



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

*Providing high quality family placements and
delivering the best possible outcomes for
Looked After Children*

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INTRODUCTION:

This Statement of Purpose has been written and developed in accordance with

- The Children Act 1989;
- The Children Act 2004
- The Care Standards Act 2000;
- The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
- The Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards 2011
- The Care Planning, Placement & Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2015

In accordance with Fostering Services Regulation 3, the Statement of Purpose includes:

- A statement of the Aims and Objectives of Safehouses Fostering's service; and relating to the agency's operations as an independent fostering provider.
- A statement as to the services and facilities provided by the fostering service.

The Safehouses Fostering Statement of Purpose is designed for a wide readership including:

- Children and young people who are placed with our Foster Carers
- The agency's staff and consultants
- Foster Carers and prospective Foster Carers
- Local Authorities who place, or are considering placing, with Safehouses Fostering
- Colleagues from other social care agencies

This Statement of Purpose is reviewed and updated annually by the Directors and updated more frequently as necessary by the Registered Manager.

1. STATUS & CONSTITUTION:

Safehouses Fostering, an independent fostering provider [IFP] is a private limited company registered under the Companies Act 1985 [Registration Number 5422189]

In accordance with the Companies Act 1985 and 1989, Safehouses Fostering has produced a Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association.

Safehouses Fostering has a Board of Directors.

The Directors meet regularly and are responsible for the corporate governance of the company, as well as determining and reviewing the company's:

- Strategic vision and direction
- Culture, values and principles
- Annual business plan
- Training and development programmes
- Performance targets
- Policies and procedures
- Financial management
- Legal compliance
- Quality assurance

In doing so, the Board fulfils the statutory duties and responsibilities for Directors of a registered company and ensures that all matters are reviewed regularly and in a planned way.

Safehouses Fostering is registered and inspected by Ofsted. [Registration No: SC066668]

Safehouses Fostering has organisational membership with:

- Fostering Network [Membership No: 1002]
- B.A.A.F. [Membership No: 67364]
- Information Commissioners' Office [Registration No: Z1423635]

Safehouses Fostering is a:

- North West Children & Young People's Flexible Purchasing System Approved Provider
- Preferred Provider to a number of Local Authorities across England

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

Safehouses Fostering is an independent fostering provider delivering high quality family placements to children and young people 'looked after' by Local Authorities.

Safehouses Fostering Aims are to:	Safehouses Fostering Objectives are to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide foster care placements and support packages for children and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop services in order that children and young people can develop and

<p>young people ‘looked after’ that offer a stable and consistent experience of family which enhances and maximizes life opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit and retain Foster Carers from diverse backgrounds thus ensuring a range of appropriate placements for children and young people. • Respect and promote the racial, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds of children and young people. • Consider the gender, suitability, disability of fostered children and young people when making placement decisions. • Promote a child/young person-centred approach. • Provide a responsive, supportive and professional 24-hour service for Foster Carers, children/young people 	<p>grow within the five outcomes areas of: ECM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be Healthy • Stay Safe • Enjoy and Achieve • Make a Positive Contribution • Achieve Economic Wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare, support and train Foster Carers to enable them to provide high quality specialist foster care. • Continuously monitor the services provided by the company to develop the provision accordingly. • Support children and young people within their family placement to optimise their potential in all areas, including: educational, social, psychological, emotional and physical development. • Ensure that a care plan for the child’s future is acted upon within the timescales and parameters set at each
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<p>and local authorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a commitment to the ongoing learning and professional development of the agency, Foster Carers and staff. • Establish, review and maintain policies and procedures that will comply with legislative and statutory requirements and expectations. 	<p>review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in close partnership with local authorities to promote and safeguard the best interests and welfare of the child/young person. • Retain Foster Carers and staff through a strategy that ensures they are appropriately supervised, supported, rewarded and developed.
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Our principles are traditional and simple - good quality family placements based on careful matching between fostering family and young people. Our services are modern, creative and innovative and built around best practice models and Every Child Matters Framework.

3. OUR STANDARDS OF CARE:

Safehouses Fostering is committed to the highest possible standards of care and undertakes to ensure that our practices comply with

- The Care Standards Act 2000;
- The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011; and
- The Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards 2011
- The Care Planning & Placement & Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2015

Safehouses Fostering defines the parameters and expectations of those standards throughout all our documents, but in particular our:

- Policy, Procedures and Practice Manuals
- Foster Carers' and Staff Manuals
- Foster Carers' Agreement

Safehouses Fostering works in partnership with all stakeholders to ensure the maximum opportunity for children and young people to develop fully and achieve their maximum potential.

Safehouses Fostering maintains a clear focus on promoting and safeguarding the physical and emotional welfare of children and young people and protecting them from all forms of abuse. We ensure the provision of appropriate health care and the opportunity to participate in decisions about health. We encourage and support the maintenance of family contacts and friendships and promote and support educational achievement and assist young people to develop skills for independence.

Furthermore, our policies in relation to the recruitment, assessment, approval, training, management and support of Foster Carers, reflect the expectations set out in the Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2015

3.1 Safeguarding Procedures:

Safehouses Fostering Safeguarding Procedures lay down a clear format for the reporting of any child protection matter to the Registered Manager. The overriding aim of the use of the guidelines and procedures is always to ensure the protection of children. On receipt of an allegation, Safehouses Fostering seeks instruction from the child's placing authority and also liaises and consults with the area authority in which the Foster Carers reside.

In addition to this, we have adopted the 'Safer Recruitment' principles for recruitment and selection of staff. We have a team administrator who is responsible for the co-ordination of DBS checks, local authority checks, references and all employment safeguards.

3.2 Recruitment and Approval Process for Foster Carers:

Safehouses Fostering is committed to the recruitment of Foster Carers who can meet the needs of children and young people, through the provision of high-quality care. All prospective Foster Carers who make an enquiry are subject to the following process:

- a) Safehouses Fostering requests detailed information and forwards an information brochure, giving details about the work of the agency, along with an initial enquiry form.
- b) On receipt of a completed enquiry form and subject to management review, two agency SSW's will undertake an initial visit to the enquirer(s) home. A report is then presented to the Registered Manager who makes a decision as to whether the enquirer(s) would benefit from further agency information and training.

- c) The enquirer(s) who thus progress are invited to attend a three day training and information event
- d) The enquirer(s) are next invited to complete an application form, giving detailed information about them and their family. They are also asked to consent to Safehouses Fostering undertaking necessary checks and enquiries as part of assessing their suitability to foster.

These include enquiries to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity checks • Disclosure and Barring Service checks – checks on all adult members of the family over 16 years of age • Social Services Departments and their Child Protection Registers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other agencies [e.g. NSPCC, probation, health and education] where appropriate. • Ex partners • Employers • 6 Personal references from Family and Friends
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- a) The applicant(s) is/are required to have a medical examination completed by their GP and the report is forwarded to Safehouses Fostering Medical Advisor for comments about the applicant(s) health and any possible implications for the fostering task.
- b) The applicant(s) is/are asked to provide at least two personal referees who will provide written references and be interviewed as part of the assessment process. These references will include one for each person (if a couple) and two for a single applicant.

- c) A qualified social worker carries out a full assessment, using the format published by BAAF, visiting the applicant(s) home on a number of occasions to meet and collect information about all members of the household, to assess the applicant(s) experience and skills in relation to fostering.
- d) All applicants are required to attend the Skills to Foster course. Applicants' own children are also invited to attend the children's Skills to Foster course.
- e) During the assessment process, applicant(s) will be helped to compile a portfolio of written material giving examples of relevant experience and skills.
- f) The Assessment Report [without confidential references] is shared with the applicant(s) and the full version is presented to the Safehouses Fostering Panel.
- g) Applicants are invited to attend the Panel meeting to assist with the decision-making process.
- h) The Panel makes a recommendation about the suitability of applicants to be approved as Foster Carers with Safehouses Fostering.
- i) The Agency Decision Maker then considers the Panel recommendation and makes a considered decision.
- j) Applicants are informed verbally, and then in writing, about the agency decision.

The assessment process takes 6 months on average and every effort is made to ensure there is no avoidable delay. All information obtained about prospective Foster Carers is held on file and stored electronically in accordance with the Fostering Service Regulations [2011] and the

General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR). On request, some of this can be viewed. References from external agencies/individuals, which are provided in confidence, cannot be processed without the consent of both the applicant and relevant referee.

3.3 The Fostering Panel:

Safehouses Fostering has a Fostering Panel with agency representatives, and at least 5 independent members in its central list, who meet to consider all applications from prospective Foster Carers:

- A full assessment is presented to the Panel, using BAAF Form F
- A portfolio of competencies is completed and made available to the Panel
- A full health and safety assessment is made available to Panel

Prospective Foster Carers are invited to attend the Panel meeting.

The Panel makes recommendations that are confirmed, or not, by the appointed Agency Decision Maker. The Panel strives to see all Foster Carer Annual Reviews, however, first and third Foster Carer Annual Reviews are always presented to the Panel. It is expected that all Foster Carers attend the Panel for their annual review to ensure feedback on the fostering task and to answer any questions the Panel may have regarding agency support/systems and Foster Carer competence issues.

The Fostering Panel has an important quality standards role; it advises on the policies and procedures of the agency, oversees the standard of assessments and provides advice and information on broader, subject related, matters. An annual report is compiled by the Panel Advisor and a Panel Guide is available for Foster Carers, applicants and young people.

3.4 Foster Care Agreements:

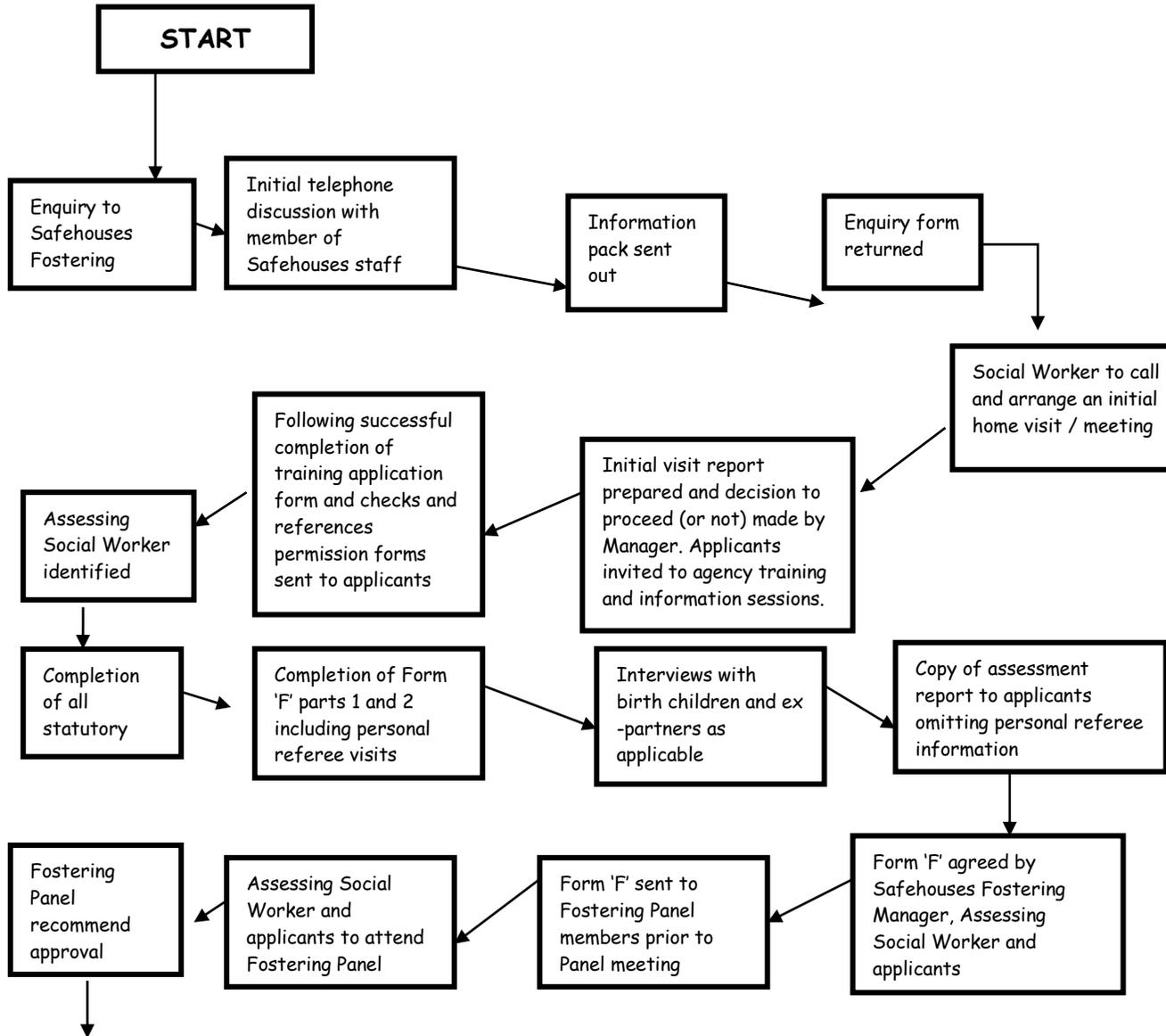
Foster Care Agreements are completed and signed following approval and are in compliance with Fostering Services (England) Regulation 27[5] [b]. All carers are issued with A Foster Carer Handbook containing details and guidance on:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standards of care• Support and supervision• Carers' annual review process• Complaints and representations procedures• Training and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insurance provision• Confidentiality/GDPR• Safeguarding procedures• Behaviour management policies• Financial matters
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Foster Carers also complete an undertaking to confirm that they will:

- Care appropriately for children and young people in placement, as identified in the foster placement agreement.
- Inform Safehouses Fostering of any relevant significant changes to their household or details.
- Follow procedures laid down within the agency's policies, procedures and practice manual.

3.5 Safehouses Fostering Assessment Process:





3.6 Review of Foster Carers:

Safehouses Fostering has a detailed procedure for completion of reviews of Foster Carers which reflects the statute law, Regulations, National Minimum Standards and best practice guidance.

In addition to the requirements to conduct annual reviews, Safehouses Fostering's procedure clearly sets out other situations in which completion of a foster care review would be appropriate, e.g. following a serious complaint or incident, or a significant change in circumstances. The review procedure focuses on the core competencies for Foster Carers that appear in the BAAF Form F Assessment and this includes an appraisal of training and development needs. It also audits the five Every Child Matters outcomes. Safehouses Fostering's Independent Reviewing Officer conducts the annual reviews of Foster Carer.

4. Safehouses Fostering Management Structure and Staffing:

The Directors are: Pamela McConnell; Tobi Gowers and Nicci Willock.

Pamela, Tobi and Nicci are members of Five Rivers Child Care Board of Directors. Nicci Willock is also Director of Fostering, Five Rivers Child Care. (Qualified Social Worker)

The Responsible Individual is: Martin Leitch who is also Head of Fostering, Five Rivers Child Care. (Qualified Social Worker)

The Responsible Individual is responsible for the financial and strategic management and the development of the Agency.

The Agency Decision Maker is: Gordon Chinchon is also Operations Manager, Five Rivers Fostering Service. (Qualified Social Worker)

The Registered Service Manager is: Pam Talbot (Qualified Social Worker)

The Registered Manager is responsible for the day to day operation of the agency, recruitment, assessment, training and approval of new carers; the development of the agency and quality standards of the outstanding services to children and young people.

The Team Manager is: Wayne Brown (Qualified Social Worker)

The Team Manager is responsible for deputising the Registered Manager.

The H.R./Office Manager is: Lisa Smith

Responsible for the office and Human Resources.

Supervising Social Workers - Carole Hemingway, Jessica Mawdesley and Jo-Anne Doherty are all qualified social workers.

Teachers – Marianne Charles (Qualified Teacher) and Sandra Gresty (Qualified Teacher)

Support Workers- Jenny Barton (Part-Time) and Zoe Talbot (Part-Time)

Office Administrators - Sue Barratt, Michelle Reynolds

Independent Reviewing Officer – Val Shepherd (Qualified Social Worker)

Student Social Workers - 100 day placements, commencing in either September or January.

Supervising Social Workers are supervised and supported by a dedicated Management Team. Foster Carers are responsible for providing a safe, caring and nurturing environment and promoting the welfare of children and young people entrusted to their care. This is further evidenced via their monthly supervision with their Supervising Social Worker.

The Agency holds a team meeting on a monthly basis and also a weekly team catch up meeting to better inform practice, the out of hours service, address issues, have specific case discussions and promote progress and resolve any case issues.

Safehouses Fostering employs administrators to conduct statutory enquiries regarding Foster Carers, maintain policies and procedures, establish systems to maintain full information and records regarding Foster Carers and children in placement.

Key financial services, including invoices and payments are also undertaken by appropriately qualified financial personnel. A named individual collates referral information and publishes regular vacancy lists.

Management and Supervising Social Workers manage and co-ordinate the 24 hour 'out of hours' service which is available 365 days per year.

Organisational Structure:

Attached as APPENDIX 'A'

In addition to the above, Safehouses Fostering have service level agreements with retained specialist services that provide:

- Business support and advice and full accountancy and financial services, including the preparation of monthly management accounts, annual updating of budgets and end of year accounts
- Legal advice on employment matters
- Design, marketing, printing and recruitment campaigns
- Information technology, database and systems development
- Individual educational support tailored to the individual child's needs from the Safehouses teachers.
- Health and wellbeing advice for carers and staff from an independent health professional.
- Independent psychological and consultancy services for the carers of children and young people.
- Post approval training for carers, in line with best practice guidelines and, in addition, training to Diploma level for carers with the appropriate longevity and experience.
- Health/safety and fire specialists for office maintenance and Foster Carers homes

All staff, whether directly employed on a service contract or providing services under a service agreement, are subject to the full range of enquiries including:

- Disclosure and Barring Service checks
- Verbal and written references from previous and current employers
- Copies of qualifications
- Health and identity checks

All staff working for Safehouses Fostering, on a permanent, part-time or self-employed basis are covered by appropriate professional indemnity insurance and all have role profiles and contracts of employment.

Safehouses Fostering insurance liabilities cover is in line with Local Authority contractual requirements and is as follows:

- **Employers** - £10 million any one occurrence
- **Public/Products** - £5 million any one occurrence
- **Professional** - £5 million in the aggregate

5. Services & Facilities:

5.1 Fostering Placements:

Safehouses Fostering social workers manage duty and referrals; therefore, an experienced and knowledgeable social worker is the first point of contact for Local Authorities making referrals or enquiries about placement choice and availability. All placements are carefully 'matched'; a detailed process which ensures that the needs of children and young people can be appropriately met by the skills and experience of Foster Carers.

The Agency provides a wide range of placements for children and young people of all ages and needs, these include:

- Parent and Child Placements
- Long term Placements
- Short term Placements
- Sibling Groups
- Placements for children who have disabilities
- Respite Placements
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Placements

- Assessment Placements
- Bridging Placements
- Solo Placements
- Permanent Placements
- Staying Put

The Agency does take emergency placements. This type of placement could be made during normal working hours of between 9.00am to 5.00pm or after 5.00pm, via the Agency's out of hours duty worker. Wherever possible the duty worker will ensure that they are available in supporting the Foster Carer by visiting the placement as and when the placement is made.

All placements made with Foster Carers are undertaken and monitored in accordance with the Fostering Regulations [2011].

Therefore:

- The child or young person is encouraged to be at the centre of the planning for the placement from the outset.
- 'Individual Foster Placement Agreements' are prepared by the placing local authority either before or at the point of placement. These include essential information sharing and a current Care Plan. The Agency prepares an Initial Risk Assessment and a Safer Caring Plan.
- Wherever practicable, a pre-placement planning is undertaken, including introductions between Foster Carers and children.
- A Placement Agreement/Planning Meeting is held within 7 days.

5.2 Support for Children and Young People:

All children and young people in placement with Safehouses Fostering are visited regularly as part of the role of the Supervising Social Worker. In undertaking this, due consideration is given to the role and involvement of the local authority social worker, so that there is clarity between the roles and responsibilities of the agency and the placing social worker.

The Supervising Social Worker, alongside the Foster Carer, will ensure that the best interests of the child and/or young person are being safeguarded and promoted. If necessary, the team will identify any further services that are appropriate to promote the child/young person's physical, mental and emotional welfare and consult with the placing authority in order to access the relevant professional input.

At the point of placement children and young people are given a Children's Guide/ Handbook. This outlines the services and support that they will receive when placed with our Foster Carers.

Safehouses Fostering also offer children and young people an independent worker. This worker is independent to Safehouses Fostering. They are available in supporting children and young people in placement and also another avenue for them to ensure that their views and opinions of our service are listened to and where appropriate acted upon.

Safehouses Fostering employs experienced teachers to offer, guidance, support, assistance and information to the children and young people in placement. This service is also provided for Foster Carers and Supervising Social Workers in order to further support the placement. The caseworker works alongside therapeutic, social care and health professionals to provide an educational and psychological understanding and context to Safehouses Fostering placements. An experienced and skilled Social Work Assistant works as part of the support team; to assist

young people, Foster Carers, and Supervising Social Workers in a myriad of ways. Foster Carers informally mentor less experienced carers and therefore provide an invaluable in-house support network.

5.3 Social Work Service:

In addition to the child's social worker, a Supervising Social Worker is allocated by the Agency to support and supervises every Foster Carer with young people in placement.

The Supervising Social Worker:

- Maintains regular contact with the Foster Carer and children in placement through monthly supervision*1 and a monthly support visit*2
1*Supervision takes place when there are children in placement or the SSW identifies a need if there are no children in placement. This can be bi-monthly in the case of no children placed and no issues in the fostering home and is agreed with the Foster Carer, SSW and Manager.2* Support visits can also be carried out by support workers, these are needs led and agreed with the Foster Carer(s), SSW and Manager. In addition to support visits and supervisions the SSW will maintain email telephone contact with the Foster Carers
- Acts as manager, providing advice, guidance and support to the Foster Carer on their care of children in placement.
- Participates in the Out of Office Hours management and support service to carers and Local Authorities.
- Investigates and co-ordinates other support services that may be appropriately identified.
- Liaises with other professionals and contributes to reviews and formal meetings in respect of care planning.

- Provides formal supervision and identifies and responds to Foster Carers' training and development needs.
- Keeps accurate records and provides at least monthly updates, to the local authority social workers of the children/young people in placement.

In addition;

1. Safehouses Fostering only employs Supervising Social Workers who are suitably qualified and experienced to undertake the role. Student Social Workers are very closely supervised and supported by qualified staff to maintain the high standard of support offered.
2. Every effort is made to match children with families who reflect their religious, cultural and diversity needs.
3. Issues around child protection will be dealt with immediately, in line with Agency procedures.
4. School attendance and academic achievement is supported and promoted for all children and young people.
5. Ensures that daily logs on each child or young person are maintained and provided to placing authorities on request. The daily logs are all seen at the carers home at supervision visits.
6. A monthly supervision update is available to all children and young people's Local Authority Social Worker
7. Corporal punishment will NOT be used in any circumstances and Foster Carers sign an undertaking to this effect post approval. Guidance is provided on the use of sanctions and a written record kept of any implementation.
8. Safehouses Fostering and its carers always maintain vigilance and confidentiality.
9. Foster Carers will have access to training up to Diploma level and TSD Standards, and regular support groups meetings.
10. Safehouses Fostering ensures that each Foster Carer and foster home fulfils and exceeds all health and safety and risk assessment requirements.
11. Foster Carers will adhere to the child/young person's Care Plan and within the terms of the Individual Placement Agreement.

12. Foster Carers will promote agreed contact with the children's families in line with the Care Plan and the local authority's wishes.
13. Safehouses Foster Carers have access to an independent worker. They are available in dealing with any complaint/child protection issue that may occur. If any such allegation or complaint is received, In the first instance the Foster Carer will be offered the opportunity of an independent worker or alternatively decide that they are happy with their Supervising Social Worker continuing to guide and support them through complaint or child protection process.

5.4 Matching:

All placements are closely matched to ensure that their needs are met by the skills and experience of Safehouses Fostering Foster Carers.

Appropriate referrals are considered by the Managers and Supervising Social Workers, Foster Carers and Local Authorities to ensure the best possible match and only positive outcomes for children.

Safehouses Fostering is very proud of its robust matching processes and, because of this and the high level of support the agency offers, the exceptionally low number of placement breakdowns experienced by children and young people looked after by the Agency.

5.5 Financial:

Foster Carers receive an appropriate weekly fostering allowance, which is paid directly into their bank accounts via BACS transfer on a monthly basis. In addition, Foster Carers also receive two weeks respite per child, per year [additional respite support is provided as and when identified].

Carers are self-employed and pay their own tax and national insurance. Detailed financial information and guidance is supplied to Foster Carers within the Foster Carer Handbook.

5.6 Management and Support:

All Foster Carers have a named, fully qualified and experienced Supervising Social Worker should a student SSW be allocated they shall be supported by the regular SSW and closely supervised to support the Foster Carer. It is this social worker's responsibility to manage and support the carer in the fostering task. Safehouses Fostering Supervising Social Workers understand that they have a responsibility for ensuring that the child or young person is at the 'centre' of the placement; even though they do not have case management responsibility for the child.

The Supervising Social Worker supervises the carer on a monthly basis while a child is in placement and visits fortnightly. Some carers are visited more frequently where this is felt appropriate. There will also be frequent telephone contact and emails to support/inform the Foster Carer. All Foster Carers are enrolled as members of the Fostering Network (financed by Safehouses Fostering] as this provides excellent up-to-date information and insurance should carers be the subject of an allegation or need legal advice.

Safehouses Fostering also provides further support to carers, where appropriate, through a Support Worker who undertakes practical support such as transport, day support, activities*. This is all subject to need and assessment.

5.7 Emergency Support [on-call service]:

At weekends, during the evenings and at night, Foster Carers are provided with an on-call service, which is staffed by a Supervising Social Worker, who in turn is supported by a Manager.

Carers are encouraged to contact the 'on-call' Social Worker for support and guidance and where appropriate report children and young people who are 'missing from home' or are classed as an 'unauthorised absence'. The office telephone numbers are diverted to the out-of-hours Social Worker. A Director is also always available for support.

5.8 Supervisory Visits:

Supervising Social Workers are responsible for ensuring that the standard of care offered to children in foster care is of the very highest standard.

This includes scrutinising safe caring practices and sourcing assistance for carers in order to achieve an excellent standard of care for the children and young people placed with the Agency. Supervision meetings are a good opportunity for all parties to raise issues of concern and also allow for the opportunity to discuss placement progress. The Supervising Social Workers also have a primary responsibility for assisting in the career development of carers, establishing learning and development needs with them and making plans to meet these needs.

Carers who have no children placed with them, will have a monthly support telephone call or a monthly placement visit as agreed with their SSW.

5.9 Unannounced Visits:

Part of the monitoring of the work of the Foster Carer is via unannounced visits by a Supervising Social Worker or a member of the support team. At least one unannounced visit takes place every year; one is completed by a qualified Social Worker in accordance with Regulations. These visits are not intended to be intrusive in any way but are to ensure the safety and well-being of children in placement.

Carers who have no children placed with them, will have a monthly support telephone call or a monthly placement visit as agreed.

5.10 Foster Care Review:

As set out in the Children Act 1989 and the Fostering Service Regulations 2011, all Foster Carers undergo an Annual Review. The main aim of the Annual Review is to determine whether approval should be renewed and whether there should be any change in the terms of approval. The review, coordinated by an Independent Reviewing Officer will include written reports from the carer's Supervising Social Worker, Registered Manager, Education caseworker, the local authority Social Worker, children and young people in placement, children of the household/carers and the Foster Carers themselves. Once completed, it is signed by the carers and their Supervising Social Worker.

The Annual Review is an opportunity to look at progress in meeting targets for the improvement of skills, to set new goals and action plan for the next year. Learning and development needs are assessed and commitment to further training agreed.

5.11 Record Keeping:

Foster Carers complete a daily log and they are expected to note regular and significant events appertaining to the child or young person in placement. Maintaining logs is an important part of the Foster Carer's role, and accurate, factual and unbiased recording is therefore paramount. It is also noted that these log recordings could, should the need arise, be used as evidence in court. This record will be kept in a daily log, one for each child in placement. Diaries and log books are supplied by Safehouses Fostering and remain the property of Safehouses Fostering. Fostering Records are now to be stored securely online in CHARMS in accordance with GDPR requirements. At placement end, they are returned to the Agency. Safehouses Fostering will ensure safe storage and availability for a child or Local Authority to view in the future, should this be requested.

5.12 Policies & Procedures:

Safehouses Fostering has developed a comprehensive, but easy to understand, Foster Carer Handbook. It is issued to every approved Foster Carer in order to aid them with the fostering task. The Handbook contains information on allegations against carers, safeguarding children, confidentiality, fees and finances, legal issues, managing behaviour, supervision and other relevant information.

The handbook is reviewed throughout the year and updates issued annually, or as required, to Foster Carers.

6. Complaints and Outcomes:

The Safehouses Fostering Complaints Procedures places an emphasis on resolving complaints at a local level. Stage 1 is informal problem solving. Records of investigations and outcomes of complaints resolved informally are held on file for inspection by Ofsted and other regulatory bodies.

All children/young people placed with Safehouses Fostering Foster Carers are informed of the organisation's Complaints Procedure via a Children's Guide which sets out a clear diagram/process of how to complain.

All Foster Carers, staff and children's/young persons' social workers are also provided with information about Safehouses Fostering complaints procedures.

Stage 2 complaints are those where resolution at **Stage 1** has not been possible, or where a complainant has elected to invoke **Stage 2** of the procedure direct. Complaints of this nature are dealt with by the Registered Manager and if appropriate, independent Social Workers are appointed to carry out formal investigations.

The Safehouses Fostering representations and Complaints Procedure has scope for a complaint, if dissatisfied by the response in **Stage 2**, to request that the matter be referred to the Responsible Individual – **Stage 3**.

Summary details of complaints and their outcomes are filed confidentially and can be provided upon request.

7. Agency Register of Foster Carers/Children & Young People:

Available upon request:

8. Statement of Financial Position:

Available upon request:

To obtain the above information [sections 7 – 8] or for any other information, please put your request in writing to:

The Responsible Individual

Safehouses Fostering,

The Fleece, 41 Oldham Road, Denshaw, Oldham OL3 5SS

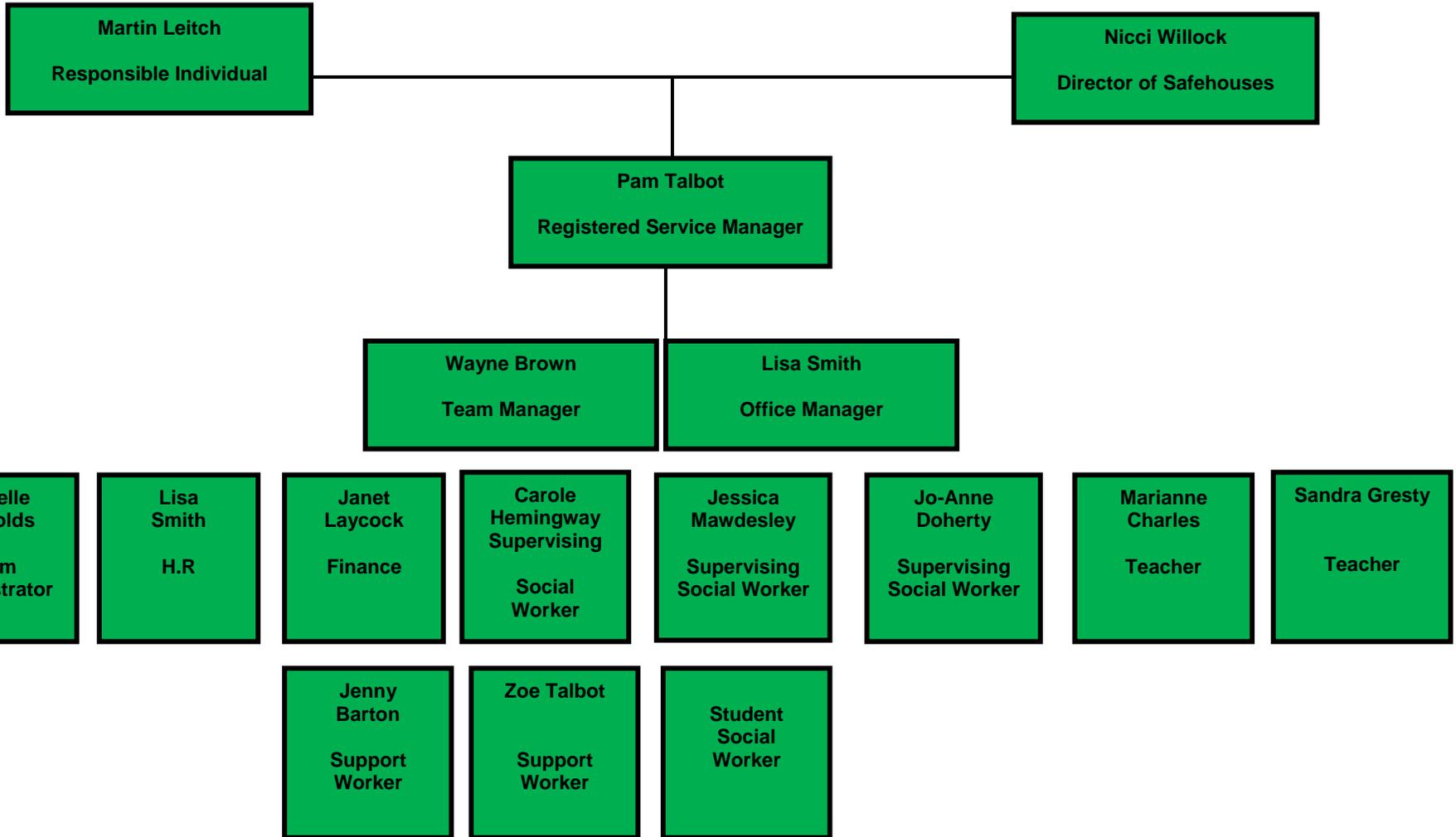
Tel: 01457 829111 ● Fax: 01457 810810

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APPENDIX A

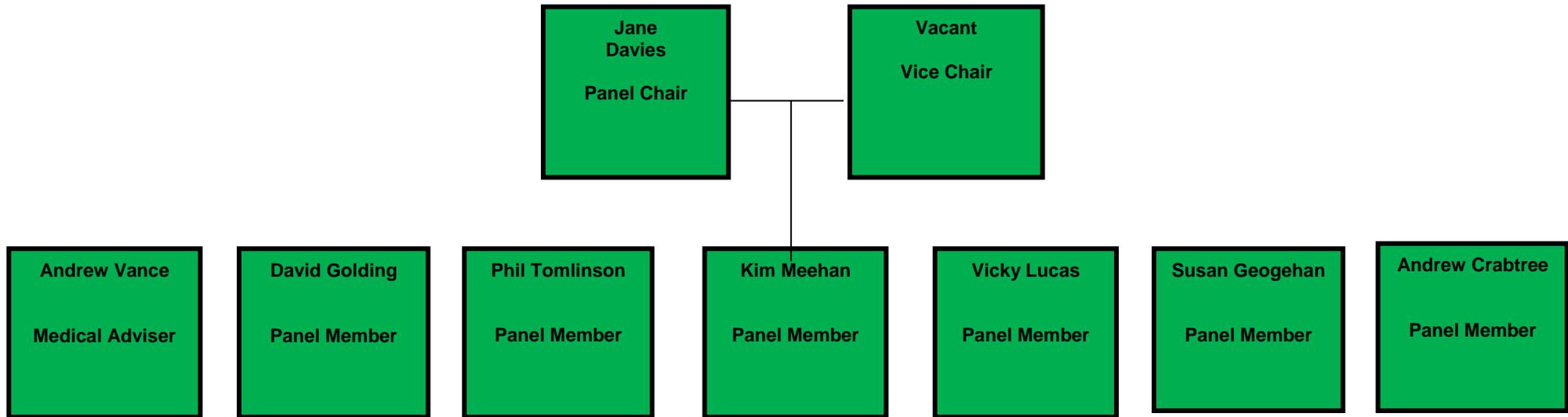
Safehouses Fostering – Staff Structure



Safehouses Fostering - External Members Structure



Safehouses Fostering – Panel Members



Details of Ofsted and the Children's Commissioner

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