

Statement of Purpose



PARAMOUNT
FOSTER CARE

"In pursuit of Excellence in Care"

Registered Office:

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About us

Paramount Foster Care is an Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) and registered under the Companies Act 2006 (company number 10707917) and registered with Ofsted (registration number (URN) 2509967).

We are based at SMA House, 172 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich, West Midlands, B70 6QG.

Statement of Purpose

This Statement of Purpose has been developed in accordance with appropriate statute law and regulations. Examples include:

- The Children Act 1989 and Volume 4 2011 (fostering services)
- The Care Standards Act 2000
- The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 updated 2013
- The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (England) 2011
- Children Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services 2011
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013 and 2015.
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children Leaving Care Act 2000

A copy of the Statement of Purpose will be made available to any person working for the fostering service, children and young people in our care, their parents, local authorities, prospective and current Foster Carers, social care establishments and any other person or company who would like to know more about our service. This Statement of Purpose is also available for perusal on our website.

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

Aims and Objectives

Our aim is to transform the lives of children and young people placed with our foster carers; enabling them to overcome any loss or trauma that they may have experienced. Whilst, aiding each child/young person to form secure attachments, build resilience, realise their unique potential and flourish whilst in placement.

Our objectives are to:

- provide stable fostering placements for Children in Care
- recruit, train and retain foster carers from diverse backgrounds; ensuring a range of appropriate placements are available for children and young people
- support, supervise and provide accessible training to carers so that they are able to meet the individual needs of the children and young people placed with them

- carefully match the assessed needs of children and young people with suitably skilled foster carers.
- ascertain the wishes and feelings of a child or young person, to promote participation and engagement to ensure they have a say in their care plan
- seek to maximise a child/young person's outcomes in all areas of their development.
- provide opportunities for children and young people to remain with their siblings and promote Family time with the birth family and significant others during a placement and to facilitate this as appropriate.
- promote diversity and equality within the service and to recognise the importance of a child's ethnic origin, religion, cultural and linguistic background; and to consider fully a child's gender, sexuality and any disability they may have
- consult with children and young people and foster carers. Ensure their views are listened to and considered in service provisions and future planning.
- engender a culture of continuous review and improvement and where applicable using research to inform practice
- adopt a culture which will reward and celebrate the good work of our staff, foster carers and children/young people in our care.

4. Roles at Paramount Foster Care

Roles include:

- Responsible Individual and Operational Lead
- Registered Manager
- Agency Decision Maker and Executive Supervisor
- Fostering Panel
- Panel Advisor
- Supervising Social Workers
- Reviewing Officer
- Fostering Therapeutic Practitioner
- Business and Administrative Support

Equality and Diversity

Committed to Equality, valuing Diversity and promoting Inclusion

At Paramount Foster Care, we strive to create an inclusive culture where diversity is valued and celebrated. We aspire to reflect the communities we serve and seek to ensure no child or young person, applicant, carer or employee is treated unfairly on the basis of race, gender, age, disability, religion or identity. We recognise and value individual differences and contributions and believe in aiming to achieve equality for all.

Service Provision

Paramount Foster Care, seeks to offer the following placements:

Emergency placements

This is commonly known as same day placements (within 24 hours). Paramount Foster Care will accommodate 24/7, all year-round emergency placements.

Respite placements

Respite placements offer families, children and young people respite or a break from complex family dynamics. Well planned breaks may prevent disruptions to a placement or problems becoming too difficult to manage in the future. To support placement demands and needs, short breaks/respite will also be offered to our own Foster Carers.

Short-term placements

This placement can last a few days, weeks or months. A child or young person in this placement may be awaiting a more permanent placement with a long-term foster family, adoption, move back with birth parents or move to assigned Guardians.

Long-term Placements

This is where a child or young person is expected to remain in care until independence (usually 18 years). Paramount Foster Care will offer permanent placements for children and young people, where either adoption or rehabilitation to family is not an option.

Solo placements

Paramount Foster Care will provide care for children and young people whose needs require a higher level of support and supervision, which precludes the placement of any other child or young person alongside.

Staying-Put arrangements

A Staying Put Arrangement enables young people to remain in their foster placement post 18 to support their transition into adulthood. Paramount Foster Care will provide support to the Foster Carer(s) in accommodating such requests.

Recruitment and Approval of Foster Carers

Paramount Foster Care is committed to recruiting a diverse range of foster carers who can provide high quality care for looked after children. We have an on-going programme of recruitment using word of mouth, the internet, local advertisements, attendance to local events etc.

Enquiries and applications to foster are welcomed from people regardless of gender, marital status, sexuality, race, disability, religion, and culture or employment status. We aim to recruit foster carers who share our ethos and demonstrate the key skills needed to holistically meet the needs of looked after young people.

During the assessment process of prospective applicants or as soon as possible after the assessment the applicants will be required to complete Skills to Foster training. Assessments on prospective foster carers are carried out in accordance regulatory and legislative requirements.

Following completion of the assessment, applicants are invited to attend a Fostering Panel with their assessor. The Fostering Panel, drawn from a Central List of members, provides a quality assurance function independent of the agency in respect of the assessment and review of carers, and may comment upon policy and development issues. Panel and central list of membership includes a balance of gender, age, ethnicity, and experience.

Applicants are informed following their attendance at panel of the recommendation and the final decision is made by the Agency Decision Maker (ADM). Applicants are notified within seven days. If the applicants are unhappy with the decision, they have a right to appeal. This can be made directly to the agency or through Independent Review Mechanisms (IRM)

Review of Foster Carers

In compliance with the Children Act 1989 and the Fostering Service Regulations 2011, all foster carers and their approval status is reviewed at least annually. The review determines whether approval of the carer should continue and / or whether there should be any changes made. If significant changes take place before this review, Paramount Foster Care will hold an additional review meeting. Some of the examples below are the reasons why this meeting would take place before the scheduled review:

- Serious concerns or allegations made relating to a carer's practice.
- A breakdown in the relationship between the approved foster carers, with one carer no longer residing at the approved household.
- Foster carers or agency requires an emergency change of approval.
- Serious illness or death of an approved foster carer.
- When the carers lifestyle has significantly changed, which has started to impact the carers fostering role/s
- Paramount Foster Care having significant concerns that the fostering household is not working in partnership with the agency.

Prior to a panel review taking place, Paramount Foster Care's Supervising Social Worker will prepare a full report and obtain feedback from placing agencies, linked social workers, foster carers, children and young people, education staff and any other professional involved in the child's or young person's care.

The review also provides an opportunity for carers to reflect on the past year and plan for the year ahead. The review recommendation made by the panel will be presented to the ADM. The carer will then receive confirmation of the ADM decision re: continuing approval in writing a few days later.

Training for Foster Carers

At Paramount Foster Care we provide an extensive range of training opportunities to benefit and develop our carers'. Our aim is to equip foster carers with the most effective tools possible to support and empower children and young people in their care. The protection and welfare of all children/young people placed with our foster carers is paramount and our training programme seeks to reflect this principle.

All foster carers are required to complete "Skills to Foster" training and are expected to complete their Training Support and Development Standards (TSDS) within their first year following approval.

For newly approved carers, core training is required to be completed within the first year of initial approval and then to attend an update on core training every three years, enabling all carers to keep up to date with relevant key changes to practice, policies and guidelines.

Paramount Foster Care is committed to provide bespoke courses, specific to the foster carers skills, development needs and practice interests, or relating to the particular needs of any child/young person in placement.

Paramount Foster Care's training courses are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they include the most up to date research, practice and legislative changes.

Support for Foster Carers

Post panel, successful applicants will join a team of other foster families, where they will be supervised, supported and advised continually by a Supervising Social Worker (SSW).

Families will be frequently contacted by telephone and visited by the SSW. At least once per year, every foster family will receive unannounced visits as part of the safeguarding and quality assurance process ensuring the continued quality and suitability of the fostering household and the well-being of children living with them.

Paramount Foster Care will be committed to promoting foster carers participation in the above, in order to improve our service provision.

Support Out of Hours

Paramount Foster Care will offer personal, local support 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

Support Group meetings

All foster carers will have access to carers support group meetings. Support groups provide a level of peer support, encourages peer to peer learning and offer a platform enabling carers to raise and discuss topics of interest.

Carer Mentors

When required, Paramount Foster Care will seek to match experienced foster carers with inexperienced newly recruited carers.

Carer Champions

Experienced foster carers or those that have additional skills around social work, education, therapeutic work, will have the opportunity to become Champion Carers' and share their knowledge and expertise with other carers.

Membership to Fostering Network

Paramount Foster Care will provide membership to Fostering Network for every fostering household registered with the agency. Fostering Network provide

independent support and advice for foster carers, including those facing allegations and complaints.

Further benefits of the Fostering Network's membership include:

- Legal expenses insurance cover
- 24-hour legal assistance
- Accountancy advice
- Counselling helpline
- Education Advisory Service

Quality Assurance (QA)

Quality control measures and procedures are implemented to ensure that the service is supplied in accordance with the Fostering Service Regulations 2011, National Minimum Standards 2011 and the Children Act 1989. Examples of QA processes include: regular supervision, carrying out quality assurance audits of our processes/practice areas, obtaining wishes and feelings of children placed in our care, gaining feedback from stakeholders to improve our service provision etc.

The Registered Manager monitors in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 6 and the notification stipulations of Schedule 7. Safeguarding matters are a key priority, and the Registered Manager has lead responsibility in this area, with oversight from the Responsible Individual

Services for Children and Young People

Services available for children and young people include:

- Supervised family time
- Access to national organisations for 'looked after' children and young people
- Support to access full health and education services
- Bespoke written materials
- Individual and group work
- Holiday activities and outings
- Leaving care advice information and support
- Access to therapeutic assessment and therapeutic guidance for the support of placements
- Education support and assistance, preparing staff and carers to engage with schools in planning to meet the needs of children and young people in their care.

Paramount Foster Care will/aim to:

- Set aspirations for children and young people, and celebrate every step towards them
- Maximise opportunities for children and young people to fulfil their potential to achieve
- Share understanding of the impact of past experience and learnt behaviour on children, coping strategies and the mental health of children and young people, with the team around the child or young person

- Advocate for children's and young people's rights and access to appropriate support and intervention.

Foster carer supervision addresses the dimensions of care provided to children and young people, ensures the best interests of children and young people are safeguarded and promoted, that their views and wishes are understood and represented, and identifies further appropriate services to promote their physical, mental and emotional welfare.

Complaints Management

Paramount Foster Care has a clearly defined 'Complaints and Representation' and 'Whistleblowing' process that is accessible to children and young people and their families, foster carers, staff, Central List members, independent assessors, local authorities, and other independent persons commissioned to contribute to our service. Complaints are monitored, treated respectfully, efficiently, and dealt with in accordance with our policy. Where applicable, a resolution is sought as early in the process, seeking to avoid un-necessary escalations where possible. Paramount Foster Care, when necessary, will facilitate accessing an independent person to oversee/review a complaint.

Essential Addresses and Contact Details

Paramount Foster Care

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Safeguarding Designated Officer

Registered Manager
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