

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE



**LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
FOSTERING SERVICE**

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE FOR THE LINCOLNSHIRE FOSTERING SERVICE

This Statement of Purpose fulfils the requirements of Standard 16 of the Fostering Services Minimum Standards (Care Standards Act, 2000) and Regulations 3 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011. To be presented for approval by the Lincolnshire County Council Executive on .

CONTENTS

Page

- 4. Aims, Objectives and Principles of the Fostering Service
- 7. Standards of Care
- 8. Status and Constitution
- 9. Management Structure
- 10. The Work of the Fostering Service
- 18. Training
- 20. Recruiting and Approving Foster Carers
- 22. Number of Foster Carers
- 23. Finance
- 24. Complaints and Allegations
- 25. Number of Complaints and their Outcomes
- 26. Advocacy and Children's Rights
- 27. Number of Children Placed
- 28. Equality and Diversity
- 29. Ofsted
- 30. Further Information

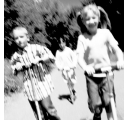
APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Management Structure

Appendix 2 Fostering Panel

Appendix 3 Staffing: Number, Relevant Qualifications and Experience.

AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE FOSTERING SERVICE



The main aims of the Lincolnshire County Council Fostering Service are to:

Provide high quality and safe care within a family setting for children and young people who are unable to live within their own families.

Provide a range of foster carers able to meet the emotional, physical, cultural, and religious and ethnicity needs of all the children looked after by Lincolnshire County Council.

Lincolnshire County Council delivers its Fostering Service through dedicated Fostering Teams managed by Team Managers covering the north and south of the county.

The main service objectives are to:

Place children and young people in local foster placements where relationships with family, friends and community are maintained and continuity of education, health and cultural links and activities is ensured. In instances where it is not possible to achieve this within the Council's Foster Placements an appropriate placement outside of the resources of the County Council will be sought.

Maintain a sufficient number of foster care placements in relation to the location, numbers, needs, age range and characteristics of the looked after population and review this annually through the recruitment strategy.

Recruit foster carers who are trained and supported in providing safe care to children who live with them. The service will determine the number and types of foster placements required and produce an annual recruitment plan.

Carry out an assessment of need on every child prior to accommodation. Where possible a safe family member or friend will be the preferred placement choice.

Provide a safe and nurturing foster placement with every effort made to achieve good outcomes for the looked after child, within set timescales and to agreed standards. The service aims to ensure that as many children as possible can meet with their prospective foster carers prior to placement.

Provide for sibling groups to be placed together when this is in their best interests.

Respect and promote the child's heritage, culture and identity.

Promote contact between the child and their family where this is consistent with the care plan.

Ensure openness and partnership working between all those involved and concerned with the child's welfare.

Involve young people and foster carers in developing services and building their feedback into service development.

The Fostering Service has set targets to achieve best practice for the following Children's Performance Assessment Framework and National Indicators:

NI062 – stability of placements of looked after children: number of placement moves.

PAF B79 – the percentage of children looked after in foster placements or placed for adoption.

PAF C69 – the percentage of children newly looked after who were placed more than 20 miles from their home address from which first placed.

NI063 – stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement.

The main principles underpinning the service are:

Foster carers will be treated with respect and recognition will be given to the valuable role they play in the care of looked after children.

Recruitment of new foster carers and staff who work within the service, complies with regulations, national standards and good practice.

Foster carers are vetted, prepared and assessed in line with national regulations and requirements.

The Lincolnshire Fostering panel considers all carer applications and reviews of approval.

All approved foster carers are required to sign the Foster Care Agreement.

Wherever possible all placements are matched to ensure a good fit between the needs of the child and the skills and experience of the foster carer(s).

Every child placed will be subject to the looked after children care planning process.

All foster carers are provided with the required documentation to support the placement of the child in their care.

Children have their placement and plan reviewed within four weeks of initial placement.

All foster carers have a named supervising social worker.

Children in foster care have a named allocated social worker.

STANDARDS OF CARE TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE AGENCY



The Fostering Service aims to provide safe, secure and high quality care in family settings for children who need to be looked after away from home. This will be achieved to the standards set out in the Fostering Services Regulations 2011 (referred to as the 'Regulations'), the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review regulations (2010) the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (2011) along with the Code of Practice on the recruitment, assessment, approval, training, management and support of foster carers. These standards will apply equally to family and friends placements. The service complies with the requirements of the Training, Support and Development Standards.

There is a countywide management group whose function is to continuously improve standards of care informed by inspections, audits, new legislation and guidance.

STATUS AND CONSTITUTION OF THE AGENCY



Lincolnshire County Council is an approved fostering service provider and will be inspected under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Decision making and arrangements for the management of the service including the appointment of the Fostering Service Manager (Regulation 6) and approval of foster carer registrations (Regulation 27) are delegated to the Assistant Director, Children's Services.

A Fostering Panel has been established in accordance with Regulation 23. A Manager who is independent from the Fostering Service chairs the Panel.

Where Lincolnshire County Council needs to use any other fostering agency for the provision of placements these agencies must be approved and accredited under the East Midlands Fostering Consortium arrangements. No child is placed in these circumstances without the approval of the Assistant Director.

THE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF THE FOSTERING SERVICE



The Fostering Service is managed by the Head of Regulated Services, through two Team Managers who manage dedicated fostering teams from bases in Lincoln and Sleaford.

The registered manager appointed to manage the Fostering Service under Regulation 10 of the Fostering Services Regulations is:

Janice Spencer, Head of Service – Regulated Services
Council Offices
Eastgate
Sleaford
NG34 7EB

Telephone: 01522 554476

Email: Janice.spencer@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Qualifications: CQSW, Advanced Award Social Work Practice, MA Child Protection, Certificate in Management Studies, Post Graduate Certificate in Health and Social Care.

Experience: more than twenty-five years of experience of working in the field of social care, specialising in the area of children and families since 1991 and has held first line and senior management posts with the local authority.

The nominated manager to manage the Fostering Service in the absence of the registered manager is John Harris (Team Manager, Fostering Service – North).

The fostering teams are locality based and deliver a comprehensive fostering service. These teams manage the recruitment, assessment, approval, support and placement processes which enable children looked after in Lincolnshire County Council to be placed in a range of fostering settings.

Michael Mulvaney is the dedicated Professional advisor for both the Fostering and permanence panels..

The organisational structure of the Fostering Service is shown in Appendix 1. The list of current staff is set out in appendix 2. This information in its fullest form is only available to Ofsted.

THE WORK OF THE FOSTERING SERVICE

Lincolnshire County Council's vision is;

“that every child in every part of the county should achieve their potential”

The principles that the Council adheres to are;

Early Intervention and Prevention

Safeguarding

Aspiration and Well being

Learning and achievement

Best use of Resources

The expectation for all children looked after is encapsulated into these principles.

All working with children will champion the importance of aspiration

We will help develop self esteem, self belief and resilience in all children

We will encourage all children to be the best they can be

We will use resources to focus on outcomes, life chances and opportunities

Looked After Children can only achieve these outcomes if the service is committed to jointly working with foster carers to help them to promote these objectives.

Lincolnshire aims to provide sufficient local placements to enable placement choice and enable children to remain, where appropriate, close to their communities .

As part of the Staying Put pilot Lincolnshire has effectively secured young people in their foster placements post 18. Some 25 young people in 2010/11 have benefitted from the continuity of a foster placement to enter employment, further education or training. Lincolnshire is committed to maintaining this service into 2011 beyond the end date of the pilot programme.

The training, induction and development of new foster carers from April 2008 was set within a new nationally prescribed framework set out by the Children's Workforce Development Council, and Lincolnshire has met the requirement of all foster carers having completed them by April 2011.

In 2011 Lincolnshire has been successful in having a bid for Multi Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) accepted and the final interviews are to be held 4th July 2011.

Aspiration and Well Being

All children are registered with GPs and dentists and this is kept under review by team managers who are required to submit fortnightly returns confirming that

children have their annual health assessment and dental check. Performance is measured against a national performance standard and we remain within the best practice band. There are 13 designated GP's and a named nurse for Children Looked After. Children and young people placed in foster care have an initial health assessment carried out by a designated GP and are encouraged to have an annual review by the same GP. Medical forms recommended by British Association for Fostering and Adoption (BAAF) are used to record both the initial and annual review. In order to improve the health outcomes for children and young people, Lincolnshire County Council has adopted the BAAF Health record (Blue Book) to be held by all carers to ensure the recording of up to date health information to provide a continuous health profile. Lincolnshire has a strategy to tackle teenage pregnancy. All carers are given a copy of the guidance on sex and relationship Education within their handbooks. Carers and Young people area able to access further information from the Teenage website and C4YP.

The health needs of children and young people are regularly monitored through the looked after children review process. A clinical co-ordinator with responsibility to improve access to CAMHS services for children looked after, works to a target of seeing all referred children for an initial assessment within 28 days. A forensic psychology assessment service is available to children looked after who have emotional, behavioural, interaction or mental health issues that are manifesting themselves in the form of offending behaviour.

Foster carers have completed a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire for children between the ages of four and sixteen years of age who were in care at 31st March 2010. This is to ensure that services for children who require additional support are accessed swiftly in order to improve emotional well being. The results of all the SDQ's are monitored by a dedicated multi agency group comprising of CAMHS, Education Psychology services , LACES and Social Care.

Part of the training programme for foster carers focuses on promoting a healthy lifestyle, good diet and exercise. All mainstream foster carers have to undertake first aid training as part of their mandatory post approval training. Foster carers have training sessions on promoting the health of children looked after. This core programme is supplemented through special interest seminars on ADHD, autism and aspergers syndrome. All carers are required to complete a First Aid course as part of their mandatory training programme.

Foster carers can access specialist services for those with substance and alcohol misuse problems through an agency called Addaction.

As part of the assessment process of prospective foster carers a health assessment is undertaken by the carers GP which the Agency Medical Advisor for the Fostering Panel considers. If there are on-going medical issues, a full medical assessment is undertaken. All carers are required to update their health assessment every 3 years. Foster carers who offer respite care to disabled children are, if necessary, offered specialist training to meet the needs of individual children.

Safeguarding

Lincolnshire's Children and Young People's Service and its fostering service are part of Lincolnshire's Safeguarding Children's Board.

The assessment of carers includes the taking of full employment and accommodation histories. Checks with the Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) and local authority checks are completed on everyone aged over 18 years of age living in the household. A range of referees are contacted and visited.

Safe caring is an important part of foster carer training and all carers are given a Safe Caring Handbook.

All foster carers attend mandatory training regarding safer caring and the implications of looking after children who may have been abused.

Each set of carers have a safer caring assessment prior to approval which highlights key aspects of the safer caring process and this is reviewed in the light of each placement made. Every effort is taken when placing children to ensure that the assessed needs of the child are carefully matched to the skills and capabilities of the carers. All children placed are subject to a safety plan that identifies any risks that carers will be asked to manage.

All foster carers are offered bi monthly formal supervision, in addition to regular visits, to look at their practice. An unannounced visit to the foster home is made at least once each year. Workers in the team are also aware of the particular vulnerability of disabled children.

Allegations against foster carers are investigated using an established procedure whereby all are considered by the Local Authority Designated Officer. An independent person chairs the initial strategy meeting and oversees the process. Independent support is offered to carers during the allegations procedure. In addition the Fostering Service funds each fostering household's membership of the Fostering Network which brings the benefit of legal protection insurance and access to support and advice from their staff, including free legal advice and counselling service.

Children's plans are regularly reviewed through the Looked After Children's Statutory Review process, and procedures are in place for reporting incidents of abuse through the Schedule 7 notification requirements. All children are given information about how to report abuse and carers are prepared in how to manage disclosure and prevent allegations arising in the placement. In addition children and young people have access to an independent advocacy service through National Youth Advocacy Services.

All children and young people are expected to agree with their carer when they go out, where they are going and a time to return. If a young person fails to return at the agreed time, attempts are made to locate them by telephoning friends, family and relatives. Carers can obtain advice about the operation of the Missing from Care protocol from the Emergency Duty Team

The process for conducting risk assessments on missing young people and making reports to the police is detailed in the foster carer handbook and was updated following the revision of the county council protocol for children who go missing.

All placements have detailed safety plans in place; these are reviewed at regular intervals following a change in the child's or carer's circumstances and is monitored through the review of the child's care plan. Lincolnshire's Fostering Service placement policy is that wherever possible children aged over 3 have their own bedroom and this is the basis on which all placements are made. In certain circumstances, a child/young person may share a bedroom. Full risk assessments for each child/young person sharing must be undertaken before these arrangements are agreed. A matching policy is in place to ensure that effective matching of children to placements is undertaken to improve placement stability and good outcomes for children and young people.

Aspiration, learning and achievement.

Lincolnshire County Council are committed to maximising a child's potential in both academic attainment and personal achievement. All young people are expected to attend school and efforts are made to maintain children in their existing schools. Foster carers who transport children to out of catchment schools have their transport expenses reimbursed.

Foster carers are aware that it is unacceptable to take children and young people out of school for family holidays. A protocol has been agreed on this matter and issued to all carers.

The Fostering Service promotes the educational attainment of children placed with foster carers. Each child in foster care has a Personal Education Plan and, where appropriate, a leaving care Pathway Plan. Foster carers are expected to involve themselves in assisting children in placement to achieve satisfactory attendance, assist with homework and participate in parent/teacher events. A successful buddy scheme is in place (JUMP) in conjunction with the University of Lincoln, to provide individual educational mentoring for children in care in Key stage Two.

There is a designated teacher in every Lincolnshire school with responsibilities for liaison; educational monitoring and pastoral care for looked after children. There are three Education Officers whose role is to ensure effective liaison with schools and to promote educational attainment and attendance of children looked after. This includes children who live with foster carers outside of Lincolnshire. In addition there is an officer in post to work directly with foster carers to enhance their skills in encouraging children's learning.

The looked after children education service is managed by a teacher who leads a team working in partnership with schools, carers and other organisations to improve the educational attainment. The structure of this service is currently under review.

Book tokens are offered to children looked after on a regular basis to enhance their interest in reading. In 2010 e-readers have been provided to older boys in an attempt to motivate their interest in developing literacy skills

There is a Senior Specialist Educational Psychologist (SSEP) for vulnerable children. This post contributes to the raising of educational standards for children in foster care. The SSEP broadens the support and intervention knowledge and skills of carers and schools and actively identifies children in need of psychological involvement within the SDQ process.

The opportunity for children and young people to succeed in hobbies or sports is seen as an important element of the fostering task and is supported through fostering allowance payments. Annual foster carer reviews consider the level of social opportunities young people in placement are supported in attending.

The Fostering Service has developed a number of arts and creativity programmes for children looked after and foster carers as a potential way of increasing their emotional literacy and resilience. In 2010 this has included choral singing , DJ experience with Soundlinks and a variety of sporting activities. These events provide opportunities to promote self-confidence, self-esteem and social interaction together with enhanced personal coping skills.

The Lincolnshire Young People's Library Service provides cards for all looked after children to enable free access to reading and learning resources such as multimedia applications.

Leisure Cards are available for all children/young people and their carers, which entitles them to discounted use of leisure centre facilities across the County. Foster carer privilege cards have been introduced with local businesses providing reductions and discounts for children and young people.

In 2009 the Children in Care Council has been developed and in addition to a steering group, 3 active local groups have been established to ensure that the voice of children looked after is heard. These groups operate under the banner of V4C (voices for choices). In addition a consultation event was held with the children from foster families and work is currently underway to produce a DVD which can be used throughout the recruitment and assessment process.

An annual event celebrates the achievements of looked after children and young people .This year's event took place on April 9th at the Drill Hall in Lincoln, with over 180 nominations and awards made under the categories of personal endeavour, sporting achievement, arts/music achievement and educational endeavour.

Foster carers who are willing for their foster children to stay with them beyond the age of 18 are encouraged to do so by participation in the Staying Put Pilot which provides levels of support in keeping with Fostering. In 2010, 25 young people have benefitted from being able to remain with their long term foster carers.

Lincolnshire's leaving care service has been contracted out to Barnardo's since April 2007. The service works with foster carers and young people. All young people leaving care have a named worker and a clear plan for support in their transition to adulthood. Local partnerships meet to develop plans to support young people in foster care into education, employment or training. The training plan contains special interest seminars, which assist carers in helping children progress to independence. On an individual case basis placement support workers will also have a role in helping young people acquire skills for independence. The Social Worker for Staying Put works closely with leaving care workers to ensure a joint approach to individual young people.

Supporting the Fostering Service

The work of the Fostering Service is delivered through a number of key relationships and support functions which are described below.

1. Supervising Social Worker

The role of the supervising social worker is to give support and supervision to the foster carer. They also assist with practical difficulties and the provision of equipment. They are a crucial link between the carer and the child's social worker. There is a supervision policy for foster carers. Supervision takes place bi monthly and includes a focus on personal development.

Although most support visits will be prearranged the supervising social worker has a duty to undertake at least one unannounced visit per year. They are also responsible for undertaking the annual review of approval, which incorporates the carers' views and those of any birth children and fostered children. The review also includes reports from social workers and the supervising social worker who will identify strengths and future learning needs. Following completion of the review the foster carer is issued with a statement of re- approval.

2. Child's Social Worker

The child's social worker is responsible for the overall management of the child's care plan. They have a statutory duty to visit the child within one week of placement and thereafter at a minimum of six weekly intervals. However in most circumstances the visiting pattern will be more frequent particularly in the early stages of a placement or when there are particular difficulties.

3. Foster Carer Support Groups

Foster carers are assisted by their supervising social worker to join a local support group. The Fostering Service also provides, upon approval, membership of the Fostering Network. In certain parts of the County, support groups have not always met the needs of the majority of foster carers. In these areas we endeavour to link newly registered carers with others who are experienced.

All foster carers receive a handbook which details local policy, information about fostering terms and conditions and guidance about requirements concerning the care and control of children and other procedures. The handbook is regularly updated and reviewed and amended information is sent to foster carers. The foster carer newsletter is produced 4 times per year.

4. Out of Hours Service - Emergency Duty Team (EDT)

This service provides a team of social workers who are available outside of office hours to offer emergency support to service users and the public. The EDT can offer telephone advice and has access to placement information and emergency placements with foster carers. The EDT workers can visit to offer assistance and support to carers who find themselves in extreme difficulties.

5. Placement Support Workers

There are eleven placement support workers supporting foster carers by working with the young people in placement in a range of settings including the carers' homes and community based venues to promote a safe and caring environment that reflects the needs of young people.

Priority support is given to those foster carers where young people, for whatever reason, are not currently attending school. The placement support worker ensures that homework is available or some form of educational teaching to promote learning and enable the young person to achieve their maximum potential.

The placement support workers are expected to attend any meetings and contribute to the care plan for the young person and to attend regular training.

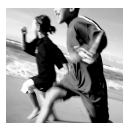
They also organise and facilitate Independent Living group work with a small group of young people which includes safe care, hygiene and self esteem. Family Centres have been used to facilitate cooking and crafts with young people and Youth Centres have also been used to encourage and develop social interaction with others, whilst trips to local stores to purchase cooking ingredients has helped young people to develop skills in the management of money. During the summer period PSW's join together to provide group activities for children in foster care and provide foster carers with information about cost effective activities in their areas.

Placement support workers have also worked alongside children in school and have assisted with homework after school.

Swimming lessons have been arranged and young people enrolled in theatre group work and sports lessons, all encouraged and assisted by the Placement Support Workers.

Specific work is also undertaken with individual young people including Life Story work, anger management, building self esteem, working with sibling groups to develop empathy and understanding, drug and alcohol awareness, sexual health matters, healthy eating, managing a budget and help provided to foster carers to establish routines and advise on behavioural issues.

TRAINING



The Fostering Service ensures that foster carers are trained in the skills required to provide high quality care to meet the needs of each child placed in their care.

Training of foster carers is a significant aspect of the service and is provided both pre and post approval and is included within the Fostering Service's Annual Training Plan.

Training is not an option but a clear expectation of all carers and is evaluated in supervision sessions and annual reviews. A three year cycle of training in Child Protection, Safer Caring and First Aid has been a requirement for all carers from April 2007. In addition in 2010 mandatory courses on diversity and behaviour management were introduced. The content of these courses are currently subject to review.

The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) training and induction standards were introduced for carers in Lincolnshire in 2008. All carers have been provided with a portfolio of learning and development in order to evidence their competences.

Pre-approval training is provided in-house and the course has evolved over the years to reflect changing practice, local experience and the national fostering agenda. Further work is being undertaken to develop the course with an agreed curriculum for prospective carers, amendments include the National Standards and current research.

Foster carers are encouraged to gain formal childcare awards. Sponsored places on the NVQ Child Care programme are available.

In 2010 a therapeutic parenting course delivered over a 10 week period have been targeted at foster carers providing permanence for children and young people. This is a rolling programme with 4 courses being delivered per year. A dedicated training officer co-ordinates and delivers all post approval training to foster carers. Foster carers also have access to a wide range of learning and development provision including direct learning, targeted learning resources, the e-learning academy and general social care appropriated provision. The content and delivery of this course is currently under review.

An annual foster carer conference is held, the topic of this years conference being around the complex area of e.safety. Attendance at these conferences are in excess of 50% of all approved carers.

THE PROCESS OF RECRUITING AND APPROVING FOSTER CARERS



Foster carers are recruited and assessed in line with Lincolnshire guidance based on the National Minimum Standards, Fostering Regulations, Code of Practice (1999) .

The recruitment of carers is currently managed and effected from within the Fostering Service by the Recruitment and Marketing Officer who has been in post since April 2008. An annual recruitment strategy is produced identifying target areas for recruitment.

Recruitment involves:

- Newspaper advertisements
- Newspaper articles
- Distribution of posters
- Information distributed through displays and presentations
- Word of mouth through existing carers
- The recommend a friend scheme
- Lincolnshire County Council LCC Connects website
- Targeted activity within specific communities in county.
- Participation in a range of county wide events.

In 2010 we have reviewed the process of engaging with prospective foster carers. Initial contacts are made via the Customer Service Centre where information is taken from prospective applicants. A detailed pack is made available to all interested applicants. For those interested to find out more, direct contact is made with the fostering Duty Officer. The recruitment officer has responsibility for managing and responding to enquirers.

Within 14 days, contact is made by a supervising social worker to make arrangements to visit the family's own home. If they are interested in proceeding further preliminary information will be gathered and statutory checks undertaken. Prospective carers attend a preparation group, following which the decision is made whether or not to apply for assessment. The home study and presentation to panel should take place within four months. The assessments are completed by qualified social workers and follow the format of the British Association for Adoption and Fostering Form F.

Foster carer approvals (including family and friends carers) are considered by the Fostering Panel. Applications to become permanent foster carers are considered by the Permanence Panel. The composition and organisation of the Panels is in accordance with regulation 23 of the Fostering Services Regulations, 2011.

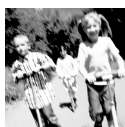
The service provider decision maker is the Assistant Director, Children's Services.

Every foster carer is required to sign a Foster Carer Agreement (regulation 27 (5) – (5b)) prior to the placement of a child. A supervising social worker is allocated to the family, this is usually the person who has undertaken the home study.

Foster carers are supervised and supported by a named locally based supervising social worker and the child has their own named social worker. Independent reviewing officers undertake all childcare reviews.

The Fostering Panel always considers first reviews, however subsequent reviews are normally considered under locality management arrangements, unless there is a disagreement regarding the terms of approval which necessitates referral back to Panel. Serious complaints or allegations will also be put before Panel to consider whether or not there should be any alterations to the terms of approval. Since April 2009 foster carers have the right to challenge decisions through an Independent Mechanism Review.

NUMBER OF FOSTER CARERS



As at the end of March 2011, Lincolnshire had carers approved in the following categories:

Task Centred	108
Respite	27
Permanence	41
Task Centred / Respite	16
Permanence / Task Centred	18
Permanence / Respite	4
Placement Plus	24
Family and Friend	31
Parent and child / task centred	5
Emergency	5
Short Breaks	5
cwd respite	4
Staying Put	11

In total there were 299 fostering households .

In the period April 2010 – March 2011 there were 48 new fostering households approved (*not including changes of existing approval*).

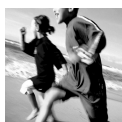
- 30 approved for 1 child
- 15 approved for 2 children
- 3 approved for 3 children

21 of the approved new households were family and freind carers.

43 carers - including Regulation 38 carers (family/friends) - ceased fostering during this period. The reasons recorded for de-registration were as follows:

At carers request not health	20
Family circumstances changed	11
Retired	0
Health Reasons	1
Child has Residence/Adoption/Special Guardianship Order agreed	6
Transferred to independent Fostering Agency	0
Child reaches 18	0
Carers no longer considered suitable	5
Moved out of area	2

FINANCE



Most foster carers receive weekly allowances according to the age of the child. Despite the financial difficulties faced by Local Authorities, in 2011 fostering allowances have increased by 1.75%.

A specialist fostering scheme remains in place targeted on harder to place children. Placement+ carers are paid higher fees. Carers able to make permanent commitment to children, receive an increased rate of allowance as do those able to take the more complex adolescents. In 2010 we have increased the number of emergency carers across the county and developed a more structured approach to parent and child placements.

COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS



Summary of the Complaints Procedure

The Directorate has a statutory complaints service, the detail of which is contained in the guide for staff 'Handling Comments and Complaints'. It is a three stage process:

- Stage 1 - Informal or problem solving
- Stage 2 - Formal stage at which an independent investigating officer is appointed
- Stage 3 - A formal review by a panel of elected members, chaired by an independent individual

Staff must ensure that all carers know how and to whom to complain.

Complainants have the right to involve a friend or advocate.

The complaints officer is John Stephenson
Telephone number: 01522 554237
Email: John.Stephenson@lincolnshire.gov.uk

The Named Manager monitors all complaints and liaises with the Complaints Officer and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Business Manager. This information is available to authorised persons only. All foster carers have access to support and information regarding the complaints procedures and at the point of any investigation, support can also be accessed through membership of Fostering Network the cost for which will be met by the agency.

Allegations

Foster carers can sometimes be the subject of allegations in respect of the care of the children or young people they are looking after. If this occurs the allegation will be investigated in line with Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board child protection procedures with all allegations managed by the Local Authority

Designated Officer. In addition to the role of the supervising social worker, foster carers have access to an independent social worker who can offer practical and emotional support.

All allegations and other matters listed in Schedules 7 of the Regulations are monitored by the manager who ensures that the appropriate notifications to Ofsted and other agencies are carried out.

NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS AND THEIR OUTCOMES

During the period April 2010 to March 2011 there were 3 complaints from foster carers, two were partially substantiated at stage 1 and the third remains ongoing and has progressed to stage 3. There were 2 complaints to the fostering service from children and young people both were resolved at stage 1. There was 1 complaint from a member of the public and this was also resolved at stage 1.

From 1st April 2009 the Independent Review Mechanism was extended to foster carers who wish to challenge decisions made by panel in respect of their approval status. There have been no representations made to the IRM in 2010/2011.

ADVOCACY AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS



National Youth Advocacy Service

The Directorate provides a separate independent advocacy service to children and young people looked after through the National Youth Advocacy Service. The telephone numbers are:

Freephone 0800 61 61 01
Local office: 0151 649 8700

Children's Rights Director

The Children's Rights Director is Dr Roger Morgan. His job is to make sure that the Fostering Service carries out its duty to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of children who are in foster care.

This work is done on behalf of Ofsted and is undertaken separately from inspections and reviews.

The law says that Children's Rights Director must listen to children and young people.

The Children's Rights Director can be contacted using any of the following methods:

By writing to him at The Office of the Children's Rights Director, Ofsted, 33 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6SE.

Phoning him on Freephone 0800 528 0731

Emailing him at RogerMorgan.rights4me@ofsted.gsi.gov.uk

Visiting the website www.rights4me.org.uk

NUMBERS OF CHILDREN PLACED



On 31st March 2010 there were 489 looked after by Lincolnshire County Council.

Of this number 418 were placed with foster carers, including those in out of county placements,

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY



The Lincolnshire Fostering Service works to the Lincolnshire County Council's Equality and Diversity Policy which is available on the council's intranet site.

The Lincolnshire Fostering Service will treat all service users fairly, openly and with respect throughout the fostering approval process. Applicants wishing to be approved as foster carers will be considered irrespective of ethnicity, religion, belief, gender, sexual orientation or disability providing the fostering service considers they can safely meet the needs of children throughout their childhood and into independence. The minimum age for applying to be a foster carer is 21 years old.

Every attempt will be made to find a placement which meets a child or young person's emotional and developmental needs taking into consideration their ethnicity, religion, language, culture, gender and disability.

The Lincolnshire Fostering Service recognises that no child or young person should have to wait indefinitely for the ideal placement.

All policies and procedures concerning the fostering service are subject to Equality Impact Assessment.

OFSTED



Ofsted is the single, independent inspectorate for all social care services in England. It is responsible for monitoring, regulating and inspecting fostering services under the provisions of the Care Standards Act, 2000.

Questions or complaints

The one point of contact for all questions, queries and complaints is the Ofsted National Business Unit.

The telephone number is 08456 40 40 40. The National Business Unit manages all calls and will redirect them as necessary, they can also be contacted at enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or write to:

Ofsted National Business Unit
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

FURTHER INFORMATION



The Fostering Statement of Purpose will be reviewed annually.

If you require this document in a different language or an alternative format such as large print, audio tape or Braille, please contact the Equality and Diversity Team on 01522 552246 or email diversity@lincolnshire.gov.uk

The Statement of Purpose, Children's Guides and other information are also available on the Lincolnshire County Council website: www.lincolnshire.gov.uk

A copy can also be obtained from the registered manager:

Janice Spencer
Head of Service – Regulated Services
Council Offices
Eastgate
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 7EB

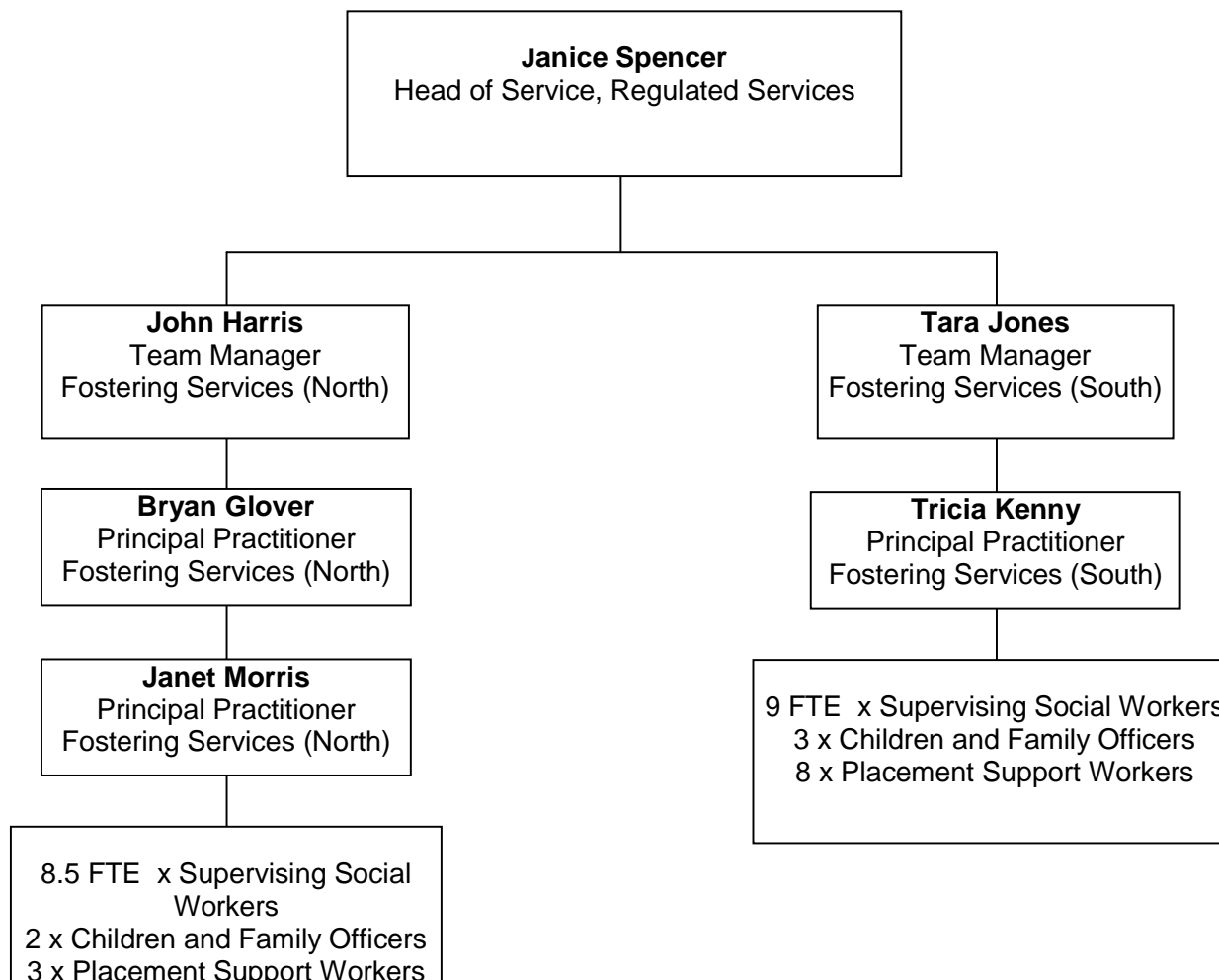
Telephone: 01522 554476

BRILLIANT LINCOLNSHIRE

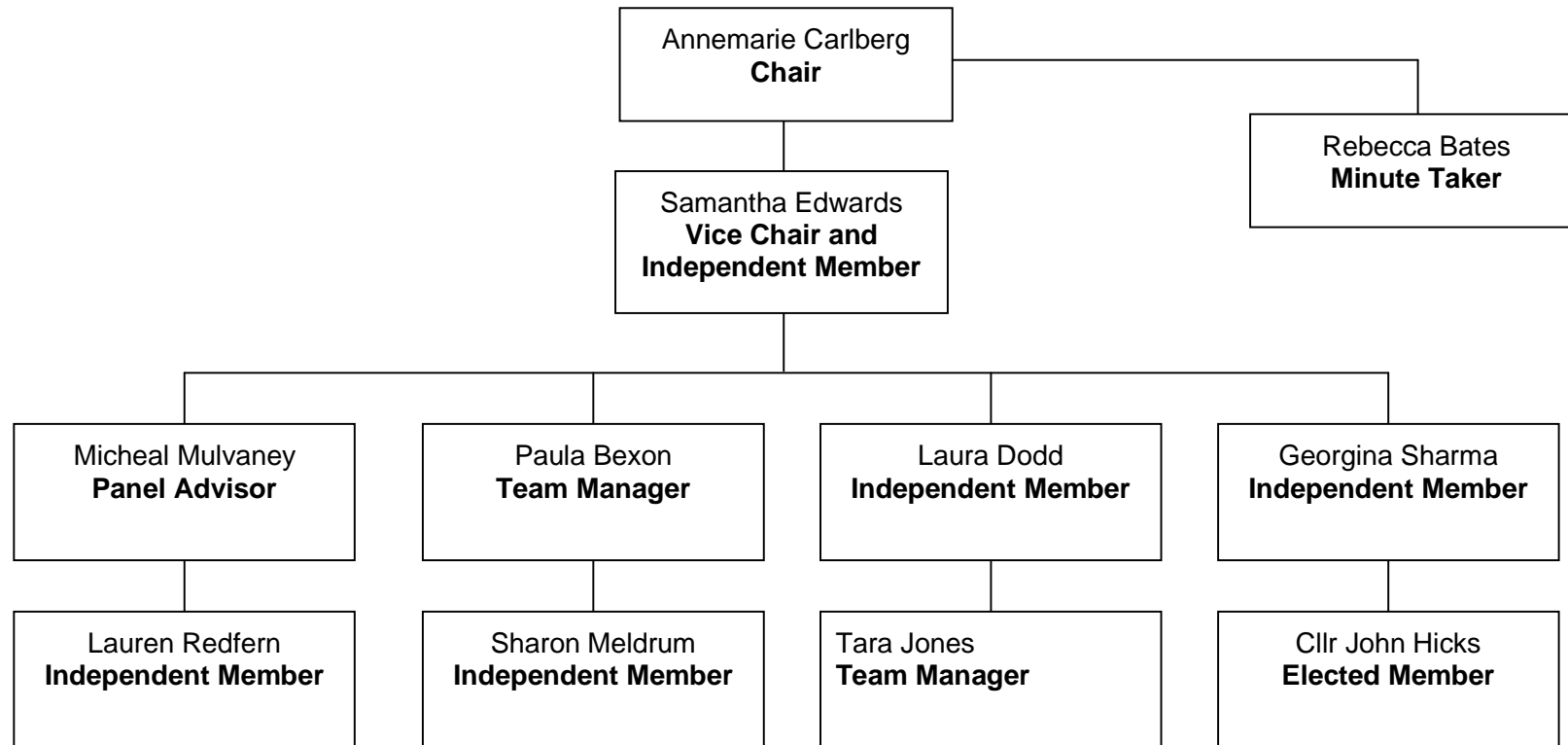
**APPENDIX 1
FOSTERING SERVICE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE
– SENIOR MANAGEMENT**

There are two Team Managers for Fostering Services who line manage two teams of fostering social workers and fostering support workers.

FOSTERING SERVICE – MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



**APPENDIX 2
FOSTERING PANEL**



**APPENDIX 3
FOSTERING SERVICE - STAFFING**

Position	Qualifications	Length of time in LCC Fostering Services
Head of Service Regulated Services (Janice Spencer)	CQSW Advanced Award Social Work Practice MA Child Protection Certificate in Management Studies Post Graduate Certificate in Health and Social Care	4 years
Team Manager Fostering Service North (John Harris)	BA (Hons) French CQSW Post Graduate Certificate in Management of Health and Social Services. Diploma in Management of Health and Social Services.	18 Years
Team Manager Fostering Service South (Tara Jones)	DipSW Diploma in Higher Education PQ1 PQCCA Post Graduate Certificate in Child Care Social Work Post Graduate Certificate in Management (Health and Social Care)	11 Years
Principal Practitioner Fostering Service North (Janet Morris)	CQSW Degree in Applied Science	1 year
Principal Practitioner Fostering Service North (Bryan Glover)	BA (Hons) Psychology MSc Social Work DipSW	6 Years
Principal Practitioner Fostering Service South (Patricia Kenny)	CQSW MA in Social Work	12 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Rachel Archer)	CQSW BA Social Studies PQ1	9 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Karen Ashworth)	BA Social Studies	5 Years

Position	Qualifications	Length of time in LCC Fostering Services
Supervising Social Worker (Mihaela Bercea)	Qualification from Romania GSCC Registered	3 years
Supervising Social Worker (Kate Besant)	BA (Hons) Sociology, Anthropology and Gender Studies DipSW	5 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Julie Cahill)	BA Social Work BA (Hons) Degree	5 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Gemma Buckton)	BSc Social Work	2 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Mary Farmery)	BA Social Work NVQ II Direct Care	4 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Mark Garrick)	Certificate in Social Studies	2 years
Supervising Social Worker (Kathryn Gilbert)	BA (Hons) Social Work	5 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Julie Harrison)	HND Health and Social Care BA (Hons) Social Work PQ1 - Childcare	4 Years
Children and Family Officer (Anth Hindmarch)	Diploma in Higher Education Social Work	14 Years
Children and Family Officer (Karen Handford)	K100 Health and Social Care GCSE Psychology British Sign Language	9 years
Supervising Social Worker (Sue Kennedy)	CQSW	26 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Judy Lumb)	DipSW Advanced PQ1	18 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Jayne Major)	CQSW BA Applied Social Studies	19 Years

Position	Qualifications	Length of time in LCC Fostering Services
Supervising Social Worker (Maggie Nisbet)	HND Business Studies DipSW Advanced Diploma in Social Work PQ1 and 2	7 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Annie Pepper)	Certificate in Social Studies	11 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Tony Rovezzano)	DipSW	11 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Mihaela Sebedean)	DipSW	5 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Andrew Shapcott)	Certificate in Management Studies CQSW	16 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Melanie Smith)	Preliminary Residential Care Certificate BA Social Work	14 Years
Supervising Social Worker (Jan Warner)	MA Social Work DipSW PQ1 BA (Hons) Humanities and Social Science	18 months
Supervising Social Worker (Julie Ward)	DipSW NNEB	2years
Supervising Social Worker (Ruth Willetts)	BA Social Work Diploma in Social Work	3 years
Placement Support Worker (Bob Balcombe)	Race Equality HIV Awareness Children and Safer Sex LSCB Policy Diversity and Social care Practice Self harm Seminar Eating Disorders and the Role of Food Learning from Complaints Multi Agency Foundation LACPC Course	5 Years
Placement Support Worker (Ann Broughton)	Child Protection Tackling Teenage Pregnancy Substance Misuse First Aid Race Equality	6 Years

Position	Qualifications	Length of time in LCC Fostering Services
Placement Support Worker (Kathy Flippance)	Developmental Attachment – Theory and Assessment	2 years
Placement Support Worker (Kathy Harrison)	Certificate in Youth and Community Work 7307 Teacher Certificate Child Protection Training First Aid Babies Born to Substance Misusing Mothers SIB Basic Awareness Children and Safer Sex LSCB Policy Annual Carers Conference	8 Years
Placement Support Worker (Rob Lambley)	Management Development Course Management Development Programme II Supporting Needs of Children LGBT Working Together to Safeguard Children and Young People Annual Carers Conference Eating Disorders and the Role of Food Learning From Complaints Special Interest Seminar for Carers and FPW Domestic Violence and Child Protection HIV Awareness Child Protection Refresher Training Communicating with Children Working with Women who Sexually Abuse Children Child Sexual Abuse Anti Oppressive Practice Private Fostering Adolescent Sexual Abuse	16 Years
Placement Support Worker (Sharon Lloyd)	City and Guilds – Learning Support Child Protection Substance Misuse Training First Aid at Work HIV Awareness Attachment Conference Special Interest Seminar Multi Agency Foundation Course Presentation Skills Course	6 Years

Position	Qualifications	Length of time in LCC Fostering Services
Placement Support Worker (Jenna Manning)	First Aid for Foster Carers Recording with Care Safe Care Child Protection and Safeguarding Children in Public Care Promoting Resilience Annual Conference	3 years
Placement Support Worker (Nicola Neville)	Handling Teenage Behaviour Guidance on Drug Related Incidents Positive Approach – Understanding Behaviour that Challenges Ready Steady Change Annual Carers Conference Risk Assessment and Analysis Bereavement Loss and Transitions Diversity and Social Care Practice Domestic Violence and Child Protection Child Protection Refresher Basic Food Hygiene Direct Work with Children First Aid Attachment Conference Child Protection Women Offenders Education Protects	10 Years
Placement Support Worker (Claire Read)	Diploma in Mathematics NBQ III Childcare and Education ILM Introduction Certificate in Management Communication with Children and Young People Annual Carers Conference	4 Years
Placement Support Worker (Tracey Steele)	Diploma in Pre-School Practice BSc Health and Social Care Preventing face to Face Violence Education Protects Communicating with Children Child Protection Multi Agency training Working with Black Families Attachment Conference Special Interest Seminar	8 Years
Placement Support Worker (Sara Thorpe)	City and Guilds BTEC Diploma Communicating with Young People and Children SIB Basic Awareness Ready Steady Change Annual Conference Basic IT Skills	4 Years

	<p>Working Together to Safeguard Young People and Children</p> <p>Domestic Violence</p> <p>Attachment Development and Theory</p> <p>Openings Understanding Children</p> <p>First Aid</p> <p>Annual Carers Conference</p> <p>Attachment Conference</p> <p>Babies Born to Substance Misusing Mothers</p> <p>Learning from Complaints</p> <p>A New Era Vision for Lincs CS</p> <p>Introduction to Safe caring</p> <p>Child protection Refresher Course</p> <p>Communicating with Young people and Children</p>	
<p>Placement Support Worker (Julie Whanstall)</p>	<p>BTEC Childhood Studies</p> <p>PPA Foundation Course</p> <p>Initial Youth Service Programme</p> <p>Promoting Resilience</p> <p>Race Equality</p> <p>Communicating with young people</p> <p>HV Awareness</p> <p>Child Protection Refresher Training</p> <p>Preventing face to Face Violence</p> <p>Basic Counselling Skills</p> <p>Education Protects</p>	<p>4 Years</p>