

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SERVICES CABINET MEMBER

REVISION TO THE FOSTERING STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

1.1. To inform the Children's Services Cabinet Member of revisions to the Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service in North Lincolnshire.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Fostering Service is required under the Care Standards Act 2000, incorporating the Fostering Services Regulations 2002, to have in place a Statement of Purpose.
- 2.2 The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services specify that the Statement of Purpose is reviewed and updated annually.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The Statement of Purpose describes the role of the fostering service in meeting the '5 Outcomes' as highlighted in Every Child Matters and The Children Act 2004.
- 3.2 Following the yearly review of the Statement of Purpose for the fostering service, revisions have been made to ensure it includes the ongoing improvements to the service and reflects current practice. These include the current fostering allowances payable to foster carers and updates to the staff who work in the service.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 The National Minimum Standards require that the Fostering Service Statement of Purpose is reviewed annually and updated to reflect any changes in staffing, practice or procedures.
- 4.2 If the Statement of Purpose is not updated and approved as above, the service will not meet its regulatory requirements

4.3 To meet these requirements, the Statement of Purpose may be accepted without changes, or amendments as deemed appropriate by the cabinet member will be included in the Statement of Purpose.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Financial

None

5.2 Staffing

None

5.3 Property

None

5.4 IT

None

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 – CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 The Statement of Purpose is a requirement under the Care Standards Act 2000 which includes the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and the Fostering Services Regulations 2002.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 Children in foster care and their carers were consulted in the preparation of the Statement of Purpose. They are regularly consulted and involved in ongoing improvements to the service which are reflected in the Statement of Purpose. Examples include:

7.2 Carers raised issues regarding access to workers out of office hours, amendments to practice were made to reflect this and these are reflected in the Statement of Purpose.

7.3 The way health information is provided to children in foster care has been updated based on their comments - for example sports taster sessions at the Health Information Days. This is reflected in the Statement of Purpose.

7.4 Carers were consulted on the use of allowances and additional payments under certain circumstances, these are reflected in the Statement of Purpose.

7.5 Once the Statement of Purpose is approved, the Garage Patch Kidz (children in care consultation group) will be consulted in updating the 'Living in Foster Care' a children's guide, which will be based on the revised Statement of Purpose.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the Children's Services Cabinet Member approves the revised Fostering Service Statement of Purpose.

SERVICE DIRECTOR CHILDREN, STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS

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Date: 06/03/2009

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

- Fostering Service Statement of Purpose

The Fostering Service



Children and Family Services

Statement of Purpose 2009 - 2010

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North Lincolnshire Council
Children and Family Services

Fostering Service Statement of Purpose

April 2009- April 2010

The Fostering Team is a highly experienced team who promote high standards and best practice in delivering a quality service. As a team we strive to improve our practice and increase our learning and knowledge. We support one another to ensure that we are able to utilise the team's wide range of skills and abilities to provide the best service we can offer for children and young people in foster care.

North Lincolnshire has agreed with its partners a vision for all children and young people living in North Lincolnshire, which reflects the Every Child Matters five outcomes for children. This is the framework for North Lincolnshire's aspirations for children and young people in care. The vision is expressed through North Lincolnshire's Children and Young People's Plan.

1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 North Lincolnshire Council is committed to providing foster care as one of a full range of accommodation options for children who need to be cared for away from home. The overall intention of foster care is to provide a family based alternative home to cater for children and young people who:

- Are not able to live at home with their parents
- Are not able to not live with their relatives or friends (who are not approved as foster carers)
- Are not able to live independently in their own accommodation

1.2 In general foster care should provide care which meets the needs of children in care, for planned periods of time. In some cases, young people may stay in foster care until they move into independent accommodation.

1.3 Our objectives are:

1.3.1 To provide a safe, secure and enabling environment for children in care for varying lengths of time, including short breaks and periods of planned respite, dependent upon their assessed needs.

1.3.2 To ensure that children who are admitted to our care are returned to their own family and community networks at the earliest opportunity, whenever it is safe to do so.

1.3.3 Where this is not in the child's best interests, we will endeavour to work with everyone concerned to help the child move on to become part of a stable and permanent, alternative family.

1.3.4 To provide each child with the opportunity, through health care, education and social and leisure activities, to develop to their full potential and achieve the five key outcomes of ***staying safe, being healthy, enjoying life and achieving their aspirations, enjoying economic wellbeing and making a positive contribution to society.***

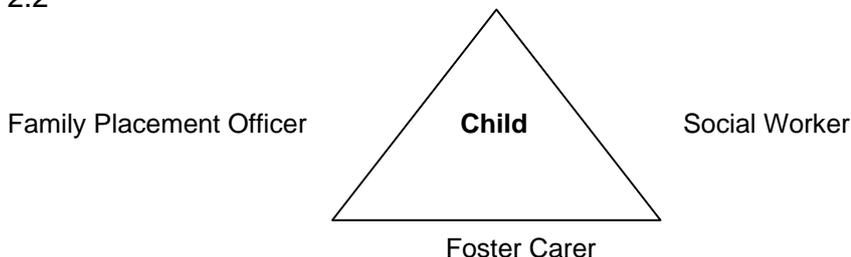
1.4 North Lincolnshire Council believes that children are best placed within their own family and community networks whenever it is safe and possible to do so. Friends or relatives that have been approved as specific carers for children and young people will have access to the same support systems as non-relative foster carers

1.5 North Lincolnshire Council celebrates diversity and will not act in a discriminatory manner in relation to issues of age, gender, sexuality, disability, race or religion. The needs of individual children are considered as paramount and each case will be considered on the basis of how individual children's needs can be most appropriately met.

2 FACILITIES AND SERVICES

2.1 North Lincolnshire Council believes that foster carers are essential partners in caring for children that need to be looked after by the local Authority. This partnership is shared primarily with social workers and family placement officers as shown in the diagram below, alongside all other partnership agencies, for example colleagues who work within education and health services.

2.2



2.3 To enable foster carers to work as equal partners as described in the triangle above, the fostering service aims to provide a high quality responsive child centred service in relation to its 4 core functions which are to

- 2.3.1 Recruit new foster carer applicants from within our community,
- 2.3.2 Prepare applicants through training to be able to effectively manage the diverse range of issues that foster carers face when looking after children
- 2.3.3 Assess each applicant comprehensively, in line with the competency framework, to ensure that they are suitable and able to carry out this role
- 2.3.4 Supervise carers to ensure that they are supported, fully informed and trained to the CWDC Standards, to enable them to competently and safely fulfil their role.

The following identifies activities that take place in relation to the above.

2.4 Recruitment of new Carers

An ongoing recruitment strategy and programme of events is in place to work with our partners in the community to raise the profile of the fostering service and encourage members of the community to apply to become foster carers.

Activities that are identified within the strategy include

- Articles in the local 'Direct' magazine
- Good news stories from existing foster carers published in the local press, to inform the public on the role of a foster carer and the rewards that it can offer.
- Attendance at community events
- Work with the Crosby Employment Bureau
- Road show events
- Posters in the local community, e.g. doctor's surgeries, community centres etc.
- Representatives from the team have appeared on local TV and Lincs FM.
- Working jointly with Lincs FM to recruit new carers during fostering fortnight.
- The deployment of a banner at key points across North Lincolnshire.
- The appointment of a Family Placement Officer to lead on recruitment, selection and training of foster carers.

The strategy has been developed with clear targets that it is hoped to achieve

Through the Referral Management process the fostering service is able to identify any shortfalls in the types of foster care required in order to meet the needs of the children that are assessed as needing foster care. The recruitment strategy is adjusted to take this into account. During this year recruitment activity will concentrate on recruiting carers who are able to provide mainstream foster care for teenagers and carers motivated to provide long- term care.

The fostering service has developed timescales for responding to enquires about the service, these are displayed below

- Telephone Enquiries
A duty officer is available during normal office hours to answer any enquiries
- Web based enquiries
Enquirers have the choice to receive information through the post or on-line information. Written information is dispatched within 48 hours and online information is accessed via a link given on the web page.

- Follow up contact within 2 weeks to arrange for an initial visit at a mutually convenient time. During this visit detailed discussion takes place about the benefits and implications that being a foster carer can have.

2.5 Preparation of New Carers

After an initial visit, if applicants wish to proceed, they are allocated a place on a 'Skills to Foster Course'. This course helps to prepare applicants to be able to deal with the variety of issues that they may face if they become foster carers. During this training course applicants have the opportunity to meet current foster carers, children in foster care and discuss any issues with them.

North Lincolnshire Council currently facilitates three training courses per year. If an applicant wishes to progress their application and not wait for a North Lincolnshire Council course then arrangements exist so that they can travel to other venues across the region to complete the Skills to Foster course.

2.6 Assessment of Foster Carers

Following the completion of the Skills to Foster course the applicant is subject to a formal assessment called the Form F assessment. North Lincolnshire Council has adopted the B.A.A.F. competency based assessment process. The assessment, which is geared towards safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, explores different aspects of the applicants' life and asks them to explain and evidence the parenting skills that they have. The assessment process is thorough and detailed and usually takes up to four months to complete. Applicants have the opportunity to comment on anything that is written about them.

Once the assessment has been completed the report is submitted to the Foster Panel. This independent panel comprises of people from a variety of backgrounds with various experiences of the fostering process, and is chaired by an experienced social worker who is independent of North Lincolnshire council. The Panel considers and recommends the approval, or not, of all foster carers. Their recommendations and reasons are passed to the Head of Safeguarding and Practice, who is the agency decision-maker and with whom the decision-making responsibility lies.

All foster carers are subject to an annual review of their status as foster carers. This is a formal review of the work that they have undertaken during the year and is an opportunity to reflect on achievements and learning. Again a report is produced that is presented to the foster panel and agency decision-maker as above.

North Lincolnshire Council are in the process of recruiting a permanent Independent Reviewing Officer to chair foster carer reviews, the position is based at the Audit and Review Team. The IRO appointed will see children and young people independently as part of the Foster Carer Review.

2.7 Support and Supervision of Foster Carers

2.7.1 Access to support

North Lincolnshire Council believes that it is important that foster carers are able to access support, at the time that they need it. The Fostering Service in partnership with other teams within the Children and Family Services have developed systems to ensure that support is available 24 hours a day 365 days of the year

- During office hours -Each Foster Carer is allocated a Family Placement Officer. This worker will usually be the first point of contact for the Foster Carer and be able to offer support, advice, guidance and supervision regarding most matters to do with fostering and the care they give to the child.
- If their worker is not available during officer hours, a duty worker is always available at the fostering team office to deal with any urgent problems or issues.
- Child's Social Worker or Case Manager - Every child in care has an allocated Social Worker or Case Manager, this person will usually be the first point of contact for the Foster Carer for any information and advice on issues that relate to the child.
- If this worker is not available during office hours, a duty worker is always available at the Children in Care Team office to deal with any urgent problems or issues.
- Outside office hours - If additional support is required outside of these times it can be accessed by contacting the Extended Hours Team, this team is able to offer information advice and support on all social care issues.
- North Lincolnshire Council believes that children have a right to information and support throughout the fostering process. All children, allowing for age and understanding are provided with a copy of 'Living in a Foster Home, a Children and Young People's Guide'. This guide gives simple but clear information around what it is like to live in foster home.

2.7.2. Allowances

North Lincolnshire Councils believes that carers should be reimbursed for the costs of looking after a child and provides a range of allowances and financial incentives to enable them to do this

- Foster Care Allowance - The Council has assessed what it believes to be the weekly cost of caring for a child and created an allowance that is paid to all carers to enable them to do this. This is called the boarding out allowance. Included in this allowance are extra payments for special events such as holidays, birthdays and Christmas, or other religious festivals. (See appendix 1)

- Addition Task Allowance - At times carers are asked to carry out tasks that are in addition to what are agreed as normal fostering tasks. When this occurs, additional task allowances can be paid. Foster carers can receive up to 5 additional task allowances at a time. Foster Carers who achieve an NVQ award are entitled to claim an additional task allowance payment, this allowance is intended to show the increase in skill levels that they have been able to demonstrate through their completion of the award. (See appendix 2)
- Interest Free Car Loans - In order to enable carers to transport children in safety, interest free care loans are available so that carers can purchase safe and appropriate vehicles.
- Insurance Scheme - At times all children can have accidents that cause damage, this is especially true of 'Children in Care'. When such damage occurs carers are initially asked to claim on their own household insurance, any excess payments or increase in premiums that results from this can be reclaimed through North Lincolnshire Council's scheme. In the event of the carers insurance not covering the loss or damage, a claim can be submitted for consideration by the fostering service insurance agents.
- Contract Carers Allowance - At times, some children can display very challenging behaviour that would be considered too extreme for mainstream foster carers to be expected to deal with. A small number of carers are approved to specifically look after these children and young people with the aim of changing their behaviour and helping them move back to mainstream foster care. These carers receive an additional allowance to cover any additional cost involved in carrying out this role.
- In order to encourage young people to participate in sporting and recreational activities the Council provides each foster family with a subsidised leisure pass that permits privileged access to council swimming facilities. An additional payment can also be made to carers to enable the child or young person to participate in hobbies and activities such as horse riding, dancing, other sporting activities etc.

2.7.3 Support Events

The fostering service recognises the importance of facilitating support events throughout the year to allow carers and children to socialise and relax in an informal setting. Various events are held throughout the year, including:

- Day out to a theme park - This traditionally takes place in May or June and allows foster carers, their families and foster children the opportunity to experience a day out at a theme park. In recent years both Flamingo Land has proved to be the favourite, as it caters for age groups.
- Funday - This event takes place mid September and involves a wide range of activities and fun events. These include a BBQ, disco/karaoke, various inflatables, magic show, clowns, circus skills and craft activities. In addition, we organise an off site trip for teenagers to Laser Quest.
- Carers Christmas Party – This event is for the Foster Carers, Family Placement Officers and Social Workers, an opportunity to socialise and get into the Christmas spirit.

- Children's Christmas Party – This is held in December at a local Community Centre that has two rooms available for our use. We split this event into a traditional party with party games that is aimed younger children and a disco for the teenagers. Both parties will take place at the same time in the Community Centre and includes a buffet for the children. Father Christmas visits the party to deliver Christmas selection boxes to the children.
- Pantomime - This event takes place on the morning of Christmas Eve and is integral to our Christmas celebrations.
- Annual Art exhibition – young people in care are invited to produce art using different medias to be exhibited at The Grove, this can include drama, poetry, dance and paintings. The latest art exhibition attracted over 80 pieces of work and focused on anti-bullying.
- Art workshops – due to the success of the Art Exhibition, we now organise regular Art Workshops where the children produce works of art, cards, gifts, etc.
- Other workshops are run throughout the year in consultation with children and young people in care, for example drumming workshops and circus skills are planned for 2009.

2.7.4. Support Groups and Consultation activities

The fostering service recognises the importance of involving carers in the development of the service. A number of systems have been developed that enable carers to contribute to these developments and also give and receive support from other foster carers

- A Foster Carers Association is well established in North Lincolnshire. The Association is a group of carers that have been elected, by foster carers, to represent North Lincolnshire foster carers. They act as a consultation, information and advice body and are able to advocate with the fostering services on any issues that affect foster carers. They hold regular support group meetings and social activities.
- The fostering service works with the foster carers association to facilitate a bi-monthly evening meeting with senior managers and all foster carers. The aim of the meeting is to offer carers the opportunity of discussing issues with senior people within the organisation and to allow information and ideas to be exchanged. The evenings are also used as training events and various people such as the clinical psychologist, the drug support worker, representatives from the education department and the children in care nurse have all been invited to talk about the work they do.
- All foster carers are given annual membership of the Fostering Network. This is an independent organisation that can offer carers support advice and guidance on fostering issues.
- Each foster carer is the subject of an annual review as mentioned above. This review offers foster carers the opportunity to comment on any aspect of the service that they choose to. A survey that asks relevant questions is circulated at each review and the result compiled annually. This survey helps the fostering service plan for the following year.

- In October 2005, the Fostering Team developed an active consultation and participation group, 'The Garage Patch Kidz'. The group consists of 16 children and young people, age range 9-15 years and includes children who are fostered, children whose family are foster carers, a privately fostered child and adopted children. The group meet fortnightly, during term time. The group have been consulted on various issues that are relevant to young people living in care.
- The Garage Patch Kidz have attended several national consultation events including the last one being the Children's Rights Fun Day Out at Drayton Manor Park in July 2008. The event was organised by Doctor Roger Morgan OBE, Children's Rights Director for England. The theme of the day was young people's thoughts on key issues in a new draft – National Minimum Standards i.e. whether they are good enough and how they can be improved.
- A Children in Care Council was established in 2007, it is a group of children and young people who are in care and care leavers. The government requires that every local authority sets up a Children in Care Council to act as a forum, and provide views on strategy, service delivery, life in care and specific issues.

It will be the means by which children's and young people's views are presented directly to those responsible for corporate parenting, including the Director of Children's Service, lead member, elected members, the chief executive and senior management. The current membership includes children who are fostered, young people who live in residential homes and care leavers.

2.7.5. Foster Carers' Training

Foster carers will be expected to undergo training as and when required to enable them to meet children's needs. The fostering service produces an annual training programme, in consultation with carers, that includes the core training elements that are considered essential for carers to undertake.

With the introduction of the CWDC Standards all foster carers will be expected to complete the standards in order to demonstrate their ability to provide safe and effective foster care placements.

The standards support a three stage training framework for foster care.

- Pre approval
- Induction
- Foster care development

All new foster carer approvals from April 2008 will be expected to complete the CWDC Standards within 1 year, existing carers by 2011.

North Lincolnshire Council supports and promotes carers who wish to undertake the NVQ 3 training programme.

The Adoption and Fostering Training and Development Plan for 2009-2010 includes training courses, workshops available for carers on a wide range of relevant subjects.

2.7.6. Foster Carer Supervision

Foster Carers can usually expect to be visited/contacted at least monthly by a family placement officer. During this supervisory visit, discussion takes place about all issues that are causing concern at that time. Discussion will particularly focus on how the child's needs are being met within the placement and how the child can be helped to achieve their maximum potential, using the 'Every Child Matters' Outcomes Framework of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing,

When a foster placement begins the Foster Carers and Family Placement Officer and the child's Social Worker meet to complete a Foster Placement Agreement, this sets out the assessed needs of the child and what everyone, the carer, family placement officer, social worker and anyone else involved, is going to do to meet these needs.

2.8 Admission Criteria

Children & young people will be admitted into foster care following an assessment that has deemed that they are

- Unable to live with their own family
- Unable to live with family and friends who are not foster carers

Except in emergency or urgent situations referrals for fostering services should be made by the child's social worker via the Duty Team, for consideration at the weekly Referral Management Meeting. Following the recommendations of this meeting the fostering service will undergo a matching process to match the child's needs with the most appropriate foster carer. The foster carer will be contacted and given full information to allow them to make a decision about whether to accept the placement.

Planned placements are taken to the Matching Panel, which meets weekly, to ensure that children and young people are matched to the most appropriate placement and support is in place to help the placement be successful.

Emergency admissions are accepted, following the agreement of three Service Managers that admission to accommodation serves the best interests of the child. Procedures require the gathering of a basic minimum of information before settling the child into the home. An emergency-planning meeting is held the next day in order to complete the normal CiC care planning process. All emergency admissions to foster care are taken to the next Matching Panel for ratification.

2.9 Be Healthy

2.9.1 We aim to ensure all young people receive good quality health assessment, advice and care and that they have the information they need to make informed choices regarding their health, understand positive health strategies and are able to take control of their own health needs. A joint protocol has been established between Children's and Family Services and the Health Services outlining everyone's roles and responsibilities in ensuring that the health needs of children in care are a priority.

2.9.2 We ensure all young people have an identified doctor, have regular dental and optical checks and health treatment when needed. We aim to ensure that health strategies do not just concentrate on treatment, but include preventive measures and young people are empowered to take on positive attitudes to health.

- 2.9.2 All young people have an individual health assessment, usually carried out by the Children in Care Nurse, and an individual health care plan with agreed strategies to meet any health care needs.
- 2.9.3 Foster carers have direct access to the Children in Care Nurse who is available to assist with any health care or support issues.
- 2.9.4 Regular Health Information Events are held at a local sports hall and are available to all children in care. A variety of health promotion and health information is available to young people and their carers and the Children in Care Nurse is available to offer general advice or arrange any further appointments as necessary. A sex and relationships counsellor, as well as a drugs advisor attends the event to talk to the children and young people to give advice and guidance. Young people are able to take part in sports taster sessions and have the opportunity to use the climbing wall. General 'fitness' tests are also available in a fun and relaxed manner, e.g. blood pressure tests and lung capacity tests. These events are both fun and informative.
- 2.9.5 Three Healthy Lifestyle training days including information from dieticians, leisure services and the fire service took place in 2008. Further dates will be made available in 2009.
- 2.9.6 The individual tasks that carers are asked to undertake with individual children in respect of their health care needs are identified in the Foster Placement Agreement.
- 2.9.7 A multi agency CAMHS action plan has been agreed to ensure that comprehensive, dedicated, integrated psychological provision is accessible for Children in Care. This includes CAMHS screening for all Children in Care, 6 years and above for any mental health issues to be highlighted (early identification). Referrals are also made in timely manner through a structured referral process to ensure that any mental health issues identified are addressed. These referrals are monitored on a monthly basis by staff in the CiC Teams and CAMHS. CAMHS and the CiC teams services have also developed psychological well being groups for Children in Care. These groups are facilitated by 2 Case Managers from the CiC teams alongside 2 assistant psychologists from the CAMH service under the supervision of a clinical psychologist.
- 2.9.8 Staff from the CiC Teams have established a multi-agency substance misuse practice group. This group monitors a database of children in care who smoke and use substances. A substance misuse screening process has been developed in order to capture the early identification of Children in Care using alcohol, smoking and other substances. Where it has been identified that a child or young person smokes, they have a smoking cessation consultation plan. To achieve this, smoking cessation pathways to intervention have been established. Age appropriate literature has been developed in order for Children in Care to be fully aware of the risks of smoking.
- 2.9.9 Children's Services provide all children in care with free passes to leisure centres to enable free swimming and discounted admission to the gym.

2.10 Stay Safe

- 2.10.1 We ensure that children in foster care are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Individual safe care guidelines for each foster care household have been developed.
- 2.10.2 A Health and Safety checklist is completed with the foster carers annually. Driving licences, MOT certificates and car insurance of foster carers are checked annually.
- 2.10.3 Appropriate equipment is provided to foster carers to ensure children and young people are transported safely. Equipment is provided according to the needs of the child, i.e. stair gates, high chairs and specialist equipment for children with disabilities.
- 2.10.4 Information within the foster carer handbook sets out policy and procedures around health and safety. We ensure that children and young people and foster carers are supported with advice and guidance to help them stay safe and develop skills, which enable them to continue to live safely.
- 2.10.5 We have in place a framework for dealing with and reducing incidents of bullying and aim to ensure children develop self-esteem and have the internal resources and external support to avoid being bullied.
- 2.10.6 Basic Child Protection Training will be offered to all foster carers as part of the annual training programme.
- 2.10.7 First Aid training is offered to all foster carers as part of the annual training programme.

2.11 Enjoy and Achieve

- 2.11.1 We aim to ensure that all young people receive good quality education, which is tailored to their individual needs. To ensure this happens we have developed joint protocols between Children's Services and Education Services to ensure that the educational needs of children in care are a priority.
- 2.11.2 We make contact with individual teachers and ensure that all young people have an educational assessment, which includes their educational attainment and projected educational attainment, and a Personal Education Plan. Based on this, we ensure each young person can achieve his or her best-projected educational attainment. Where necessary and appropriate we will work with colleagues with educational responsibilities to obtain additional help and support for fostered children to help them to achieve in school. Following the publication of 'Creating Success for Children in Care' we are using the North Lincolnshire protocols, procedures and guidelines for improving the Education and Health of children in care.
- 2.11.3 We support young people's education by attending meetings with schools, parents' evenings and events. We also promote and attend out of school activities. Foster carers are invited to the child's Personal Education Plan meetings which happen termly within North Lincolnshire. Foster carers are involved in the discussions regarding Personal Education Allowance.
- 2.11.4 We ensure there is space within the home for young people to complete their homework, encourage education as a positive process and provide incentives for young people to achieve educationally.

- 2.11.5 North Lincolnshire Council is working with Safe Net to ensure that children have safe access to the internet.
- 2.11.6 To help children achieve educationally an Education Manager for Children in Care is employed to work with all schools and agencies to ensure that the education for Children in Care is the most appropriate and the highest possible standard.
- 2.11.7 The individual tasks that carers are asked to undertake with individual children are identified in the Foster Placement Agreement.
- 2.11.8 Young people are encouraged to participate in those sporting and recreational activities that attract them. The Council provides each foster family with a subsidised leisure pass that permits privileged access to council sports and leisure facilities. In addition extra allowances are available to foster carers to enable young people to take part in a wide variety of hobbies and activities that meet their needs and interest.
- 2.11.9 The individual tasks that carers are asked to undertake with individual children are identified in the foster Placement Agreement.
- 2.11.10 All foster carers are issued with a 'Max' card. This gives free entry to museums, galleries and other places of interest across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

2.12 Make a positive contribution

- 2.12.1 We ensure that children and young people in foster care have active involvement in formulating their plans, in reviewing and planning the service they receive and in commissioning new services.
- 2.12.2 We ensure that children and young people in foster care have active involvement in formulating their plans, in reviewing and planning the service they receive and in commissioning new services.
- 2.12.3 We use restorative approaches in dealing with challenging behaviour and potential offending.
- 2.12.4 We consult with children and young people in foster care on issues in relation to being in care.
- 2.12.5 Foster carers promote personal, social and independence skills with the young people in their care.

2.13 Achieve economic well-being

- 2.13.1 We ensure plans and supports are in place to enable children and young people in foster care to continue in education, attend college or gain employment.
- 2.13.2 We promote independence skills with children and young people in foster care.
- 2.13.3 We encourage children and young people in foster care to access community resources and facilities.

3 CAPACITY ISSUES

As of the 1st January 2009 North Lincolnshire Council has 86 approved foster families. Of these 60 are mainstream foster carers, 11 are friends and family carers, 12 are carers offering short breaks and 3 offer contract care.

- 3.1 As of 1st January 2009 North Lincolnshire Council cared for 89 children in foster care placements.
- 3.2 It is anticipated that on average a full time Family Placement Officer will support up to 20 foster carers and undertake 3 assessments at any one time. Plus have input into the recruitment, selection and training of foster carers.

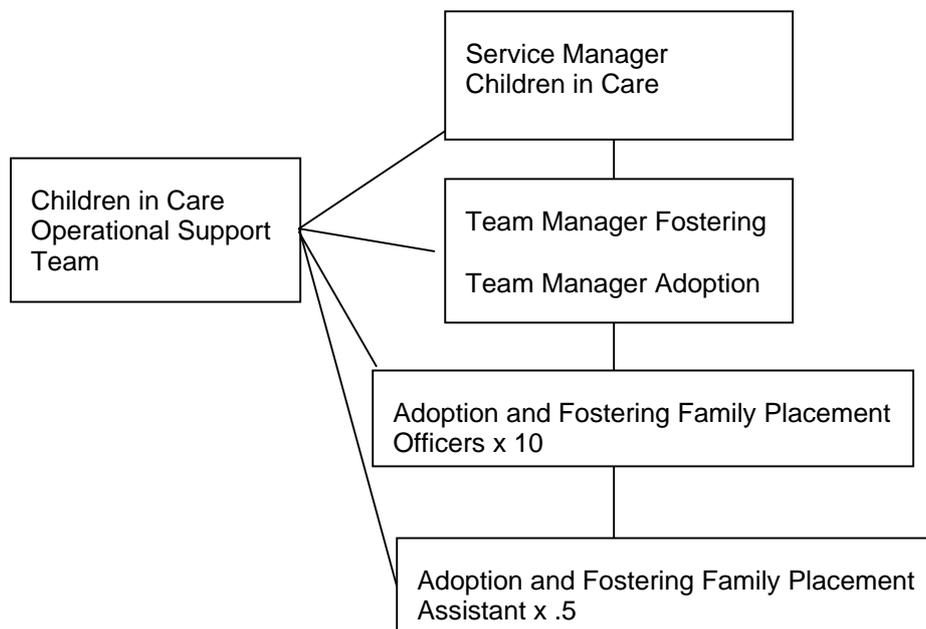
4 NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE REGISTERED PROVIDER AND REGISTERED MANAGER

The Registered Provider: North Lincolnshire Council
Mr P. Cowling The Grove 38 West Street Scawby Brigg North Lincolnshire DN20 9AN
The Registered Manager
Mr Gordon Everatt The Grove 38 West Street Scawby Brigg North Lincolnshire DN20 9AN

5 RELEVANT QUALIFICATIONS

Registered Provider:
BA Hons (Social Science) Diploma in Social Work Diploma in Social Services Management
Registered Manager:
Certificate in Social Services, ILM Diploma in Management

6 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES



7 STAFFING QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

All employees are provided with appropriate written contracts, job descriptions and conditions of service. Personnel records of those working within the Adoption and Fostering Team are kept at the Human Resources office

Appropriate checks are made on all colleagues in partnership agencies to ensure they are professionally qualified and appropriately trained to work with children and young people, their families and foster carers and have a good understanding of foster care

Where shortfalls in staffing levels occur there are contingency plans in place to resolve the situation, all members of the adoption and fostering team have a working knowledge of each other's roles. If the designated Family Placement Officer is not available i.e. on leave, training or sickness then the duty system ensures that any issues of concern from any foster carer, social worker and other professionals are dealt with in a timely manner.

Post Title	Gender	Qualifications of Current Postholder	Experience of current Postholder
Team Manager	Male	Certificate in Social Services ILM Diploma in Management	32 years
Team Manager	Female	Associate Diploma in Social Welfare BA Social Work ILM 7 Executive Diploma in Management	17 years
Family Placement Officer	Female	Diploma in Social Work Certificate in Counseling	21 years
Family Placement Officer	Female	Diploma in Social Work	12 years
Family Placement Officer	Female	Diploma in Social Work Preliminary Certificate in Social Care PQ Award 1 PQ Good Practice in Family Placement 2-5 PQ 6 award	12 years
Family Placement Officer	Female	Diploma in Social Work Preliminary Certificate in Social Care PQ Award 1 PQ Good Practice in Family Placement 2-5 PQ 6 award	21 years
Family Placement Officer	Male	Diploma in Social Work PQ Award 1 Diploma in Health and Social Welfare OU	13 years
Family Placement Officer	Female	Diploma in Social Work Btec Special Educational Needs	19 years
Family Placement Officer	Female	Diploma in Social Work NVQ Level 4 in Care	13 years

Family Placement Officer	Female	Diploma in Social Work Certificate in Counseling NNEBS Introductory Course in Management IN Service Social Care Course	20 years
Family Placement Officer	Female	Diploma in Social Care Diploma in Counseling	17 years
Family Placement Officer	Female	BA Honors degree in Social Work	9 years
Family Placement Assistant	Female		7 years

8 COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS

At times, foster carers and children in foster care may feel unhappy about the services they receive. The fostering service works within North Lincolnshire Council's complaints procedures. In the first instance it is hoped that the fostering service would attempt to deal with any complaint or representation, however if this is felt inappropriate all foster homes have complaints information and leaflets that show how to complain and how complaints are dealt with.

All children in foster care have direct access to the Children's Advocate

Bev Berry

Hewson House

Station Road

Brigg

North Lincolnshire

DN20 8XJ

Telephone Number 01724 296639

Mobile 07717586247

The independent complaints officer is

Julie Pointon

Hewson House

Station Road

Brigg

North Lincolnshire

DN20 8XJ

Telephone Number 01724 296426

8 OFSTED

The contact point for all questions, queries and complaints to Ofsted is the NBU via the central number, or you can email them.

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

Telephone 08456 404040
Email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Children's Rights Director for England

In addition to the North Lincolnshire complaints and representation procedures children, or adults acting on their behalf, have access to the Children's Rights Director for England.

The Office of the Children's Rights Director, St Nicholas Building, St Nicholas Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 1NB.

Free phone 0800 5280731

www.rights4me.org.uk

theteam.rights4me@ofsted.gov.uk

Talking to your 'Corporate Parents'

Children and Family Services



As a child or young person in care you have a number of 'corporate parents'. These are people who are responsible for your welfare, want to help you make the most of your life and are interested in hearing your views.

Please feel free to get in touch with any of them to tell them your views about: your life, the help you get and what you think about things. You can email, write or telephone them.

You can write to your councillors and Richard Stiff at North Lincolnshire, Pittwood House, Ashby Road, Scunthorpe DN16 1AB

Or Denise, Mick and Dave can be reached at Hewson House, Station Road, Brigg DN20 8LD.



Richard Stiff is the Deputy Chief Executive for North Lincolnshire Council. He looks after all things to do with Children and Young people.

You can email him with any issues: richard.stiff@northlincs.gov.uk or call him on 01724 296002



Councillor Tony Gosling. Tony is the Children's Services Cabinet Member. This means that he makes important decisions about services for children and young people.

clr.tonygosling@northlincs.gov.uk or call 01724 296357



Denise Hyde is Service Director for Children, Strategy and Partnerships. Denise makes the important decisions that affect children in care and care leavers.

denise.hyde@northlincs.gov.uk or call 01724 296495



Councillor Linda Cawsey. Linda is working with Tony and Margaret to support children and young people in North Lincolnshire.

clr.LindaCawsey@northlincs.gov.uk or call 01724 296357



Mick Gibbs is Head of Children and Family Services. Mick manages the services that look after children in care and care leavers.

mick.gibbs@northlincs.gov.uk or call 01724 296495



Councillor Margaret Simpson. Margaret is working with Tony and Linda to support children and young people in North Lincolnshire. Call 01724 296357



Dave Basker is Head of Safeguarding and Practice. Dave looks after your reviews and makes sure they happen on time and in the way you want them to. He also makes sure you are involved in important decisions that affect you.

Need to tell Dave some information? why not email him at: dave.basker@northlincs.gov.uk or call 01724 296495

Appendix 1

Age Group	North Lincs Base Rate National Minimum Rates (NMR) 2009- 2010	North Lincs Base Rate (NMR) plus Common Core Standards 01.04.09 (Fostering Network Recommended Rates)
Babies and Pre Primary (0-4)	£108.00	£125.09
Primary (5-10)	£119.00	£142.49
Secondary (11-15)	£137.00	£177.38
Secondary (16+)	£159.00	£215.74

Fostering, Special Guardianship, Residence Orders and Adoption Rates Sept 2008

The Council follows the DCSF Recommended National Minimum Rate (NMR) as the base allowance. This will ensure that there is no prejudice to the child in the type of order made.

The base allowance is the same whichever route is chosen so that there is no financial incentive or disincentive for a carer to opt for one route rather than another. Family and Friends carers will also receive the North Lincolnshire Base Rate.

Foster Carers receive the base rate, but are also required to work towards the CWDC Core Competences. This is remunerated by additional payment to the level of the Fostering Network Recommended Rates for Foster Carers (carers offering short-breaks also receive an additional allowance equivalent to the Fostering Network Recommended Rates).

Appendix 2

Enhancements

Foster Carers

Enhanced rates are payable where a child will require significantly greater levels of care than might otherwise be expected for a child of similar age. An enhanced allowance of £20 may be payable in each of the following circumstances:

1. Continuing extensive input from a professional other than universal services and/or an individual programme of therapeutic support to the placement
2. The child has a significant physical or learning disability;
3. The child presents very challenging behaviour (that may lead to a placement break down)
4. The child's needs are such that extra expenses such as higher heating bills, special diets, additional laundry or extra support is required
5. The child has other exceptional needs (discretionary payment)

Such enhancements will only be paid following the agreement of the Matching Panel. Each ATA will have clear time limits and will be subject to review.