



**WAKEFIELD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

**FOSTERING SERVICE**

**STATEMENT OF  
PURPOSE  
2017 to 2018**

**Placement Services  
Queens House**

## Index Page

	<b><u>PAGE</u></b>
Introduction	2
Aims and Objectives	2 - 5
Services Provided	6 – 14
Management Structure and Staffing	14 – 15
Complaints	16
Ofsted and Inspection	16 - 17
Useful Contacts	17
Appendices	18 – 21

## Introduction

This Statement of Purpose is about Wakefield's Fostering Services. The statement outlines the aims and objectives of Wakefield's Fostering Service and the services and facilities provided by it, which are closely aligned with the outcomes stated within our Integrated Children and Young People's Strategy and Integrated Placement Strategy.

The Statement of Purpose has been produced in accordance with the Fostering Services Regulations 2011 (PART 2 Section 3(1)). It will be reviewed annually, amended as necessary and approved by Elected Members. It is supported by a range of more detailed information including, the Foster Carers Manual, and a range of Policies and Procedures which describe the day to day responsibilities and expectations of those involved in Fostering Services. This Statement of Purpose links with the Children's Guide which is provided to all children, subject to the child's age and understanding at the point of placement and also aligns with the Looked After Children's Pledge, approved by our Corporate Parents, to ensure our commitment to offering children and young people the best foster placements that meet their needs and offer them a happy, safe and settled environment.

In Wakefield, all looked after children and young people will have the opportunity to participate in decisions which affect their lives via access to a Participation Service which delivers a wide range of consultation groups for looked after children ranging from age 4- 21 years. Our Children in Care Council groups involve around 35 – 40 fostered children, giving them opportunities to discuss their experiences of fostering and to drive forward their ideas for service changes and improvements. This work is supported by our Corporate Parenting Panel who work collaboratively with the Children in Care Council to ensure their voices and experiences of fostering are listened to and valued at the highest decision making level. This provides a platform for real meaningful change. In 2016 the Fostering Service has achieved the **Gold Standard** for our participation work, through the Hear by Rights framework, proving that Wakefield continues to take seriously the views of care experienced children and young people in the delivery of their services.

This Statement of Purpose is intended for use by foster carers and staff of the Children and Young People's Service, for staff in a range of agencies who work with the Local Authority, for any child (ren) we have placed with a foster carer, their parents, and for people who are interested in becoming foster carers.

### 1. Aims and Objectives

Wakefield Council is committed to ensuring that foster care provided for children in its care is of high quality and guarantees the best possible standards for care, safety and life opportunities which contribute to addressing national and local aspirations, namely:

- Children and young people are healthy and resilient
- Children and young people are supported and safe

- Children and young people are ambitious and achieve
- Young people have the skills for a successful transition to adulthood
- Children and young people are engaged as productive citizens

The Fostering Service will promote the following aims and objectives:

### **Leadership and Management**

- 1.1. A child's welfare is the paramount consideration. Children are entitled to grow up as part of a loving and caring family which can meet their needs during childhood and beyond. The needs and wishes, welfare and safety of the child or young person are at the centre of Wakefield's Fostering Service.
- 1.2. Children and young people should be brought up in their birth families wherever possible and safe to do so. The Children and Young People's Service, along with other agencies and with community groups, will work to ensure that there is a comprehensive range of services provided to support birth families and for them to provide safe and appropriate care for their children.
- 1.3. The Fostering Service will aim to work in partnership with foster carers in an open and reliable way. Foster carers will be involved in planning and developing the service and kept informed about practice and policy developments as any other member of the team would be.
- 1.4. The Fostering Service will work to maintain an adequate number of appropriately qualified, skilled and trained fostering team workers in order to facilitate the running of the service
- 1.5. The Fostering Service is committed to multi-agency working and developing partnerships with organisations with which we can progress the needs of our children. We work at all levels, in partnership and through co-location, with the Adoption Team, LAC Services, Participation Worker, education and health services to enable direct access to a number of relevant professionals and promote the well-being of children under Wakefield's care
- 1.6. As part of Wakefield's implementation of the Signs of Safety model Wakefield's Fostering Service will have a clear commitment to the principles that underpin the approach of the model, including:
  - Working relationships are fundamental, with families and other professionals
  - Stance of critical inquiry – always being prepared to admit you may have it wrong
  - Landing grand aspirations in everyday practice

Wakefield Fostering Service will support the key components of the implementation strategy for Signs of Safety which include:

- Structural arrangements
- Learning strategies
- Leadership imperatives

### **Foster Carer Recruitment, Support and Training**

- 1.7. Wakefield's children come from a range of cultural, racial, linguistic and religious backgrounds and the Fostering Service will endeavour to recruit and retain carers who reflect these needs. Any foster placement made should reflect these needs. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that a proposed placement is suitable for a child who has a disability.
- 1.8. Foster carers will be carefully recruited and trained and given access to support services to enable them to provide high quality care for the child/ren placed with them. This will include support to enable the child or young person to make full use of educational, health, leisure, creative and sporting activities to develop self esteem and life opportunities. They will also work to provide safe, caring and appropriate boundaries for the child or young people.
- 1.9. The Fostering Service will work to retain foster carers through a comprehensive training programme that offers development opportunities, together with a 24 hour support package, and an equitable payment scheme to recognise their value and skills. Further review of training for the Fostering Service is taking place with the model 'Secure Based Model' being considered as part of the overall therapeutic approach to caring for Looked after Children. The Secure Base Model provides a positive framework for therapeutic caregiving, which helps infants, children and young people to move towards greater security and builds resilience.

### **Connected Persons**

- 1.10. Where children and young people are not able to live safely with their birth parent(s) then consideration will be given to that child or young person being cared for within the extended family network. This may involve approval of family/friends as foster carers or use of appropriate legislation such as applications for Child Arrangement Orders or Special Guardianship Order. Assessment for support from Fieldwork and Placement Services in Wakefield will be carried out. A Family Group Conference may be considered appropriate in some situations to facilitate the family network.

### **Placements**

- 1.11. Where children and young people are not able to remain with their birth family or within the wider family network then placement in foster care should be the first

choice for the majority of children whilst their longer term needs are assessed and plans agreed. Good child care planning and practice are essential and undue delay and drift should be avoided.

- 1.12. The Fostering Service will aim to ensure that there is a diverse and wide range of safe, stable and nurturing family placements to meet the needs of Wakefield's children who are looked after in care. This will include respite care, short term, long-term carers and Connect carers who have a particular role in caring for disabled children. This may also mean that services are commissioned from Independent Fostering Agencies in order to meet needs.
- 1.13. All placements need to take into consideration the need for the child or young person to be placed near to family and school. If at all possible, siblings should be placed together unless identified needs indicate otherwise.
- 1.14. The Fostering Service will aim to ensure that full information is provided by the child's social worker about the child's background, family, needs and any issues of risk to inform the matching process and enable the foster carers to work to meet the needs of the child or young person in placement.

### **Care Planning & Review**

- 1.15. All children and young people who are looked after in care will have a care plan, which will be reviewed regularly. The wishes of the child or young person will be taken into account in drawing up the care plan. The birth family should be fully involved and their views made clear in the plans. Foster carers also have an important contribution to make.
- 1.16. The care plan will be reviewed at every Looked after Child Review and at the four-month review the child's plan for permanence will be addressed. This plan will be based on the needs of the individual child and will include consideration of permanence being achieved by return to birth family or other means including long term fostering or adoption.
- 1.17. The care planning and assessment work will ensure that the child, birth family and foster carers have access to appropriate specialist services to meet particular needs such as for education or health.
- 1.18. The views and wishes of the child or young person should be sought through a range of age appropriate means. This could include the involvement of the Advocacy Project.

### **Contact**

- 1.19. The care plan for the child or young person will always consider the need for plans for contact with family and friends. Foster carers will be trained and

supported to enable them to work with members of the birth family and deal with this sensitively with the child or young person. Where there is a plan for permanence through adoption, the foster carer/s will have a very important role to play in gathering age appropriate information for the child's life story and work with the child's social worker who co-ordinates this.

## **2. Services Provided to Meet Outcomes for Children**

### **Foster Care Placements**

- 2.1. As at 31 March 2017 there were 172 registered households providing foster placements on behalf of Wakefield Council for 243 children (including friends and family and temporarily approved connected persons, but excluding short break placements) and 89 placements provided by Independent Fostering Agencies.
- 2.2. Four quarterly reports are produced every 3 months and presented to Elected Members and the Senior and Directorate Management Teams that give more detailed information about activity and performance of the Fostering Service. In addition to these reports we submit an annual Data Set to Ofsted that provides relevant data about the service such as figures on households, children in care, recruitment process and supporting performance figures on looked after children.
- 2.3. There are a range of placements provided through the Fostering Service:

#### Short-term Placements

Carers undertaking short-term placements do so in a variety of circumstances and with a variety of children and young people. It may be for a very short, predictable period of time whilst for example a child's mother is in hospital or a carer may look after a child whilst detailed assessments and Court proceedings are undertaken, and until an agreed permanence plan can be implemented for the child.

#### Long-term/Permanent Placements

Carers offering long-term/permanent placements commit to caring for a child or young person whose 'permanence' care plan indicates that their needs will best be met in a foster placement that takes them through to adulthood and independence.

#### Emergency Placements

Carers offering emergency placements can be contacted at short notice, at evening and weekends, to accept unplanned placements of children. A list of carers with vacancies is updated weekly and forwarded to the Social Care Direct (Out of Hours Team)

### Breakaway Carers

The service has a small number of carers who offer breakaway care on a regular basis where a child's care plan has indicated that such arrangements will be helping to maintain a child in his/her own family.

### Remand Fostering Placements

Remand foster placements are provided through a contract with an independent fostering agency. These placements are arranged in liaison with the Youth Offending Team (YOT) for young people who are remanded to local authority care through the courts because of their offending. These young people will remain with their carers until the criminal proceedings are completed.

### Parent and Baby Placements

One carer offers a placement to young people prior to the birth of their baby and following birth. This placement is to assist in assessing parenting abilities to safely care for the baby and where appropriate to help in developing parenting skills.

### Connect Scheme

There is a scheme which offers planned short term breaks for children with disabilities to provide them with new experiences and social opportunities, and their families with some support in their care.

### **Connected Carers**

2.4 Our fostering service offers an assessment service and support to placements where children are children placed with connected carers. All approved connected carers are eligible for the same framework of entitlements such as allowances, support and involvement of a supervising social worker, as other approved foster carers.

### **Leaving Care, Staying Put and Supported Lodgings Service**

2.5 Foster carers can continue to care for young people after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday through Staying Put; they can also become providers of supported lodgings so that young people who have lived with them can continue to do this beyond their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. A range of services from Wakefield's Leaving Care Team is provided to young people who continue to need support with their social, educational and housing needs.

## **Participation of Children and Young People.**

2.6 Wakefield's Fostering Service has a dedicated Participation Worker who works to promote participation opportunities to staff, managers and Councillors to ensure that looked after children and young people are given a voice about the services they receive and how they can be improved upon for the future. We have a key responsibility to gather children's views about their fostering experience and to allow them to reflect on the quality of their foster placement by allowing children to have their say in foster carer's annual reviews. The role of the Participation Worker focuses on asking children and young people for their views about services by organising and delivering events and groups for children and young people that allow them to engage in a fun and positive way, such as those listed below. Foster carers are expected to support and encourage their foster children to engage with the participation service:

**Wakefield's Children in Care Council (CiCC)** is a representative group of Looked after Children with 3 main age streams which are:

- CiCC Juniors for children aged 4 -11 years
- Children in Care Council ages 12 – 15 years
- 16 Plus forum for young people and care leavers 16 – 25 years

All 3 groups meet with the relevant Service Manager and Lead Member once a month to talk about issues that matter to children in care. CiCC's agenda evolves from the issues identified by the children and young people and develops into project ideas/ and or campaigns and managers support this work by committing to outlining an action plan in response to what they are going to do about the issues. There is an annual CiCC action plan that is signed up to by all members of the Corporate Parenting Panel, and a large part of this focuses on fostering services. Young people are enabled to facilitate projects to improve services, review policy documents, scrutinize relevant data (e.g. placement moves) via the support of the Participation Worker. Details for joining CiCC and much more information for looked after children can be found on our dedicated CiCC website at [www.care4us.co.uk](http://www.care4us.co.uk)

## **Recognition of Achievement**

- 2.7 The Celebration of Achievement Awards is an annual event which rewards the achievements and successes of our looked after children and young people. The recognition of their achievements is an important Corporate Parenting role for and is a commitment embedded in 'The Pledge', it is essential that foster carers understand the value of such awards and support the annual event by nominating children and young people they feel deserve the recognition. The awards ceremony is a positive example that illustrates our commitment to recognising the achievements of looked after young people in the District. A range of award categories are identified including Personal Achievement, Being Involved, Making Changes, Recreation and Educational Achievement. The number of children attending the event and receiving an award has grown over the last 5 years building a more positive picture of the young people in care in Wakefield and we welcome more nominations from new and current foster carers.

## **Recruitment**

- 2.8. Following an accumulation of activities and work the Fostering Services will coordinate and action a detailed plan of Recruitment and Retention for 2017 – 2020. There will be a clear focus on the pattern of needs for children, carers and the Council as a whole. The emphasis will be on a wider corporate parenting responsibility by the Council and its partners.
- 2.9. Information about the Fostering Service and recruitment is available on the dedicated fostering website 'My New Family' [www.wakefield.gov.uk/mynewfamily](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/mynewfamily) which is linked to the Wakefield Council website.
- 2.10. Enquiries will be welcomed from a wide range of prospective carers including couples with or without children, single parents, single men or women, lesbians and gay men, people from all ethnic backgrounds, people with disability and older people.
- 2.11. Staff within the service will respond to enquiries and applications about fostering promptly and with high standards of customer care. Information sessions and recruitment events will be held at regular intervals and include contributions from experienced foster carers. The Service will also ensure that children and young people can contribute to efforts to recruit foster carers.

## **Assessment and Preparation**

- 2.12. After making an enquiry, all prospective foster carers receive an information pack and will have an initial home assessment visit to discuss their interest in fostering in more detail.

- 2.13. The Fostering Service will run regular preparation training groups for prospective foster carers. There will be input from experienced foster carers and the opportunity to link up with experienced foster carers for further advice and support. Looked After children are also involved in the Skills to Fostering rolling programme of training every 6 weeks, which includes delivery of a new film children were involved in producing during 2014/15 entitled 'Put us in the Picture' and gives a snapshot of the lives and experiences of over 20 fostered children from Wakefield.
- 2.14. Once permission forms are received back from applicants, then statutory checks are carried out, including the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, which comply with the requirements of Schedule 3 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011. Following amendments to the Fostering Regulations there are now 2 stages to assessment and approval of carers. Applicants can be withdrawn at stage one of the process with no right of appeal if there are concerns about their suitability.
- 2.15. Following completion of the preparation training, prospective foster carers are allocated a Supervising Social worker from the Fostering Service who then works with them to complete an assessment using the Fostering Competency Model. The prospective foster carers complete a Competency Portfolio.
- 2.16. The service encourages all newly approved carers to attend our Induction Group for a minimum of 6 sessions. The induction group provides information about the service and entitlements that carers can access. Various professional speakers are invited to present information on attachment, emotional wellbeing and health, education and participation of children in foster care.

### **Approval and Termination of Approval**

- 2.17. Once completed, the Assessment report and the Competency Portfolio are presented to one of the two Fostering Panels for recommendation whether to approve or not. Any recommendation made by the Fostering Panel has to be approved by the Agency Decision Maker who is the Service Manager for Safeguarding.
- 2.18. There are two Foster Panels that are chaired by an Independent Chair-person and provide regular opportunities throughout the year for approval of new foster carers.
- 2.19. The Fostering Service will inform all prospective foster carers in writing of their approval and any conditions such as the age range and number of children that the carers are approved to care for. Revisions to foster carer approvals will also be considered at a foster carer review in line with amendments made to the Fostering Regulations 2011.

- 2.20. The foster carers then enter and sign into a foster carer's agreement with Wakefield Family Services which sets out a range of terms and conditions about being a foster carer for Wakefield.
- 2.21. Foster carers are required to notify the Fostering Service of any change in their family or household circumstances.
- 2.22. The Fostering Service has responsibility to recommend to the Fostering Panel the termination of approval of any foster carer if it is no longer satisfied that the foster carer/s or the household are suitable. This should firstly be discussed at a Foster Carer review and a recommendation made from this meeting for consideration at the Fostering Panel. Following any proposed decision taken by the Agency Decision Maker the carer has the right to appeal either through the fostering service or since April 2009 foster carers are able to use an Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) to challenge the agency's decisions with regard to their assessment and approval. Information on the IRM will be provided by the Fostering Service.
- 2.23. When Foster Carers decide to retire or resign from the fostering service this is also reported to the Fostering Panel.

### **Matching for Placement**

- 2.24. The Fostering Service provides a weekday duty service to field social work staff needing a placement for a child. Full information is taken about the child's placement needs to assist in the matching process. As far as possible children are placed within the Wakefield District so that contact with family and friends, continuity with school and leisure pursuits can be maintained and links to services can be kept.
- 2.25. When an appropriate in-house placement is not available the Fostering Service will advise the Fieldwork Service that this is the situation and that they, who have more knowledge about the child concerned, need to seek approval for an externally provided foster placement from the Service Director. Once this is achieved then the Fostering Service will assist in approaching local independent preferred provider fostering agencies. The Council has developed links and partnerships with Independent Fostering Agencies through its White Rose Framework, which is a project that aims to capitalise on the buying power of the West Yorkshire authorities to achieve efficiency savings on the costs of accommodation for its looked after children from Independent Fostering agencies.
- 2.26. The Fostering Service will keep information about unmet placement needs of looked after children. The Team Managers for the Fostering Service will ensure there is a weekly update regarding children who are awaiting placements.

2.27. An emergency list of foster carers is provided for use by the out of hours services.

### **Training for Foster Carers**

2.28. Training is seen as essential to the fostering task and every encouragement is made to ensure that foster carers attend training through reimbursement of expenses, where possible the provision of crèche facilities and training times which are geared for foster carers.

2.29. Training is provided by Children and Young People's Service staff or commissioned from other sources such as external trainers where appropriate. Foster carers will also be supported and trained to deliver training themselves to other carers and appropriate professionals.

2.30. Foster carers receive training prior to approval using the Fostering Skills programme. Following approval and during their first 12 months carers must complete the TSD (Training, Support and Development Standards). For Connected Carers they have 18 months in which to complete the TSD. This was formally the CWDC and is linked to induction standards for foster carers.

2.31. Supervising social workers will regularly discuss foster carers' training needs on their visits to foster carers and the annual foster carer review will address carers' training and development needs.

2.32. There is an expectation that carers will attend the Participation and Voices Training and Life Story Training (both courses are mandatory) and are delivered by care experienced young people. Carers will continue to attend a minimum number of training events each year to keep themselves abreast of current trends and improve their skills as carers. The Payment for Skills scheme is closely linked to foster carers' training needs in the framework of competencies. Additional core training will also be provided to foster carers delivered by care experienced young people, including the Foster Carer Conferences.

### **Support**

2.33. With effect from 1 April 2007, all foster carers receive the recommended national allowance for weekly payments with payments for young people aged 16 and 17 years old being higher than the national allowance. Foster carers are advised about what the allowance should cover in caring for the child or young person.

2.34. In addition to the weekly payment, foster carers also receive a skill payment which reflects their assessed level of skill. Where carers can take more than one child they will receive additional payments for each child placed.

2.35. All foster carers have access to the on-line foster carer manual, which is updated and is a key resource and guidance for foster carers. In the event that foster

carers do not have access to a computer the Fostering Service is able to provide a hard copy.

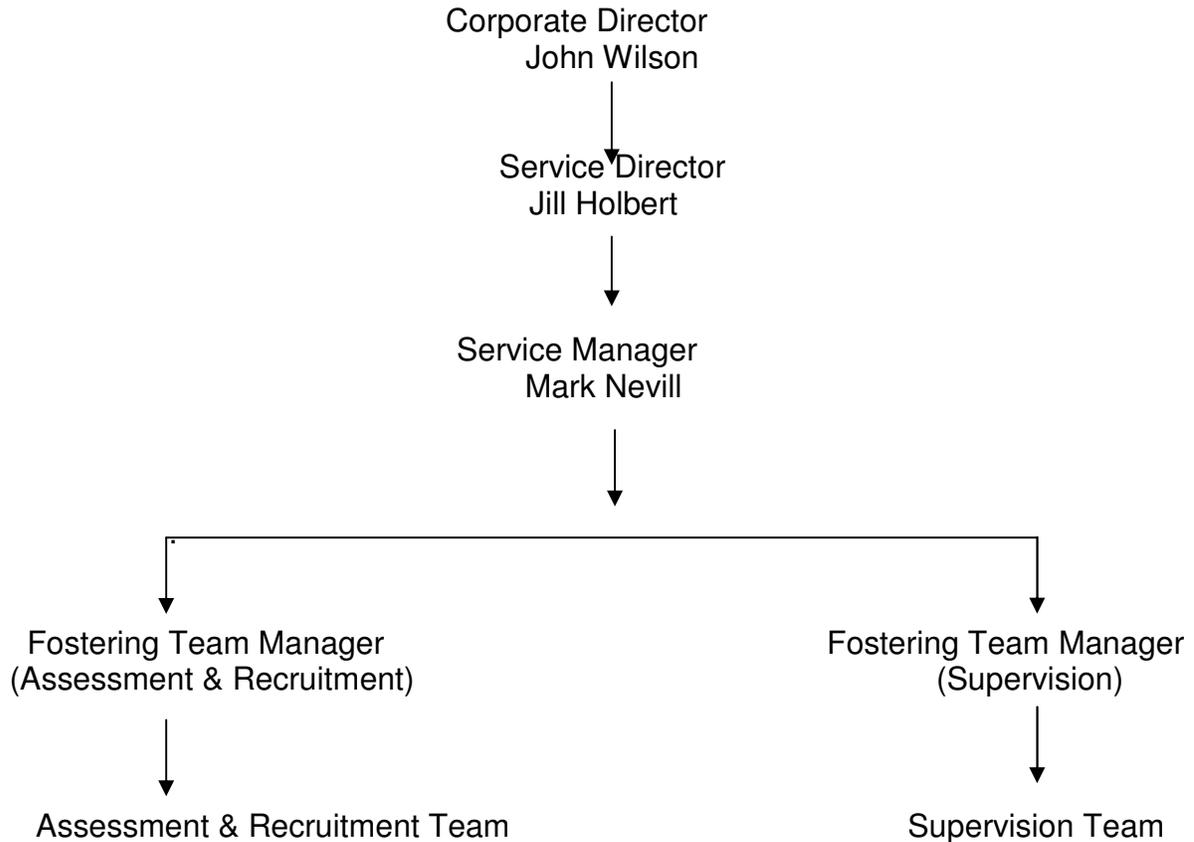
- 2.36. All foster carers have an allocated supervising social worker/support worker from the Fostering Service who has particular responsibilities to visit, support and supervise them. The supervising social worker will visit on a 6 weekly basis or more frequently if required. They will also liaise closely with children's social workers.
- 2.37. The supervising social worker has responsibility for ensuring that the foster carer's annual review takes place and co-ordinating all the contributions and reports for the review, which is chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer. The first review after approval will be undertaken within 12 months and taken back to the Fostering Panel. In addition, Fostering Panel will also consider the reviews of foster carers where there have been specific and significant complaints, allegations, or issues about standards of care or other major changes in circumstances. Whilst the emphasis in these circumstances is on the safety of any child involved, there will also be regard to the support and needs of the foster carers and attempts to resolve the situation satisfactorily.
- 2.38. The Fostering Service employs two Support Workers who are available to provide additional support to foster carers and children in placement when there are particular difficulties or pressures.
- 2.39. Foster carers are advised about being able to access Wakefield's Social Care Direct service, which operates 24 hours a day. The service also provides an additional tier of out of hours support from 2 of Wakefield's Residential Homes.
- 2.40. The Fostering Service will promote links with a range of support services and agencies that are involved in children's placements and are important for the foster carer. These will include
  - Fieldwork Services
  - Safeguarding Services
  - CAMHS
  - Looked After Children Nurses
  - REACH Team for the education of looked after children
  - Schools
  - Youth Offending Team
  - Leaving Care Team
  - Children's Advocacy Services
  - Participation Service for Looked after Children
  - Emotional Wellbeing Team
- 2.41. Foster carers will be supported in having arrangements for a breakaway care

- 2.42. The Fostering Service runs four support groups for foster carers each located in different parts of the district to facilitate access for the foster carers. Foster carers are encouraged to attend and this is set out as an expectation in the Foster Carer Agreement.
- 2.43. The Fostering Service recognises the significant role played by the foster carers' own children in fostering and the pressures this can bring to the family. There is a birth group that is held for children of foster carers, which offers these children a voice and understanding about the fostering task.
- 2.44. Foster carers are provided with Wakefield Leisure cards (Activate Cards) and the Max card scheme which enable them and their children to participate in leisure activities either free of charge or at a discounted rate together with the children they look after.
- 2.45. Whilst foster carers might be involved in providing transport for children or in contact arrangements there is also support provided for some children to be transported to school and contact if required, and to supervise contact.
- 2.46. If foster carers are required to give evidence at court relating to a placement then they will receive support, advice and guidance in preparing and doing this.
- 2.47. All approved foster carers are members of FosterTalk, who can provide comprehensive support on a number of areas such as legal and financial matters. FosterTalk also provide independent support to foster carers who are subject to allegations.
- 2.48. The Fostering Service will update and consult with foster carers on local and national developments in fostering and services for looked after children to keep them informed of current proposals and developments which will affect them.

### **3. Management Structure and Staffing**

- 3.1 The day-to-day management of the Fostering Service is the responsibility of the Fostering Team Manager. The Service comprises a recruitment team and a supervision team. The Team Manager reports to the Children's Service Manager for Looked after Children, the Service Director and Corporate Director. The Fostering Service is a Local Authority Council Service and is accountable to the Council's Cabinet.

3.2 The structure is set out below:



### **Location of Fostering Team**

Services for Fostering in Wakefield are based at:

Queens House

Tel: 01924 302160 Fax: 01924 304215

3.3 The Managers of the Fostering Service are both experienced social worker practitioners and will be supported to access appropriate management training. They also work with the Service Manager to ensure that services are integrated within Placement Services and the overall Children and Young People's Service.

3.4 The Service Director is an experienced senior manager in the field of children's services.

3.5 Staff from the Fostering Service are all appropriately qualified and experienced and are involved in the review, planning and developing of the service.

## **Staff Development, Qualifications and Experience**

- 3.6 All new staff receive a local authority and service induction. Induction is underpinned with a thorough training needs analysis to identify support and training required. This is monitored at supervision by their line manager.
- 3.7 All staff in the Fostering Service have an annual appraisal and a personal Development Plan that identifies their development needs and the training, which can help them to progress and improve their skills, abilities and knowledge.
- 3.8 All staff that hold qualified social worker status, are mandated to attend the Signs of Safety 2 day basic training to ensure staff use the SOS approach to child protection casework. Ongoing support and supervision is provided on a monthly basis.
- 3.9 The detail of names and individual qualifications for staff in the Fostering Service are set out in the attached Appendix A

## **4. Complaints**

- 4.1 All young people in foster care receive information with regard to the complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. This information is available in the Young People's and Children's Guides to Living in Foster Care. There is a Children's Complaints Officer who can provide a dedicated service to deal with young people's concerns. In addition to this, all young people in foster care have access to the Young Person's Advocacy Project. Workers from this project will act on behalf of the young person if requested where a complaint occurs.
- 4.2 Foster carers are provided with complaints information
- 4.3 Any allegation about foster carers, which comes within a Child Protection remit, is investigated within the Directorate's Safeguarding Procedures.
- 4.4 Any concerns about the Fostering Service may also be addressed to Ofsted (contact details below).

## **5. Ofsted and Inspection**

- 5.1 The Fostering Service will be inspected as part of Ofsted's single agency inspections of services for children in need of help and protection; children looked after and care leavers, which take place once within a 3 year cycle. These inspections will be carried out in accordance with the Fostering Services Regulations and the National Minimum Standards for Fostering. At the time of writing Wakefield was still awaiting an inspection of this type. In the last dedicated inspection of Fostering Services in 2010 the Wakefield Fostering Service was rated overall as 'good' with one area of 'outstanding'. A copy of the inspection report is available on the Ofsted website.

5.2 Ofsted can be contacted at:

Ofsted,  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD  
☎ 0300 123 1231  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

## 6. Useful Contacts

Childline  
NATN 1111  
London  
E1 6BR  
☎ 0800 1111

Children's Advocacy and Participation Service  
Civic Centre  
Ferrybridge Road  
Castleford  
WF10 4JH  
☎ 01977 552493

Complaints & Representations  
County Hall  
Bond Street  
Wakefield  
WF1 2QW  
☎ 01924 302840

## Appendix A

### Fostering Team: Qualifications and Experience

#### Fostering Supervision Team Manager – Sandra Kennedy

Qualifications: Diploma in Social Work, Leeds Metropolitan University, 2000.  
ILM Level 5 Leadership and Management

Experience: Child and Family Social Work, 2000-2002.  
Senior Practitioner Family Support, Dumfries and Galloway Council, 2003-2004.  
Looked After Children Team Manager, Wakefield MDC, 2004-2005.  
Fostering Team Manager, 2005 to present.

#### Fostering Recruitment and Assessment Team Manager – Joanne Hall

Qualifications: Diploma in Social Work, July 2004. Leeds Metropolitan University 2004  
Post Qualification Award, University of Huddersfield University 2007  
Developing Practice Educator - University of Huddersfield 2013  
Enhancing Practice Educator Skill - University of Huddersfield 2014

Experience: Residential Social Work, Wakefield MDC from 1991- 2000  
Wakefield Children's and Family Team. 2000 -2004  
Wakefield Fostering Service since August 2004.

#### Fostering Principal Social Worker – George Foy

Qualifications: Diploma in Social Work, 1996, Bretton College Leeds Unit.  
C.M.S in Management, 2004, Huddersfield University.

Experience: NVQ Assessor, 2004.  
15 years residential experience.  
2003-2005, Manager of the Assessment Children's Home.  
Wakefield Fostering Service since 2005.

#### Fostering Supervision Social Worker- Julie Womersley

Qualifications: Diploma in Social Work, University of Leeds 2004  
Post Qualification Award, University of Sheffield 2010  
Specialist Level Post Qualification in Specialism of Children, Young People, their families and carers.

Experience: Worked in Barnsley from 2004 in a children and families team

#### Social Worker- Alex Cross:

Qualifications: Degree in Social Policy, Leeds Met 1992  
Post Graduate Diploma in Social Work, Leeds Met 2001.

Experience: Child protection Team Leeds 2001 -2003  
Leaving Care Team Wakefield, 2004- 2007

Kirklees adoption team 2007 – 2008  
Fostering team 2008- 2010  
Initial Response Team and Child protection 2010 -2011  
Fostering Team 2011.

Fostering Supervision Social Worker – Angela Ryton

Qualifications: Diploma of Social Work, Leeds Metropolitan 2003.  
Experience: 13 years in residential care with children with disabilities.  
Staff Development (NVQ), 1996- 2003  
Looked After Children’s Team, 2003-2008.  
Wakefield Fostering Service since 2008.

Supervising Social Worker – Andy Young

Qualifications: Diploma in Social Work, 1993, Leeds Metropolitan University.  
Experience: 6 years Area Office Social Worker, Leeds City Council.  
3 years Principal Case Worker - Child Protection, Leeds City Council,  
2 years Principal Child Protection Officer – Independent Reviewing Officer/Child Protection Conference Chair – Kirklees Social Care,  
6 years Children’s Guardian, Cafcass, Leeds,  
1 year IRO/Child Protection Conference Chair, Leeds City Council,  
5 years Senior Social Worker, Wakefield Council – Wakefield Fostering Service since May 2015.

Fostering Supervision Social Worker- Sam Rehman:

Qualifications: BA Hons Social Work 2008 Huddersfield University  
Experience: Connect Social worker 2008  
Wakefield Fostering Service since April 2009

Fostering Supervision Social Worker – Steve Richardson

Qualifications: Certificate in Social Services, 1983, Stockport College.  
Experience: Residential Social Worker from 1977-1990.  
Children’s Residential Home Manager, Wakefield MDC, to 2004.  
Wakefield Fostering Service since May 2004.

Fostering Supervision Social Worker – Kelly Voss)

Qualifications: Msc Social Work 2014 university of Lincoln  
Experience: Student social worker within private fostering agency 120 days

Fostering Social Worker – Danielle Bathgate

Qualifications: Master of Arts in Social Work university of Sheffield 2015  
ASYE – Doncaster Council

Experience:

2015 -2016Danielle began her social work career working within children with disabilities after completing the ASYE in her first year she began working at Wakefield in November 2016

Fostering Recruitment Social Worker- Elizabeth Garbutt.

Qualifications: BSC (Hons) Degree in Social Work/ Diploma in Social Work, 2005  
NVQ level 4 Management, 2003.

Experience: 20 years working with adults with learning disabilities.  
3 years social work, children with disabilities team.  
Wakefield Fostering Service since 2008

Fostering Recruitment Social Worker- Tania Anderson.

Qualifications: Master of Arts in Social Work awarded by York University in July 2009

Experience: Child Protection Team at North Yorkshire County Council – September 2009 – April 2011;  
Looked after Children’s Team at North Yorkshire County Council – April 2011 – December 2013  
Joint Investigation Team at Wakefield Council – January 2014 – February 2016  
Fostering Team at Wakefield Council – February 2016 - Fostering Team.

Fostering Recruitment Social Worker- Claire Ruckledge

Qualifications: Diploma and BSC in Social Work, 2005, Huddersfield University  
Post Qualification Consolidation in Social Work – Huddersfield University 2007  
Developing Practice Educator - University of Huddersfield 2010  
Enhancing Practice Educator Skill - University of Huddersfield 2014

Experience: Worked as a children and families worker in Family Services.  
Wakefield Fostering Service since August 2008.

Fostering Recruitment Social Worker- Katie Atkinson

Qualifications: BSC (Hons) degree in Social Work 2005  
Diploma in Social Work 2005 at Huddersfield University  
20 years working as a Family Worker in Family Centres.  
4 years as a Manager Family Centres in Leeds and Kirklees.  
3 years Safeguarding and Child Protection SW in Kirklees.  
3 years in Fostering.

Fostering Social Worker – Connect – Lisa Thomas

Qualifications: Diploma in Social Work, Teesside University 1997

BA (Hons) Professional Studies, Social Work 1998

NVQ Assessors Award D23/33 2003

Experience:

Work with children and families, children with disabilities and short break scheme in Kirklees Metropolitan Council from 1997-2008.

Wakefield Connect Service since 2009.

Placement Service Support Worker - Wendy Timmins

Qualifications: Currently undertaking NVQ Social Care Level III award.  
Experience: Residential social work with children and young people since 1992.  
Community outreach work and support work with looked after children from 2002.  
Wakefield Fostering Service since September 2004.

Placement Service Support Worker- Linda Pringle

Qualifications: ILM level 3  
NVQ 3 Children and Young People  
Experience: 15 years residential experience with children and young people.  
Acting assistant manager at a residential unit from 2005-2007  
Permanent Managers Post 2007-2008  
Wakefield Fostering Service since August 2008.

Participation Worker- Sarah Huntington

Qualifications: BSc Hons Psychology, University of Liverpool 1998.  
City and Guilds Teaching in the Lifelong Sector and Management Diploma, Huddersfield University  
Experience: 15 years working with children and families, initially as a play therapist for children with autism after qualifying as an ABA practitioner in the USA in 2000.  
10 years specialising in children's rights, advocacy and participation.