



GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CHILDREN'S SERVICES

**Fostering Service
Statement of Purpose**

Fostering
Gloucestershire
County Council



2025/26

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1. Introduction

Gloucestershire County Council Fostering Service's Statement of Purpose is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000 (CSA) for the conduct of Fostering Services. The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and Fostering Services Regulations govern the work of fostering services throughout England and are used in inspecting and registering fostering agencies.

Standard 16 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and Regulation 3 (1) of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011 require a fostering service to produce a statement which contains a range of detailed information as set out in Standard 16. It is intended as a useful source of information for Foster Carers, Supervising Social Workers, Childcare Social Workers, and young people. The aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose should be child focused and show how the service will meet outcomes for children.

2. Aims and Objectives

Gloucestershire County Council's fostering service is determined to provide an outstanding service to all children in foster care and a standard of care that meets or exceeds their needs. We recognise the importance of foster care as a steppingstone to transforming children's lives. Foster Carers are regarded as making a huge contribution and should therefore be provided with the first-rate preparation, training, and support to carry out this task to maximum effect.

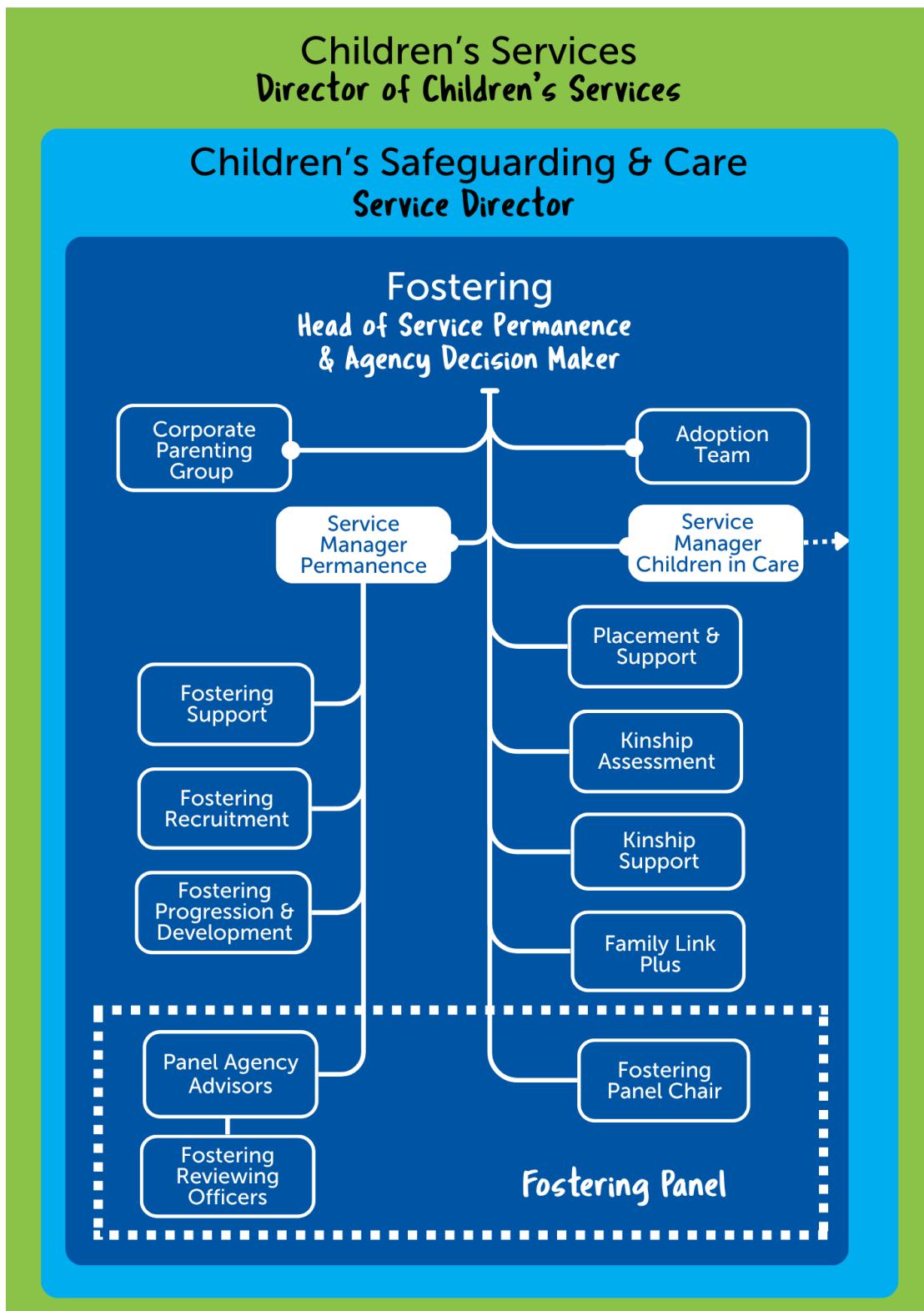
As a corporate parent Gloucestershire is committed to listening to the voice of each child and young person, assessing their needs and comprehensively planning to meet them. The fostering service will work in partnership with children, their families, and colleagues from the council and other agencies to deliver the best care and support to children in our care.

The aims of the services are:

- All fostered children are provided with a well-planned, stable, and high-quality homes that will enhance their life chances.
- The service will aspire to ensure the recruitment of Foster Carers is sufficient to meet the required needs of children needing foster care, providing an element of choice.
- To provide excellent support and service to our Foster Carers, by suitable experienced, knowledgeable qualified staff.
- To provide training and development opportunities to all our Foster Carers.

3. Service Structure

The Fostering Service is part of Children's Safeguarding and Care within Gloucestershire Children's Services under the overall leadership and direction of the Director of Children's Services.



The roles and responsibilities within the Fostering Service are as follows:

Tammy Wheatley – Head of Service Permanence has overall responsibility for the operational management and strategic leadership of the fostering service, providing direct supervision of the Service Manager, some of the Fostering Team Managers and is the Fostering Agency Decision Maker (ADM).

Lisa Long – Service Manager Permanence reports directly to the Head of Service to support the operational management of the Fostering Service and directly supervises the agency advisors, the Mockingbird Co-ordinator, some of the fostering Team Managers as well as the Training and Marketing Officers.

Fostering Panel Agency Advisors are responsible for the line management of the independent Fostering Reviewing Officers and the operational management of the Fostering Panel.

Kelvin Troake – Independent Chair of the Foster Panel is responsible for the leadership of the Foster Panel.

The Fostering Reviewing Officers are a team of three officers who are responsible for chairing Foster Carer's annual reviews and making recommendations relating to their approval to the Fostering Panel and ADM.

The Fostering Service is a countywide service, with task-focused teams as follows:

Fostering Recruitment Team (FRT) is responsible for the recruitment of prospective Foster Carers. They provide preparation training to applicants and assess their suitability to become Foster Carers. Newly approved foster carers transfer to one of the fostering support teams after three months, providing them with continuity and stability during the early stages of their fostering journey. This approach helps ensure they receive enhanced support from a familiar member of staff when they care for their first child.

The staff team consists of two part time Managers (job share), one Deputy Team Manager, 6 full time equivalent social workers and one full time equivalent Fostering support worker.

Fostering Placement & Support Team (FPST) is responsible for identifying foster families for children who require them. They work collaboratively with Children's Placement Commissioning Service, operational social work teams and other parts of the Fostering Service to identify the most suitable homes for children in care by ensuring their needs are well matched and best placed to build stability. In addition, they support specialist foster carers who care for children with more complex needs.

The staff team consists of a full-time Manager, three full time equivalent Social Workers, one full time Placement Social Worker, two full time Placement Coordinators and a full time Support Worker.

Fostering Support Teams (FST) is responsible for the supervision and support of the general (Band 1 and 2) approved Foster Carers. The team is split into three, across the three teams there are three full time Team Managers, 1.5 Deputy Team Managers, 16.5 full time equivalent Social Workers and three full-time Fostering Support Workers. Each team is responsible for two locality areas across Gloucestershire in line with the safeguarding teams.

Kinship Assessment Team (KAT) is responsible for assessing connected carers who may provide care for children unable to live with their birth parents. This includes completing full kinship fostering assessments following temporary approval under Regulation 24, ensuring carers are suitable for longer-term fostering arrangements. The team also undertakes Stage 2 viability assessments to explore the potential of other family members or connected persons and completes full Special Guardianship Order (SGO) assessments to support court decisions regarding permanent care arrangements.

The team consists of one full time Team Manager, two part time deputy Team Managers (job share), 10 Social Workers and two-family support Workers.

Kinship Support Team (KST) is responsible for supporting all connected families who are caring for children via a kinship fostering arrangement and provide training and support, (including financial) in respect of all Special Guardian arrangements. The team are also responsible for assessing the suitability of, and fulfilling the visiting requirements to, children being cared for in private fostering arrangements.

The Team consists of two part time Team Managers (Job share), two part time Deputy Team Managers (job share), seven social workers and four Fostering Support Workers.

Family Link Plus Team is short break service for children with disabilities and complex health needs. The Family Link Carers are approved under the framework of Fostering Regulations and the same National Minimum Standards apply. The Family Link Plus Team is made up of a group of highly skilled individuals who work to ensure that children and young people are getting the day care and short breaks fostering service they need.

This team is made up of 1 Team Manager, 3 Social Workers, 1 Senior Family Support Worker, 1 Family Support Worker and 1 specialist Nurse Practitioner. In view of its specialist function, the Family Link Team has its own Statement of Purpose and works very closely with DCYPS.

Fostering Progression and Development Team are responsible for several service-wide functions including marketing and recruitment activities, facilitating face to face and online training for foster carers, allocation of work and supervision of Fostering family support workers and the coordination of the Mockingbird programme. The team is managed by the Service Manager and currently consists of two part time specialist colleagues and a full time Support Worker providing marketing and training support. The Marketing and Training Officers work in collaboration with the Corporate Communications Team and external training providers; one senior family support worker is in post to supervise and coordinate allocation of work to fostering family support workers and a Life Story Coordinator is responsible for developing, supporting, and embedding life story work with Children in Care across Children's Services. The development of the Mockingbird Programme is led by the full time Social Worker who works within this team and provides a service across all teams.

All Supervising Social Workers have a recognised social work qualification and are registered with Social Work England.

4. Functions of the Fostering Service

The core functions of the service in relation to foster care are:

- Recruit, train, and assess a sufficient number of prospective foster carers in line with the business plan.
- Maintain a high-quality cohort of foster carers capable of meeting a wide range of children's needs and achieving positive outcomes.
- Ensure a diverse range of foster homes are available to support effective matching, considering racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural factors.
- Provide preparation and ongoing training tailored to carers' skill levels and focused on improving outcomes for children in care.
- Deliver high-quality supervision and support to foster carers.
- Complete an annual review for each foster carer to ensure continued suitability and development.
- Work collaboratively with professionals, teams, and partner agencies to support children and carers.
- Provide placement support that is responsive to children's needs and aimed at improving all aspects of their wellbeing.

The fostering service works in close association with:

Prospective Foster Carers - The Fostering Recruitment Team assesses potential foster carers using the Coram BAAF Form F. The assessment and preparation of prospective carers and the supervision of them for the first three months of approval is the primary focus of the recruitment team. Thereafter carers are supported by the Fostering Support Team.

Approved Foster Carers - Once approved, foster carers receive regular supervision and ongoing support from the Fostering Support Team. We are proud of the comprehensive support we offer, which includes access to support groups, TSD (Training, Support and Development) workshops, one-to-one support, online learning opportunities, a wide-ranging training programme, and consultations with a child therapist.

Kinship Foster Carers - When an assessment identifies that a connected person is the most suitable arrangement for a child, the child's Social Worker works closely with a social worker from the Kinship Assessment Team. A fostering assessment is completed for the connected person, and if approved, they become a kinship foster carer. These carers are then supported by the Kinship Support Team, who provide regular supervision, access to kinship support groups, and ongoing guidance. Kinship foster carers receive the same financial allowance and support as mainstream foster carers, ensuring equity in the care and support provided to children.

Social Work Teams – Each child in care has an allocated Social Worker who is responsible for the child/ young person's care plan. They lead on assessing need, care planning and supporting children in foster care.

Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) – The role of the IRO is to chair the reviews of children in care, confirm their care plans and oversee that plans are implemented in a timely and appropriate manner.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – The role of the **LADO** is outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010). The LADO is responsible for overseeing the management of allegations made against individuals who work with children, ensuring they are handled promptly and appropriately. This includes allegations that a person has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that suggests they may be unsuitable to work with children.

This process applies to all individuals working with children, including foster carers. The LADO provides advice, guidance, and oversight from the initial concern through to the conclusion of the case, working closely with employers, social care, and the police to ensure a fair and thorough process.

Designated Nurse for Children in Care – This designated nurse oversees the medical provision to children in care; this includes advice and support to Social Workers and Foster Carers.

Gloucestershire's Virtual School - Gloucestershire Virtual School is a specialist service within the local authority that supports the educational progress and outcomes of children in care. It acts as the educational advocate for these children, ensuring they receive the support they need to succeed, regardless of where they live or go to school.

Children and Young People Service (CAMHS) – CAMHS can provide specialist mental health services for children in care. They also provide consultations with Foster Carers to advise and support the development of skills and knowledge needed to meet the individual needs of children and to manage behaviours caused by trauma and early life experiences. They provide mandatory consultations and training to Foster Carers in their first year along with clinical supervision and training to staff, working in collaboration to embed our therapeutic approach to caring for children.

5. Recruitment & Assessment of Foster Carers

5.1 The recruitment process

Gloucestershire has developed a recruitment strategy, in conjunction with the overall sufficiency strategy and in consultation with the placement service. It is designed to help deliver targeted campaigns based on researched needs for certain types of carers. Examples of current strategies include targeted recruitment for carers of siblings, teenagers, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, and disabled children. The department have developed a range of marketing materials and is staffed by experienced, enthusiastic staff led by marketing officer, Karen Etheridge (karen.etheridge@gloucestershire.gov.uk). Karen liaises closely with the South West Fostering Hub communications team and attends separate monthly meetings focused on marketing strategies. The Hub has pooled and centralised resources to deliver larger-scale campaigns. They also run marketing events across the South West, some of which Gloucestershire supports, and in turn, they support some of Gloucestershire's local events.

Initial fostering enquiries for Gloucestershire County Council are received via the South West Fostering Hub, which supports 15 Local Authorities. The Hub conducts a brief screening call to explore the applicant's interest and circumstances, then passes the enquiry to Gloucestershire via a shared portal. Once an enquiry is received, Gloucestershire's Fostering Recruitment Team contacts the individual directly to gather further details and carry out its own screening. This includes answering additional questions, offering invitations to Gloucestershire's fostering webinars, or arranging a one-to-one session. For potential agency transfers, Gloucestershire aim to visit as soon as possible, following the agreed transfer protocol.

If the enquirer wishes to proceed, an Initial Visit is arranged. A fostering social worker will visit the applicant's and assess initial suitability. If both the applicant and the local authority agree to proceed, the applicant will be invited to complete a formal application, including

consent for statutory checks. All applicants are required to attend Skills to Foster training, which is mandatory and designed to provide foundational knowledge, insight into the needs of children in care, and support informed decision-making. Upon completion of training, the applicant will enter the Form F Assessment stage, conducted by Gloucestershire's Fostering Recruitment Team.

Gloucestershire maintains a strong working relationship with the South West Fostering Hub, including monthly meetings with all partner Local Authorities to discuss relevant issues. A named contact within the Hub, Jade McInty, meets monthly with Gloucestershire online to ensure smooth coordination. Referrals received through the "Refer a Friend" scheme are managed entirely by Gloucestershire, outside of the Hub process.

The county council's website provides full information on Gloucestershire's fostering service for the public. www.goucestershire.gov.uk/fostering

5.2 The assessment process

In accordance with the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2013, the assessment of prospective foster carers is structured into Stage 1 and Stage 2. These stages may be undertaken concurrently, subject to the discretion of the fostering service.

Stage 1 – Initial Screening and Statutory Checks

Stage 1 involves the completion of a detailed application form, which gathers essential information about the applicant(s) and all members of the household. Consent is obtained to undertake a range of statutory and safeguarding checks to determine the applicant's initial suitability to foster. These include:

- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all individuals in the household aged 18 and over, in line with LAC (97) 17
- Local authority checks, including a review of any information held on internal systems, in compliance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Medical assessments conducted by the applicant's general practitioner
- Verification of employment history, including references from any roles involving direct work with children
- Personal references and, where applicable, ex-partner checks
- Health and safety checks of the applicant's home environment

Applicants are also required to attend the Fostering Network's Skills to Foster preparation course as part of this stage.

Stage 2 – Comprehensive Assessment

Stage 2 comprises a full assessment undertaken by a qualified social worker. This involves a series of structured home visits and interviews to explore the applicant's background, family dynamics, motivation to foster, and capacity to meet the needs of children in care.

The assessment focuses on:

- Parenting experience and skills
- Understanding of child development and safeguarding
- Ability to provide a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment
- Capacity to work in partnership with professionals and birth families

The primary objective throughout the assessment is to determine whether the applicant is a safe, suitable, and capable individual to provide high-quality care to a child in care.

Once the assessment report is complete, it is shared with the applicant to ensure that the content is accurate and that they agree with the recommended terms of approval. The application is then presented to Foster Panel so that a recommendation can be made to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) about the applicant's suitability to become approved Foster Carers. The final decision regarding approval of applicant's rests with the ADM.

If an assessment is discontinued during Stage 1—typically due to concerns arising from statutory checks, references, or other eligibility criteria—the applicant is informed in writing of the decision and the reasons for it. At this stage, there is no right to appeal to the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM). However, the applicant may reapply in the future, subject to the discretion of the fostering service. In contrast, if the assessment progresses to Stage 2 and the fostering service proposes not to approve the applicant following a full assessment, the applicant has the right to make written representations or request a review by the IRM. In such cases, the completed assessment is presented to the Fostering Panel, and the final decision rests with the Agency Decision Maker (ADM).

Regulation 24 Placement

Under the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, a Regulation 24 placement allows a child to be temporarily placed with a Connected Person, someone with an existing relationship to the child, such as a relative or close family friend, for up to 16 weeks, with a possible 8-week extension under Regulation 25. This emergency provision is used in exceptional circumstances where a full fostering assessment cannot be completed beforehand. The placement must be deemed the most suitable way to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. Initial checks, including a viability assessment and home visit, must be completed before approval is granted by the Agency Decision Maker.

Once the child is placed, the Connected Person receives the same support as mainstream foster carers, including access to allowances, supervision, and training. A full fostering assessment is then initiated by the Kinship Assessment Team, following the two-stage process set out above.

6. Fostering Panel

There is one fostering panel which meets at a minimum four times per month with additional panels when needed. Panel capacity has responded to the increased need of the department. The panel is constituted to meet the requirements of the fostering service regulations. The panel consists of a central list of members with a diverse range of personal and professional backgrounds, relevant to fostering. New panel members are provided with an induction, and annual appraisals are undertaken with all panel members. Regular training and away days are also provided. The fostering panel has an independent chair to provide an objective stance. The panel collectively provides a key quality assurance function in relation to the local authority.

Panel recommendations are passed to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) and letters then sent accordingly to prescribed timescales. The fostering panel strongly encourages all prospective and approved Foster Carers to attend when their cases are being presented, panel believe this symbolises the importance of partnership working. Minutes are taken of all panel business.

6.1 Approvals

All Gloucestershire's Foster Carers are approved by the fostering panel. Applicants usually attend with their assessing Social Worker. Panel members understand that applicants are often apprehensive about attending and do all they can to help them feel at ease and supported. Applicants are asked a range of questions about their motivation, skills, and knowledge along with at least one question from a care leaver's perspective. The panel consider the most suitable approval for applicants such as age, gender, and number of children they can care for.

6.2 Annual reviews of approval

In addition to considering all fostering applications, the Fostering Panel also reviews all first annual reviews of approved foster carers. Subsequent annual reviews are chaired by Fostering Reviewing Officers, with reports submitted to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for a decision regarding continued approval.

These reviews are not routinely presented to panel unless there has been a significant change in the carer's circumstances, a change to their terms of approval, a serious concern regarding the standard of care, or an allegation that necessitates a review of the carer's continued suitability or consideration of termination of approval.

6.3 Termination of approval

Occasionally the fostering service will form the view that the standard of care provided by a Foster Carer is not good enough and does not meet the required standards. Depending on the severity of these issues presented additional training or support may be provided in the first instance. However, the matter may be presented to the panel that will give the Foster Carer an opportunity to express their views and will consider all the information available to them. The Foster Carer is encouraged to seek advice and support from the Fostering Network in these circumstances.

If panel reaches a recommendation that the carer is not suitable, the ADM forms a proposed decision (qualifying determination). If this is to terminate approval a letter is then sent to the carers stating the reasons. The Foster Carer then has 28 days within which to make representation to the decision maker or to apply to the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) for an independent review on behalf of the Secretary of State.

7. Placement Finding

The Fostering Service responds to planned and unplanned admissions. The structure of the Service recognises that unplanned admissions will occur and seeks to proactively address this need. Carers are specifically recruited and approved based on the service they will provide. During the assessment process and final approval, consideration is given to the impact placements will have and the capabilities/skills of carers. Thus, emergency, and unplanned admissions are directed towards carers with appropriate skills and capabilities. Where the Fostering Service is unable to find a home for a child, the commissioning of a foster home from independent agencies is managed and monitored by the Commissioning Team.

The Fostering Service aims to ensure that each child or young person placed in foster care is carefully matched with a carer capable of meeting her/his assessed needs. In matching children with carers, account is taken of the child's care plan and recent written assessments of the child and their family and the carers. Particular attention is paid to the child's existing networks and preserving educational continuity.

The Fostering Service aims to achieve matches by means of information sharing and consideration involving all professionals, the child and her/his family and potential carers, their families, and other children in the home. Where needed a support plan may be provided to support any matches which require it.

The Fostering Service is clear that to practice safe caring, Foster Carers need to be provided with as much information as possible, preferably before or as soon as possible after the child has moved in, to help them provide a safe environment for themselves, their own family, and the foster child.

The supervising Social Worker has a responsibility to ensure carers have as much information as is available. Unless a child moves via the emergency duty service, all Foster Carers will receive a child profile outlining the location, the child's view of themselves, educational and social needs, family time arrangements and current risk levels.

Views from Social Workers of children already living in the home will usually be sought and their comments included in the fostering risk assessment completed at the placement planning meeting.

The fostering resource highlights the specific training that Foster Carers will need to attend especially those Foster Carers who offer support to parent and child and other specialist fostering services.

Where practicable, each child has the opportunity for a period of introduction to a proposed Foster Carer so she/he can express an informed view about the arrangement and become familiar with the carer, the carer's family, any other children in the home and the home, neighbourhood, and any family pets, before moving in.

8. Support to Foster Carers

8.1 Supervising Social Workers

All approved Foster Carers have their own supervision with Social Workers from the Fostering Support Team. Whose duties include:

- Supervision to carers at a minimum of 8 weekly.
- Making an unannounced visit, at least once per year
- Organising training with carers, including child specific training to meet the health and other related needs of disabled children.
- Organising the provision of equipment as appropriate
- When possible, attending placement meetings, child protection meetings and placement reviews for children placed with their carers.
- Giving oral and written information to the fostering panel about the carers
- Helping to ensure that placements are appropriate for the child, carer, and the carers family.
- Arranging medical checks to be updated
- Arranging DBS and other legal documents to be updated including any adults living in the home age 18 years or older.
- Undertaking the Foster Carers annual review and ensure that any training and support needs are identified and organised.
- With the Foster Carer, young person, and Social Worker, contribute to the end of placement report.

- Monitoring the Foster Carers progress in relation to caring for children, as set out in the fostering national minimum standards.
- Take lead responsibility when a concern or allegation is made about a Foster Carer and sign post the carer to independent support if applicable through such organisations as the Fostering network.

8.2 Foster Carer support groups

Support Groups contain an element of training as well as support. These are run across the county on a regular basis for both general and kinship carers. Some meetings take place in the evening and others during the day (including a Saturday), this hopefully allows Foster Carers to attend despite any other commitments they may have. We encourage joint facilitation of groups by both a Supervising Social Worker and a Foster Carer. There is also an elected member from each support group who meets with senior management on a quarterly basis to share any feedback and to take back updates and information to the groups. Details of the groups are sent out on a regular basis, are on our website and always recorded in the newsletter. Carers can also contact the office for information about the groups.

8.3 Learning, development and training

The Foster Carer's Training Manual contains all the information Foster Carers (and staff) need to know about what training is provided for carers and how to access it. Learning and Development forms a key part of the Foster Carers' charter and explains the basis of the working relationship between staff and carers, outlining how we work best together, endorsing service delivery, commitments, and expectations on both sides.

Each carer is expected to have a Personal Development Plan (PDP) co-developed between the carer and Supervising Social Worker which is reviewed regularly within supervision. The plan captures past training and plans future learning activities, for up to 12 months, citing specific activity addressing their individual learning needs.

It is also a requirement that the Training Support and Development (TSD) Standards be completed by carers within the first 12 months (18 months for kinship carers) from the point of approval and form a national professional benchmark. Completion of these standards is also captured within their PDP. Supporting workshops and one-to-one guidance is available where required to encourage completion.

The Training Manual also includes mandatory and other courses as described in the Training Pathway (the essential training route relating to carers' current approval status). All carers are encouraged to attend, and both individuals in carer couples should complete all mandatory courses. The Pathway highlights when refresher training is due for key subjects, so that knowledge is kept updated and relevant to the changing fostering picture.

Carers are encouraged to be proactive, initiating their own learning and taking advantage of the broad variety of learning opportunities (multi-media, webinar, conference, reading material, peer, and support group activity) reflecting differing learning styles.

A separate Calendar of training dates is published twice yearly listing all courses available, together with annual carer conferences to which specialist speakers are invited. Flexible online e-learning is also available with an A-Z of subjects relevant to all carers, whether new or longer standing.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Service

The department has several systems in place for monitoring and evaluation of the fostering service, these include:

- Supervising Social Workers, Foster Carers and managers receive regular monthly supervision to maintain the high standards expected of carers and workers.
- All reports are read and signed by managers; their signature represents a quality assurance check on the standard of work and relevance of information provided.
- Annual unannounced visits are made to all carers (by a Social Worker different to the allocated one)
- The Agency Decision Maker has oversight of all annual reviews completed by the fostering service for all approved carers.
- Tracking systems are in place to monitor timescales from initial enquiry to approval.
- Feedback forms are provided to potential Foster Carers and approved carers at different stages of the process.
- Annual consultation with approved Foster Carers.
- Quarterly liaison meetings.
- Engagement events three times per year.
- The fostering panel routinely ask for feedback from every presenting Social Worker and approved Foster Carer who attends panel.
- The fostering panel provide feedback to all Social Workers who present work to the panel as part of their quality assurance role.
- A Quality Assurance programme runs across the service which includes monthly audits where files are reviewed, and the voice of the foster carer is ascertained. In addition, bi monthly thematic dip samples take place and inform practice development.

10. Ofsted Inspection

Ofsted are responsible for the regulation and inspection of children's services including local authority fostering services. The National Minimum Standards and fostering regulations are designed to set a minimum acceptable standard for the safe running of fostering services. Further details are available on the website www.ofsted.gov.uk

11. Fairness and Diversity

The Fostering Service works within Gloucestershire County council's Equality Objectives.

The Service aims to ensure:

- Employees and service users alike are treated equally with fairness and respect and that their diversity is both valued and celebrated.
- That our working practices are characterised by flexibility, efficiency, and excellence, reflected in a supportive management style that enables the diverse work force to realise their full potential in serving our customers.
- That our employee profile reflects diversity at every level of the organisation, and that posts will be filled through a fair system of recruitment and promotion.

12. Complaints Process

All complaints by Foster Carers are taken seriously. Foster Carers are entitled to use the departmental complaints procedure. Complaints will be resolved informally where possible, by the Supervising Social Worker or their manager. When this is not possible, it may be helpful to seek a second opinion from outside the team. Foster Carers should be advised that, if not satisfied with the response, they may take it to the Head of Service, or GCC's complaints service.

Gloucestershire County Council welcomes the views of those people who use its services and will utilise information gathered to improve and develop the services we provide. Full details of the corporate complaint's procedures can be found through - Customerservices@gloucestershire.gov.uk