

May 2017



Statement of Purpose



This Statement of Purpose is provided to and made available to employees, carers, local authorities, children and young people in placement and to the general public via The Foster Care Agency website www.thefostercareagency.org.uk or in hard copy when requested.

This Statement of Purpose is reviewed and agreed annually by the Senior Management Team.



Contents

The Foster Care Agency's Vision, Mission Statement and Values	4
Principles	5
Aims and Objectives	6
Children and Young People's Rights	7
Committed to Equality and Valuing Diversity	9
Company Status	10
Management Structure	11
Our Employees	12
Complaints and Outcomes	14
Services	16
Carer Recruitment, Assessment and Approval	17
Annual Reviews	19
Matching Process	20
Financial	21
Training and Development	22
Support and Management of Foster Carers	24
Contact Details	25



TFCA's Vision, Mission Statement and Values

The Foster Care Agency's Vision

To make a real difference to a child's life.

Mission Statement

To deliver outstanding fostering services to children, young people, foster carers and local authorities.

Values

At The Foster Care Agency (TFCA) we have a set of values which truly reflect the way we work.

Respect

For all the children and people we work with. Providing consideration to how we treat others by promoting a collective approach to achieving our goals. Enabling all the children and young people we support to reach their full potential. We provide equality of opportunity and do not tolerate discrimination.

Excellence

In all our outcomes we strive to exceed all statutory and guidance requirements providing quality care for children and young people that reflect excellent practice. We aim to improve the quality of life for all children and young people looked after by our foster carers.

Integrity

In what we do and in all our working relationships. Trust is important to us and underpins all our working practices. We provide open and transparent services and changing policies that reflect our principled working ethic.



Principles

The Principles within the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services (referred to as statutory guidance), The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, The National Minimum Standards 2011 and subsequent updates underpin the policies, procedures and good practice of TFCA, its foster carers and employees.

The Welfare Principle

The welfare of the child or young person comes before and above any other consideration. This is reflected in our support and service delivery to ensure that the education, health, identity and welfare of the child is paramount.

Valuing Uniqueness

A comprehensive matching and assessment process takes careful consideration of the child or young person's needs and the needs of the existing members of the household, extended family and network.

Working in Partnership

TFCA's staff and foster carers work in partnership with birth parents, social workers and other individuals and agencies to ensure the best outcomes for the child, involving the children and young people in the discussions that matter to them.

Consultation

TFCA believes that children must be listened to. Their wishes and feelings are taken into account in their everyday lives and in the planning for their futures. Their contributions are valuable in the development of the services provided by the agency.

Investors in People

TFCA, as part of the NFA Group, has achieved the Investors In People Gold Award.

The award follows an intensive assessment process over fourteen days involving interviews with over 150 staff and carers. Less than three per cent of organisations with IIP achieve Gold Standard accreditation.

It has been awarded to fewer than 700 organisations throughout the United Kingdom and provides a solid foundation for further growth and development.

It is only awarded to well-run companies that meet set criteria, including learning and development, leadership skills and recognition and reward of staff.



Aims and Objectives

Celebrating and Promoting Children's Welfare is our Pledge

TFCA's main priority is for children and young people to feel safe, nurtured and happy so they can enjoy their lives and achieve their potential.

TFCA puts children and young people first by offering a child centred service.

TFCA prides itself on offering a high quality and professional service that is built on good relationships with our stakeholders, careful selection and support of foster carers and the careful matching of children and young people.

TFCA is dedicated to improving children and young people's lives and future outcomes. We are achieving this through:

- Delivering outstanding support and training to carers.
- Working openly and in partnership with commissioners and local authorities.
- Committing to the continued development of our professional team to deliver outstanding quality in practice.

TFCA aims to surpass the statutory framework and the associated codes of conduct. All the policies and procedures are written and subsequently monitored and reviewed with reference to these codes, legislation and guidance. 'Every Child Matters' is embedded into all aspects of training and development for carers.

TFCA has a dedicated Training Coordinator who manages and oversees the TFCA training and development programme for its carers before and after approval.

TFCA also provides a wide range of child-centred services to support their placements, through sessional workers and access to therapeutic input to offer tailored packages of care to children and

young people with very complex needs or when required due to specific circumstances. TFCA ensures that all the children and young people placed with our foster carers receive a magazine for young people, called Teenlines and Kidslines.

Our objectives include:

Working in partnership with local authorities and agencies to find the best solutions for children and young people – many of whom present with very complex needs. Our specialist fostering service is designed to compliment and support existing local authority provision:

- To broaden the choice of services on offer to children, young people and their families who are in need of support. Fostering teams often find our services particularly useful where children and young people need a specialist service, to remain with siblings, or in cases where an emergency placement is needed and no in house placement can be found.
- To promote the health and welfare of all children and young people placed with the agency, in line with the Governments 'Every Child Matters' agenda and Public Health Guidance: promoting the quality of life of looked after children and young people 2010.
- To provide a workforce who are appropriately qualified, experienced and registered with their professional regulatory bodies. The company is committed to continuous professional development for all employees.

Carers and young people are supported 24 hours a day and 365 days per year by social workers supported by the Team Manager and Registered Manager.



Children and Young People's Rights

Children's Commissioner

The Children's Commissioner and their team make sure that the key people in the lives of children and young people listen to them.

The role of the Children's Commissioner was created by the Children Act 2004 and is there to promote the views of children and young people from birth to 18 (up to 21 for young people in specific circumstances).

Their Vision

A society where children's and young people's rights are realised, where their views shape decisions made about their lives, and they respect the rights of others.

Their Mission

To promote and protect the rights of children in England. They will do this by involving children and young people in their work and ensuring their voices are heard. They will use statutory powers to undertake enquiries, and their position to engage, advise and influence those making decisions that affect children and young people.

How can young people have their say?

Children and young people can have their say by answering questions, participating in meetings and reviews and uploading content such as videos, powerpoint presentations and photographs. They use their views to shape our policies and influence decision-makers.

Supervising social workers see young people in their visits and give them a chance to share their views, wishes and feelings. Every child and young person is provided with a TFCA guide, which promotes participation. The children's guides inform children on how to share concerns

and gives out contact details for the appropriate people. The young people's guide offers information to young people on how to make a complaint.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner

33 Greycoat Street, London SW1P 2QF

Telephone: 020 7783 8330

Every Child Matters

Every Child Matters (ECM) is a UK government initiative for England and Wales, that was launched in 2003, partly as a consequence of the Victoria Climbié serious case review. It is one of the most important policy initiatives and development programmes in relation to children and children's services of the last decade, and has been described as a "sea change" to the children and families agenda. It has been the title of three government papers, leading to the Children Act 2004.

Every Child Matters covers children and young adults up to the age of 19, or 24 for those with disabilities.

Its main aims are for every child, whatever their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- Stay Safe
- Be Healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Achieve economic well-being
- Make a positive contribution

Each of these themes has a detailed framework attached whose outcomes require multi-agency partnerships working together to achieve best outcomes. TFCA shares and endorses this framework.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a legally-binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

Since being adopted by the United Nations in November 1989, 193 countries have ratified the convention, meaning they have agreed to do everything they can to make the rights a reality for children around the world.

All signatories are bound to the UNCRC by international law, and its implementation is monitored by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Under the terms of the convention, states are required to meet the basic needs of children and help them reach their full potential. Central to this is the acknowledgment that every child has basic fundamental rights. These include:

- The right to life
- The right to his or her own name and identity
- The right to be protected from abuse or exploitation
- The right to an education
- The right to having their privacy protected
- To be raised by, or have a relationship with, their parents
- The right to express their opinions and have these listened to and, where appropriate, acted upon
- The right to play and enjoy culture and art in safety



Committed to Equality and Valuing Diversity

TFCA recognises and celebrates the diverse society and communities in which we all live and work. We embrace diversity and promote equality of opportunity. We aim to recruit people from all backgrounds to reflect the communities that our children and young people live in.

We are aware however, that discrimination, prejudice, unfairness and oppression exist in every aspect of daily living, including education, employment, health and social care. We are committed to enabling all children and young people, foster carer's and employees to reach their full potential as individuals, unimpeded by discrimination, unfairness or oppressive behaviour within the organisation.

In TFCA we want all children and young people in our care, foster carer's and employees to feel valued and treated equally and fairly in TFCA. Our goal is to ensure our values are embedded in our day to day working practices with all our stakeholders and service users.

TFCA embraces and celebrates diversity.



Company Status

TFCA is a Limited Company. The company registration number is 4234023.

TFCA provides local placements to children and young people from local authorities across the South Coast, South London and bordering local authorities.

All our foster carers have organisational memberships of FosterTalk.

Senior Management Objectives

The Senior Management Team, are responsible for the strategic planning of the company including its business plan, with service user needs, direction and aims, organisational structure, policy and procedures, to incorporate new legislation, guidance and regulations, and financial commitments. Our financial management ensures best value for our stakeholders.

They are also responsible for setting performance targets and subsequent monitoring, in addition to ensuring the legal compliance of the organisation. TFCA is registered with Ofsted URN SC032330.

TFCA has established and maintained relationships with 17 local authorities in the last two years.

Quality Assurance

The Registered Manager monitors and audits in relation to all aspects of the service, supported by the Team Manager to ensure consistency of service across TFCA.

Issues arising out of complaints and allegations are managed, investigated and reported appropriately to the Quality Assurance Team in Head Office.

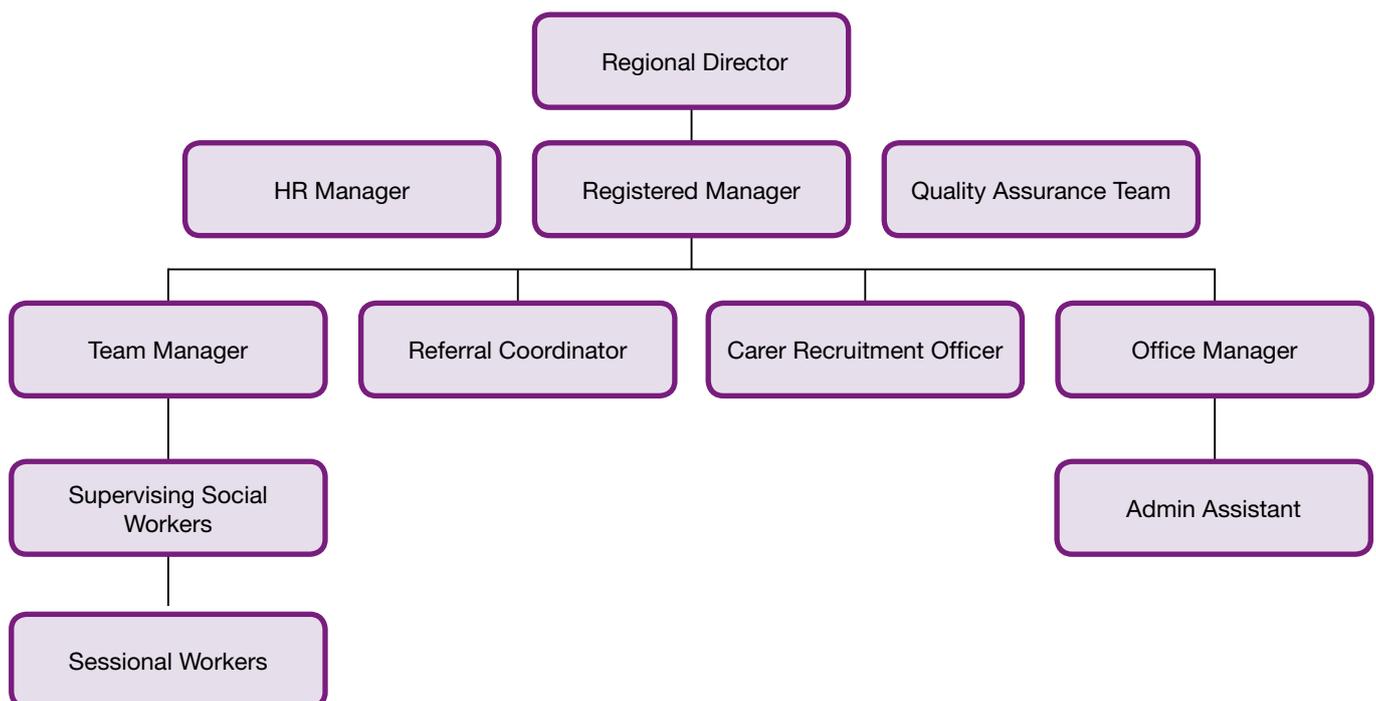


Management Structure

Registered Manager – Luisa Halloran
Responsible Individual – Iain Anderson, CEO

The company establishes clear roles for Managers and all Employees and has well established lines of communication and accountability between Managers, Employees and Carers.

Staff numbers are maintained in line with placement and carer numbers, supported by a HR Manager from the parent company.





Our Employees

Regional Director

The Regional Director provides social work supervision to the Registered Manager. She is a member of the Senior Management team and is directly accountable to the Operations Director. She ensures that the agency provides a quality service.

Registered Manager

The Registered Manager is responsible for the management of the service in a defined geographical area. This includes the supervision and management of the Team Manager and Office Manager and overall responsibility for TFCA. They are responsible for budgetary control in their area and for producing the area business plan. The Registered Manager is also involved with the development and implementation of the strategic aims and objectives of the organisation, and meets monthly with Senior Managers and Team Managers. The Registered Manager sits on the TFCA's Panel.

Team Manager

The Team Manager is responsible for the supervision and management of Supervising Social Workers and support employees, working from our office based in Shoreham-by-Sea. The Team Manager will assist the Registered Manager as appropriate, in the recruitment, training and management of independent assessors and quality assuring their work in producing Form F's and other assessments or pieces of work.

Supervising Social Workers

SSW's undertake the assessment, support and annual review of foster carers. Each SSW will work in partnership with the social worker allocated to the children and young person, to ensure best outcomes. SSW's support the training of foster carers and run support groups for foster carers. The SSW's provide Out of Hours support to our foster carers, on a rota system 24/7.

Sessional Workers

Sessional Workers provide a range of supportive and additional services to children in care from transport, supervised contact, to support for young people moving on to independence. The Sessional Workers support activities and events for children and young people; both children looked after and young people as well as the sons and daughters of our foster carers. TFCA is also able to offer other services such as life story work and therapeutic support through accessing additional resources.

Carer Recruitment Officer

The CRO is responsible for implementing the recruitment and marketing strategy, organising carer recruitment events and the initial screening of potential foster carers. The CRO works closely with the Registered Manager, Team Manager, Referral Coordinator, and reports to the regional CRO Manager.

Administration

TFCA has one Office Manager who oversees the work of a part-time administration assistant.

Finance Team

The finance team based at NFA's head office undertake all financial duties in the company including invoicing, carer's payments, pay role, credit control and accounts payable.

Placements Service

The Referral Coordinator works with local authorities in identifying the most suitable placements to the referrals we receive, sharing information appropriately and completing matching assessments. The Referral Coordinator works with the Registered Manager collating data including placement outcomes and agreeing contracts and finance for placements.

Employees Qualifications and Experience

TFCA's office is situated in Shoreham-by-Sea. All the members in the team are mainly office based, with the exception of two social workers who have responsibility for the households of foster carers in the South London area. These two social workers have the flexibility of working from home some of the time.

The Regional Director, Human Resources and Quality Assurance Managers visit the office regularly.

The Registered Manager and Team Manager hold recognised professional social worker and management qualifications and all supervising social workers hold a recognised professional social work qualification. TFCA's social work employees are practitioners with a wide range of skills and experience, in the private, voluntary and statutory sectors.



Complaints and Outcomes

TFCA's complaints procedure aims to deal with complaints received in a prompt and equitable manner. The Registered Manager and Team Manager are responsible for the compliance of the complaints, allegations and investigation procedures in consultation with the Quality Assurance Team.

TFCA Complaints Policy

All the children and adults with whom this company comes into contact have the right to receive a professional service of the highest standard. If they do not feel they have received such a service, they have the right to complain and have that complaint listened to. If it is possible to identify a way forward with a complaint which is informal and therefore easily resolved, this is the preferred option. We would encourage all complainants to talk to the person with whom they have a complaint wherever possible as we find most complaints can be resolved at this point. Where this is not possible there will be a meeting between the complainant and the line manager of the person/s being complained about. A letter of resolution will be issued by the line manager detailing how the outcome was arrived at.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome at the initial stage, or if at the outset they require the matter to be dealt with by another employee of TFCA they will be asked to write to the Registered Manager who will then contact the complainant within five working days. Following this investigation a report will be made available to the complainant outlining the outcome of the investigation. The Registered Manager will invite the complainant to a meeting to discuss the report.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the report they must confirm in writing the reasons for their dissatisfaction to the Registered Manager who will arrange for the complaint to be reviewed by an independent panel within 28 days. Once the panel has reached a decision the complainant will be advised of the outcome within seven days.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied they may take advice from the Regulatory Authority.

Ofsted

Enquires, Ofsted National Business Unit
Piccadilly Gate, Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 1231231

Children and Young people may also make a complaint to the Children's Commissioners based in England. They can do this by going to the website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Support

It is the policy of TFCA to make its complaint procedures accessible, effective, fair and as independent as possible.

Sometimes children and adults need help and support to make a complaint.

The child may have support from his or her parent, social worker, independent visitor or foster carer. A child who wishes to make a complaint about any aspect of his or her care should receive assistance to access independent advice and support from their Independent Reviewing Officer. Any complaint made by a Child Looked After will also be referred to a recognised advocacy service if the child wishes to do so.

Foster carers may enlist the help of a support person or advocate or their Supervising Social Worker, as appropriate, to make a complaint about the agency under this policy or where appropriate, about the placing authority under the relevant local authority's complaints procedure.

Allegations of Abuse

If any complaint is made to any employee of TFCA that is clearly of a child protection nature that complaint will be immediately passed on to the relevant Local Authority LADO, the responsible authority and Ofsted will be informed.

If at any time during an investigation into a complaint it becomes clear that there may be child protection implications, the current investigation will be halted and the relevant Local Authority LADO will be notified immediately, and the responsible authority and Ofsted will be informed.

Where a complaint is made against a registered person, Ofsted will be notified; both of the nature of the complaint and of the outcome. This action will be undertaken by the Regional Director of TFCA.



Services

We are passionate about improving the quality of life for children and young people.

We pride ourselves on finding the best possible match when children need to be placed with our foster carers. Each carer is rigorously assessed and constantly supported, trained and monitored to ensure the best possible outcomes for each child. We provide the following flexible services:

- Short and long term fostering placements
- Bridging and respite care placements
- Parent and child placements
- Sibling group placements
- Emergency placements
- Placements for unaccompanied minors
- Placements for children with disabilities
- Remand placements
- Support services
- Staying put arrangements
- Supervised contact
- Form F Assessments

We also have access to therapeutic support which is available to be commissioned by the Local Authorities we work with.

We underpin our placements services by:

- The recruitment of a diverse range of carers throughout South London and surrounding local authorities including Essex, Kent, and across the South Coast.
- The assessment of carer's through a rigorous and comprehensive screening process lasting between three to four months on average.
- Statutory checks, including medicals and enhanced DBS checks.
- The taking up of extensive references (minimum of three).

- Independent Fostering panel for recommendation of approval of potential carers.
- Ongoing support to carers is via a dedicated emergency support system provided by Social Workers and Team Manager. The carers can access this facility 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- Regular, relevant training and development opportunities for carers.
- Support groups.
- We work in close partnership with local authorities.
- The management, support, supervision and monitoring of placements, including placement planning meetings, case conferences and regular reviews.
- Continuous assessment of carers, including annual household reviews and regular updating of references, medical checks, checks with professionals from education and household checks.
- Special events and activities for carers and all the children and young people in their households.



Carer Recruitment Assessment and Approval

Prospective Carer Pack and Registration of Interest Form

Individuals who contact this agency, or who we contact as part of a recruitment drive will undertake a screening call within 3 days of the enquiry with the Carer Recruitment Officer. This information will enable a decision to be made whether or not to proceed with the enquiry and to carry out an Initial Visit.

A Supervising Social Worker will make contact by day 4 of the enquiry, to set a date of an Initial Visit which should be completed by day 7. The Social Worker will take information about the agency to share with the applicant. Following the initial visit the applicant is advised of their success or otherwise. If successful the Team Manager will allocate an assessing social worker and the assessment process is initiated, including stage one checks.

Assessment Process

All fostering assessments will be undertaken in accordance with the National Minimum Standards, BAAF Form F format, equal opportunities policy and any other relevant legislation and or policy in force at the time of the assessment.

The assessor will assist the applicant in completing all relevant statutory check forms including the DBS checks and references. The assessor will also agree a schedule of visits to complete the assessment. The applicants will be invited to undertake Skills to Foster training which forms part of the assessment. Applicants will need to have a medical with their GP prior to approval.

The assessment is very comprehensive and produces a report that covers past and present relationships and partnerships, support networks, individual profiles, interviews with children and adult members of the household, lifestyle, parenting capacity and experience and valuing diversity, as well as a Health & Safety check of the home. This report will be presented to the TFCA fostering panel. The applicants will also be required to produce a family portfolio which includes photographs, descriptions of family lifestyle and household rules to be shared with the child or young person when appropriate.

The applicants will be invited to attend the panel. They will receive advice on how the panel presentation meeting will be organised and what part they will play in it. The assessor will also attend the panel. The panel members experience derives from a variety of backgrounds, including education, health, social care and fostering.

Following the panel presentation, the applicants will be notified immediately of the panels recommendation in respect of their application. However the final decision as to the applicants' approval will be made by the Agency Decision Maker.

In line with the Fostering Amendments 2013 if, at any time during the assessment, the assessor feels the applicant falls short of the standards required, this will be discussed with the Registered or Team Manager immediately.

Any areas of shortfall will be investigated and where training or support will not bring the applicant up to acceptable standards, the assessment will cease. The assessor will inform the applicants of this decision and the reasons within 48 hours and present a brief report for consideration by the Fostering Panel.

Post Approval

The applicants will receive written confirmation of their approval, a foster carer agreement and foster carer handbook. Where panel have asked for further work or clarification, the assessor will agree a timescale for this work to be undertaken.

Where approval is given, the household details will be entered on to the TFCA IT system which acts as a central register, and the carer allocated to an Supervising Social Worker.

The information placed on the system will then be used to provide matching between the foster carer and a child or young person referred to TFCA.



Annual Reviews

Each fostering household will have a review annually, unless there are significant changes to their circumstances in which case we will conduct a review at that time. These circumstances include:

- After the final strategy meeting of a s.47 investigation involving a carer(s).
- Where allegations have been made regarding a carer(s) child care practice and no s.47 investigation is pursued.
- Where there has been a breakdown in the approved carer's relationship resulting in one carer moving out of the household. In this instance both carers will be subject to review except where one/or both carers has given notice of an intention to resign and the other continues to be an approved carer.
- Where there have been significant changes to the carer's lifestyle.
- Where there has been the death of a carer.
- Where a carer has been diagnosed with a serious illness.
- When a carer has stopped or started living with a partner.
- Where a carer is not working in partnership with the agency including a lack of willingness to attend training.

The annual household review will address the carer's training and development needs and suggest, if required, alterations to their approval status. Reports will be requested from the responsible social worker, school, SSW, carer, the child/young person in placement, the birth family (if appropriate) and any other party involved. A Manager will chair the review either in the respective office or within the fostering household.

Following approval, the carer's first review report and annual reviews every three years will be presented to the Fostering Panel for their recommendation and comments and subsequently the Decision Maker for approval. Carer's will be invited to attend all reviews taken to panel.



Matching Process

All children and young people are closely matched to ensure that their needs are met by our skilled and experienced foster carers.

At TFCA we recognise that all children and young people are different and thus all placements are unique.

Our dedicated Referral Coordinator is on hand to assist local authorities in finding the right match for children or young people. They work closely with the Supervising Social Workers, foster carers and local authorities to ensure the best possible matches are made.

The matching process will consider the child's needs especially regarding the following key areas:

- Schooling/education.
- Expectations around contact, particularly in relation to the foster carers' part in facilitating and/or supervising such contact.
- The child's identity/race/culture/religion.
- The child's history.
- The child's behaviour.
- The child's health.
- The focus of the placement.

The matching process will also consider the carer's availability and:

- Their experience/knowledge/skills.
- Their address and the distance from the foster home to the child's school.
- Any other children in the placement.
- The foster carers' own children and other family members.
- Risks identified in the referral from the Local Authority.

TFCA will not propose a placement if the assessed needs of the child cannot reasonably be provided by the proposed foster carers.



Financial

Foster carers receive a generous weekly fostering allowance, paid directly into their bank account.

The allowance paid to foster carers includes a maintenance payment, payments for clothing, pocket money and birthdays and seasonal allowances.

Savings for children in care are deducted at source and saved in individual accounts administered by the NFA Group.

Detailed information and guidance on rates and allowances is provided to foster carers in the Foster Carers Handbook and a detailed annual statement is provided to each foster carer.

Foster carers are self employed and must seek their own advice on liability for Income Tax and National Insurance.

Local authorities should contact TFCA for information pertaining to our charges for the different types of placements and support services offered.



Training and Development

Foster Carers

TFCA is committed to ensuring that foster carers are highly skilled and equipped to give children and young people referred to this agency a positive experience of fostering. The statutory framework for fostering informs the comprehensive training programme delivered to our foster carers to ensure their continual provision of high quality care.

The training provided is delivered by a dedicated training coordinator, we also provide some training through external trainers. The training equips the foster carers to work with children and young people with complex needs to ensure their quality of life is improved. The foster carers are trained to develop an understanding and knowledge of the multi racial and disadvantaged groups in their communities.

Training is updated and reviewed annually to ensure the courses delivered are compliant with the latest guidance and legislation and the evolving needs of children and young people. The training schedules are planned and any new courses will be introduced at the beginning of each year.

It is expected that all our foster carers attend training regularly and that they further their development in a variety of ways. Foster carers are offered e-learning courses and are encouraged to read widely and at times may attend relevant externally provided courses.

Our foster carers are supported to complete the Training & Development Standards (TSD) within one year of approval to formalise their learning in a measured and consistent way. The carers will develop an understanding of attachment, safeguarding, promoting healthy living and managing challenging behaviour, including de-escalation techniques. Once the TSD workbook is completed each carer will complete a personal development plan with their SSW, based on their role and practice as a foster carer and this will form part of the carer's annual review.

Support Groups/Coffee Mornings

TFCA provides support groups and coffee mornings so that foster carers can meet in an informal setting to discuss topical issues. These meetings enable the carers to share experiences of fostering and to discuss any issues that may be concerning them. Specific issues are often discussed with guest speakers being invited to address the support groups.

Foster Carer Participation

TFCA encourages experienced foster carers to participate in the delivery of some training courses and at recruitment events. This furthers the development of the presenting foster carer and enables newer foster carers or applicants to gain first hand insight into the fostering task.

We encourage carers to contribute to the development of the training programmes and ask their views on various subjects periodically. We send out carer questionnaires to ascertain the carer's views on a wide range of subjects including our service to them. Feedback is gathered from carers regarding their annual household review.

The Senior Directors and Managers meet with carers for an annual consultation event to ascertain their wishes and feelings and views.

As part of the Quality Assurance audit process, the foster carers views may be sought with one to one interviews being held and questionnaires being completed.

Our more experienced foster carers are invited to act as mentors to less experienced or new carers under our buddying scheme. This involves matching the experienced carers to their 'buddies' so that support and mentor-ship can be offered.

Employees

TFCA encourages all employees to develop their skills and knowledge by accessing e-learning and training courses where appropriate.

Employees will continue their training and development under the guidance of their regulatory body.

Each year all permanent employees will have an appraisal, part of this is an audit of training and development needs.



Support and Management of Foster Carers

All foster carers have an allocated qualified Supervising Social Worker.

It is the SSW's responsibility to manage and support the foster carer in the fostering task, backed up by their Team and Registered Manager. Both the SSW and foster carer are trained to ensure children and young people's welfare is paramount. They will work in partnership to ensure that the children and young people's needs are met and that they are provided with a safe, nurturing placement where they are able to achieve their potential.

The SSW will visit the foster carers regularly to undertake supervision. These times are an opportunity to discuss the day to day care needs of the children and young people and how the foster carers are working to meet those needs and progress the care plan. Discussions about training needs will also be held at these meetings.

The SSW will aim to undertake at least two unannounced visits to each fostering household per year. SSW's also carry out independent health and safety inspections of each fostering household to ensure the standard of accommodation on offer is of the highest quality. The SSW will attend all meetings and reviews with the carer, prepare reports for annual reviews and keep a thorough and accurate record of all fostering activity.

The teams are contactable at their local office during office hours, and for out of hours support the foster carer can ring the duty number. The duty system is operated centrally and manned by the social workers on a rota basis backed up by a Team or Registered Manager.

All foster carers have access to a social worker 24hrs a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year.



Contact Details

The Foster Care Agency

Unit 6, Riverside Business Centre
Brighton Road
Shoreham-by-Sea
West Sussex BN43 6RE

Telephone: 01273 463 100

www.thefostercareagency.org.uk





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