

Catherine Lockett Fostering Services

An Effective Out of Hours Service

Emergencies call for immediate support no matter the time. Providing out-of-hours services can often alleviate worries, concerns and provide reassurance when foster carers are experiencing situations that feel hard to manage alone or may require some guidance.

Effective out of hours service should have a consistent approach. Through creating a robust service, clear policy and good practice guidance, including tips to manage situations, leaflets to help carers understand the service, and deciding on interventions during the day should a situation arise you are likely to become “preventative” rather than a “crisis led” service. Hopefully, you are likely to see fewer calls and a need for shorter interventions out of hours.

21.2 NMS - The fostering service ensures foster carers understand the nature and level of support which will be provided to them by the fostering service.

21.3 NMS - There is an effective out of hours advice and support service for foster carers.



Together we will explore :

- Setting up a robust out of hours service and having clear policies, process and the type of support that can be provided “out of hours”
- The role and responsibilities of the on-call workers - management oversight
- What constitutes as an emergency, a consideration of thresholds, and how we can minimise risk and vulnerabilities during the working day
- Notifications and responsibilities around this - “team around the child”
- Responding to crisis and an escalation of behaviours - “feelings of helplessness” (the dreaded phone call)
- A “good practice tool box” - having resources to provide additional support and guidance to the out of hours workers
- Effective communication - reporting and recording, a learning organisation

If you have any questions or would like some more information, please get in touch by emailing us at

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