services is required to support the task of transport if the foster carer is not in a position to undertake this task themselves. Transport requirements will be explored and arranged at the placement planning meeting.
- Foster carer will provide a fully furnished bedroom complete with bed, cot, and cot linen etc. and will ensure the parent has use of a sitting room with home entertainment, i.e. TV and WIFI. Foster carer will provide and make available toys and equipment for both inside and outside the home.
- Foster carer will be expected to periodically check on the care and safety of the child in placement, and therefore must have access to the child at all times whilst in the home environment, i.e. easy access to the bedroom.
- Foster carers should intervene if the level of risk to the child from a parent would be detrimental to their welfare.
- Foster carer will always seek medical advice or treatment for any fall or injury that a child has sustained. A report of any injury should be made to the child's social worker and supervising social worker as soon as possible.
- Foster carer will respect and give recognition to the importance of a parent and child's ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, language, gender, sexuality and disability.
- The **Parent and Child Placement Agreement** will be completed and shared with the parent at the start of the placement to ensure that they understand the household rules and routines and the need for safer caring practices. This

will be reviewed on a regular basis during supervision between the foster carer and the SSW and in the regular placement review meetings with parent/ social worker and other identified key professionals.

- Foster carer will attend Pre-Placement Meeting, Review meetings, Core Group Meetings, Planning Meetings, Child Protection Conferences and any other meetings required. The Supervising Social Worker will support the foster carers at these meetings if required.
- Foster carer will liaise at all times with child's social worker, health visitor and Supervising Social Worker and any other professionals involved.
- Although the progress of the placement will be reviewed according to the schedule set out in the contract, the child will also be subject to the Children Looked after Review mechanism according to the statutory schedule, as will the parent if also looked after.
- Foster carers will receive full information prior to placement from the child's social worker in relation to both the parent and the child. If the information has not been received the carer must inform the supervising social worker prior to the placement commencing. If the information is not shared the foster carer has the right to refuse the placement until the information is shared. If a placement is made on an emergency basis the foster carer should expect to receive relevant information within 5 working days.
- Foster carers offering parent and child placements may do so alongside existing long-term placements. When carers have placement availability a new placement can be considered in consultation with all those involved in the existing placement. Careful matching is paramount to prevent any disruptions of the parent and child placement. Prior to other children or young people being placed alongside the parent and child placement consultation with the social worker IRO etc. needs to take place to ensure careful matching.
- Any planned holidays or breaks planned by the foster carer during the placement duration must be shared at the placement planning stage. This is to ensure that the care provided to the parent and child during the placement and assessment is consistent.
- The foster carer is required to continue to take advantage of training and development opportunities. Training and development is reviewed at each supervisory visit between the foster carer and the Supervising Social Worker. Parent and child foster carers are required to undertake Parent and Child training prior to becoming parent and child approved carers. This training can be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure the parent and child carer is upskilled and kept up to date of any changes regarding legislation, principles etc.
- Should the placement be terminated because of a decision made by the local authority or the court following a serious breach of the contract, i.e. the parent has left the placement, or the child has been put at risk a planning meeting will need to take place at the earliest opportunity. A decision will be made regarding the placement of the child concerned, i.e. it may not be deemed appropriate for the child or the parent to remain in the current placement and alternative placements may be required.

8. Role and responsibilities of the Parent(s)

General expectations are listed below, but additional limitations or clauses can be specified in the Parent and Child Placement Agreement.

- Parent(s) will be expected to care for their child at all times (getting up, bathing, feeding, changing under supervision from carer until it is agreed it is no longer necessary).
- Parent(s) will be expected to manage the day and bedtime routine, which fits in with the foster carer's household. When the parent is settling a child for bed it is their responsibility to check on the child throughout the evening and during the night as required.
- Parent(s) will be expected to demonstrate their competence in attending to all their child's physical needs as well as interacting positively with their child.
- Parent(s) will be expected to shop, budget and cook for self and child and attend to all clothes washing and ironing. One of the placement aims will be for the parent to achieve greater independence and skill in these areas.
- Parent will keep their room tidy and leave the kitchen, bathroom and any other communal areas in a tidy, clean condition after use.
- Personal clothing and belongings must be kept in parent's own room. The foster carer cannot be responsible for property or articles that are lost or damaged.
- Parents will contribute to the wellbeing of everyone in the foster carers' home and in public by demonstrating non-aggressive, non-threatening behaviours.
- If agreed in the contract the foster carer will offer babysitting one evening per week; parent will provide 24 hours' notice for request.
- Foster carer may make random room checks to ensure safety of parent and child and therefore all bedroom doors must be kept unlocked.
- The foster carer will write accurate daily record sheets, which will be shared daily with parent(s) and signed by both parent(s) and carer.
- If there are any differences of opinion on childcare these should be discussed and recorded. However, the parent will need to accept the final decision from the foster carer who will endeavour to contact the health visitor at the first opportunity.
- The foster carer will complete and share the safe caring plan with the parent.
- Smoking is not permitted inside the foster carer's home. If a parent smokes it must be in the designated outside area. On returning to the home, the parent must wash their hands before contact with their baby.
- If there are other children in the household the parent in placement must not provide any practical or supervisory care.
- No alcohol should be kept by the parent in the carer's home.
- No involvement with any illegal substances is permitted in the foster carer's home. However, it is recognised some parents may be supported in a parent and child placement whilst the parent is supervised by a treatment programme for drug or alcohol misuse.
- Parent should inform the foster carer and child's social worker of any appointments, and check if childcare cover is required.

- Parent's circumstances and history is strictly confidential to the named foster carers and not their families or friends. Parents can feel reassured that no discussions will take place between family members and friends.
- Parents over the age of 18 will be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service Checks and the results will be fed into the pre placement risk assessment.

9. Role of the Supervising Social Worker (SSW)

All approved foster carers will have an allocated, suitably qualified supervising social worker. The allocated supervising social worker is responsible for supervising and supporting carers, ensuring that they have the necessary guidance, support and direction to maintain a quality service, including safe caring practices. This will include an understanding that they must work within the **National Minimum Standards for Fostering** and the agency's policies, procedures and guidance.

- Frequency of Supervisory Visits:

Supervisory visits form part of the support offered to foster carers and should take place on a frequent basis (minimum every 6 weeks) A more frequent visiting pattern is agreed when carers are providing placements to specialist placements include Parent and Child placements. This may include weekly or fortnightly visits. The frequency of the visits will be reviewed throughout the placement.

- Additional support offered to Parent and Child Foster Carers:

Supervising social worker (SSW) to ensure full parent and child information is passed on by child's social worker to foster carer prior to placement commencing. and to ensure carers they fully understand the purpose of the placement and their role and responsibility.

In the absence of the supervising social worker during the placement duration (annual leave or sickness) the fostering team leader will allocate another SSW to support and supervise the foster carer.

The supervising social worker will ensure that the foster carer understands the placement needs and is equipped and able to undertake the tasks set and what is required of them. It is the role of the Supervising Social Worker to ensure that the foster carer has access to training and development opportunities to enable the foster carer to meet the needs of the children and young people in their care.

The SSW will ensure that the foster carer understands the finances which they are entitled to. The Parent and Child payment structure is dependent upon the placement status (see below chart). The Supervising Social Worker will ensure that the child's social worker and the parent understand what is required of all financially, i.e. who is responsible for purchasing nappies and formula.

To ensure prompt payment to the carers, the SSW will inform fostering finance of the placement start date, confirm the status of the parent and child.

- Financial Arrangements Parent and Child Placements

1.Expectant Mothers

The total weekly allowance and recompense will be paid where the expectant mother is a looked after child. An additional clothing allowance of £200 can be made available to the mother throughout the pregnancy for additional expenditure over and above clothing that would have been purchased as normal.

2.Guidance for payments for parent and child placements

Below is guidance that should be referred to when making Parent and Child placements. All cases must be assessed on an individual basis and payments agreed at the placement planning meeting. (Rates given are approximate and exact values should be sought as needed.)

| Parent looked after status | Parent looked after status | Parent not looked after status (including in Staying Put) | Parent not looked after status (including in Staying Put) | Specialist placement |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| Child looked after status | Child not looked after status | Child looked after status | Child not looked after | Parent looked after status, Child looked after status |
| FC receives: - Full allowances (boarding out, expenses and recompense) for the Parent and the child FC to give to Parent equivalent of Benefit | FC receives: - Full allowance (boarding out, expenses and recompense) for the Parent - Recompense and Boarding out payments for the child | FC receives: - Equivalent of recompense and boarding out payment for Parent - Full allowances (boarding out expenses and recompense) for the child | FC receives - Boarding out and recompense for the Parent and the child Parent would be in receipt of benefits or a wage. (Child care arrangements) | FC receives: - Boarding out and expenses for the Parent - Specialist FC recompense - Full allowances (Boarding out expenses and recompense) for the child |

| Parent looked after status Child looked after status | Parent looked after status Child not looked after status | Parent not looked after status (including in Staying Put) Child looked after status | Parent not looked after status (including in Staying Put) Child not looked after | Specialist placement Parent looked after status, Child looked after status |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <p>allowances (Child tax credit Child benefit)</p> <p>Parent responsible for: - milk, nappies, toiletries, Toys & clothing.</p> <p>FC responsible for the parent's clothing & spends</p> <p>LA to provide baby equipment for health and safety reasons</p> | <p>Parent should claim benefits for the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child benefit - Child tax credit - Income support from 16yrs if lone parent (covers basic living costs) - Maternity Grant from Sure start, (only for first child and must be claimed within 3 months - Vitamins and milk from Healthy Start for Pregnant Mums under 18 and for 4 months after birth | <p>Parent would be in receipt of benefits or a wage. (Child care arrangements for working parents would be agreed at the placement planning meeting)</p> <p>Parent to claim: - Job seekers allowance or Employment support allowance if the parent has health issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Income support can be claimed if parent is a student and estranged from their | <p>for working parents would be agreed at the placement planning meeting)</p> <p>Parent is responsible for all of their own and their child's provisions.</p> <p>LA to provide baby equipment for health and safety reasons</p> | <p>FC to give to Parent equivalent of Benefit allowances (Child tax credit Child benefit)</p> <p>Parent responsible for: - milk, nappies, toiletries, clothing & toys</p> <p>FC responsible for the parent's clothing & spends.</p> <p>LA to provide baby equipment for</p> |

| Parent looked after status Child looked after status | Parent looked after status Child not looked after status | Parent not looked after status (including in Staying Put) Child looked after status | Parent not looked after status (including in Staying Put) Child not looked after | Specialist placement Parent looked after status, Child looked after status |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | <p>Parent responsible for: - milk, nappies, Toiletries, clothing & toys.</p> <p>FC is responsible for the parent's clothing & spends.</p> <p>LA to provide baby equipment (needs led) for health and safety reasons</p> | <p>parents.</p> <p>FC to give the parent the Expenses element of the child's payment</p> <p>The parent is responsible for: milk, nappies, toiletries, clothing & toys</p> <p>LA to provide baby equipment for health and safety reasons</p> | | <p>health and safety reasons</p> |

10. Role and responsibilities of the child's social worker

- The child's social worker must visit the placement every 2 weeks and make weekly phone/email contact in addition to the supervising social worker contact with the carer. During these visits social workers should discuss individually and together with parent and carer how the placement is going in relation to the Parent and Child Placement Agreement / contract and provide opportunity to share concerns/worries.
- Child's social worker should undertake a room check.
- Child's social worker must arrange and chair regular placement reviews following the placement planning meeting. Review frequency will be discussed at the placement planning meeting but may need to be weekly at first to ensure that the placement is fully supported, and any issues immediately identified and addressed. Placement reviews should be structured around the original placement plan, and the reviewing process should highlight the assessment plan in place, placement progress (strengths and vulnerabilities) and any additional issues that may be impacting on the parent's ability to care with an identified plan to address these.
- Minimum standard placement reviews should be arranged at 2 weeks, 4 weeks combined with first Child Looked after Review, 7 weeks and 10 weeks. Every review should consider placement exit and future plans for family.
- Child's social worker should check out any arranged appointments and childcare cover that needs to be approved by the carers.
- Child's social worker needs to consider the second parent, consideration must be given to contact arrangements (family time) and attention and scrutiny must be given to the parent's relationships, both of their involvement in the assessment process and future planning.
- Should a dispute arise within the placement, Supervising Social Worker and child's social worker will initially undertake joint visits. If necessary, the child's social worker will then arrange a follow up meeting to include parent, Supervising Social Worker, carer and locality team manager.
- Child's social workers will liaise with housing benefits and senior management (if necessary) if the placement continues past 13 weeks. At this point, if the parent is in receipt of Housing Benefit then their entitlement will cease unless they return to the property and sleep overnight once a week. The alternative is for the Local Authority to pay the rent to secure the tenancy.
- Child's social worker must ensure that the carer has all relevant information at the latest by the date of the pre-Placement Planning Meeting. If the placement is made in an emergency basis, placement information must be supplied within 5 days.
- Child's social worker should provide parent(s) with complaints procedures leaflets.
- Child's social workers will inform carers of any arranged annual leave and what cover arrangements will be made.

11. Role of the specialist IRO and Parent and Child champion

The role of the specialist IRO and Parent and Child Champion have been created in recognition of the fact that most social workers (and team leaders) are not familiar with the use of these placements and they do not occur frequently enough to establish expertise. Social workers may require additional support to ensure placements are established, assessed and monitored in a way that best promotes the parents opportunity to successfully, and safely parent their child.

The specialist IRO and/or Parent and Child Champion will

- Ensure that matching of parent and foster carer occurs where possible.
- That parents receive the Parent Information Leaflet and are encouraged and supported to attend additional introductory meetings with the foster carer prior to placement.
- Support social workers in the use of the **Preparation for Placement Agreement Checklist** and Parent **and Child Placement Agreement (contract)** to ensure parents, carers and other professionals are clear about the aims and expectations of the placement and the method of assessment being used.
- Ensure that very regular placement review meetings occur, so that parents can receive clear feedback about their progress in placement, and any difficulties/ issues be quickly identified and responded to.