

Knowsley MBC

Directorate of Children and Family Services

FOSTERING SERVICE

Statement of Purpose

2012

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Introduction

This Statement of Purpose sets out the range of fostering services and information provided by and in relation to Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council's Fostering Service. These include

- Support Services
- Fostering Panel and other key partners.
- The aims and objectives of the Service
- Specific information on the management, and organisation of the service.
- Services provided by, or in support of, the Fostering Service.

The Statement of Purpose has been produced in compliance with Regulation 3 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and with Standard 1 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011. It also reflects the suitability of the Fostering Service to comply with the amended Fostering Regulations 2011.

The Statement of Purpose is circulated to all approved foster carers, other interested parties and upon request, are available to members of the public; alternative formats of the document can be made available or translated on request to the Fostering Service Manager. It is also posted on the Council's website and is approved by Elected Members and reviewed annually.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aims

1. Knowsley's Fostering Service will ensure that carers are recruited; assessed, supported and developed in order to meet the diverse needs of children looked after who live in foster placements.
2. The Fostering Service will work with partners to improve outcomes for looked after children.
3. The Fostering Service will work towards meeting National Minimum Standards in all areas by providing cost effective and high quality services that offer value for money.
4. The service will ensure that it has an ongoing development plan which will support service improvement

Objectives

1. The Fostering Service will have a Recruitment Strategy that takes account of the identified needs of children and ensures that there are sufficient carers recruited to meet those needs.
2. The annual training programme will deliver training that reflects the identified needs of carers. It will also take account of the wider development of legislation, guidance and the service.
3. The manager and staff will maintain appropriate links with other professionals and partners, by attending relevant meetings

4. To maintain appropriate communication with the Knowsley Foster Carer Association (KFCA) through regular meetings and involvement in service planning.
5. The service will ensure that there are systems in place to ensure that the wishes and feelings of children are taken into account in the reviews of their carers and the development of the service.
6. That monitoring systems are in place to capture data regarding service activity on a regular basis and that this information is used to inform service planning, strategy and procedures.

SERVICES PROVIDED

2012

The Fostering Service recruits, and assesses prospective foster families and provides support to them in a variety of ways including when they attend Knowsley's Fostering Panel. The range of types of fostering provision available ensures flexibility in meeting children's individual needs.

All foster carers are allocated supervising social worker from within the fostering service. The social worker is responsible for supervising and supporting the carers ensuring that training and development needs are identified and met. Additionally they provide appropriate contributions to the carer's annual review.

Financial allowances are paid to foster carers at the National Fostering Network recommended rates for each child. These allowances may be supported by additional 'skill' payments to foster carers for three separate skill bands; there is also a weekly supplement that is paid on an age related scale.

The service is responsible for ensuring that children are appropriately matched with carers and that children's needs are met in their placement. The Fostering Service works closely with a range of other professionals, from both inside and outside of Children's Social Care. They include:

- Child care Social Work teams.
 - There are a range of meetings where the fostering manager and worker meets with child care social workers and managers. These include care planning meetings for children and service development groups for looked after children.

- Children Looked After Health Team
 - Staff from the CLA Health Team provide direct contact with children looked after by undertaking health assessments. In addition consultation and training is provided to staff in Children's Social Care and foster carers

- Education Support Team
 - Staff from the Educational Support Team work with looked after children, young people, and carers to promote educational attainment and attendance. This involves providing training, advice and where appropriate support including the management and review of Personal Educational Allowances.

- The Right to Read Project – through the Library Service
 - The Right to Read project is proved through the Library Service. It provides direct services to children and carers to enhance their literacy skills, as well as access to specific reading materials relating to the fostering task.

- CAMHS

- The services of specialist workers are available on a consultancy basis to foster carers, on a case by case basis, to help them manage the behaviour of individual children. Additionally training is provided to carers around attachment and behaviour management as part of the annual training programme.

- Fostering Panel
 - Knowsley will have a Fostering Panel that is constituted in compliance with standards and regulations. The Panel will meet on a regular basis throughout the year and the business activity it considers will include, approval of foster carers, allegations and first reviews of all foster carers.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT OF FOSTER CARERS

TRAINING FOR FOSTER CARERS

Annual Training Programme

The Fostering Service publishes an annual plan that is designed to be delivered to foster carers throughout the academic year. This includes training being offered during the day and of an evening, which provides flexibility in the way that carers training needs can be met. Each training course is generally run twice during the year, with each course being able to accommodate a maximum of 20 carers. Crèche facilities are provided for carers who have pre school age children placed.

SUPPORTING FOSTER CARERS

The Fostering Service provides a range of services to foster carers and these are designed and delivered to enable the foster carer to provide consistent and stable placements in line with children's care plans.

Out of Hours Support

In the event that foster carers require emergency social work intervention outside of normal office hours they are able to access the Emergency Duty Team. The co-ordinator will assess the situation and respond accordingly to each contact.

Social Activities

Knowsley has a well established Foster Care Association (KFCA) who meet on a regular basis through out the year. They provide a programme of social activities for carers and children including days out, pantomimes and holidays. They also oversee the bookings for a dedicated holiday home in Wales that is available to carers for a reasonable cost.

Support Groups

These groups are held monthly at the designated training centre and are open to all foster carers including family and friends carers. The groups discuss a variety of topics and are attended by guest speakers. In addition to these support groups there are additional groups arranged through the year specifically for family and friends carers. The service also now runs support groups for the children of foster carers.

During 2012 the Fostering Service is hoping to explore developing a Men's Support Group for foster carers.

Independent Support

Knowsley have an Advice and Mediation contract, involving a small number of other local authorities, with Fostering Network. This provides the services of a worker to support foster carers who require independent support when they have issues with the agency including where allegations or complaints have been made against them. The worker also attends support groups to carers to discuss any wider issues that impact on their role as carers.

FOSTERING SERVICE TRAINING AND STAFF PROFILE

Fostering Staff

The Fostering Service has appropriately qualified staff each of whom has been properly recruited and vetted in accordance with the Fostering Regulations and NMS. In 2008, a Directorate decision was made to apply the Criminal Records Bureau

(CRB) vetting and barring procedures to the Fostering Service Business Support Assistants; this was done in response to the Bichard Inquiry recommendations with regards to personnel handling confidential information.

Training and Staff Development

Fostering staff are developed through the council's Workforce Development procedures. Staff are inducted and supervised as required by Council and regulatory procedures. Accredited or formal training is offered for social worker development through the PQ Consolidation Award. Specialist training provided by agencies such as BAAF is available to staff.

Fostering Service Staff Profile

Fostering Service Manager – Jackie Evans

Jackie has been in post since 2009 and previously worked within the Knowsley Children and Young Person's Service. Jacky completed a BA in English Literature and Information Technology at Liverpool Hope University in 1997. Jacky gained the Diploma in Social Work Studies and MA at Liverpool John Moore's University in 1999. In 2004 she also successfully completed the Post Qualifying Award for Social Workers and in 2006 gained the PQ Child Care Award in 2006. In July 2008 she gained the NVQ Level 4 in Management.

Senior Practitioner - Barbara Nodwell

Barbara began working in Knowsley in 1993 within the Children and Family Teams. She joined the combined Adoption and Fostering Service in 2000 and over the years she has become a highly skilled and experienced fostering staff member and she has had a special interest in developing and facilitating the Foster Carers training programmes. Barbara holds a BA (1989), Certificate as Qualified Social Worker (1992), Certificate of Professional Development – Counselling Skills (1998) Post Qualified (PQ) Level 1 Award (2004) and will be completing the NVQ level 4 Award in Management during 2009.

Fostering Supervising Social Worker – John Corcoran

John worked for Lancashire County Council for 20 years as a manager of a Young Person's Secure Unit. He qualified as a social worker in 2002 having obtained a Diploma in Social Work at the University of Central Lancashire. He started working for Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council in the Knowsley Adoption and Fostering Team in August 2004.

Fostering Supervising Social Worker – Maureen Roberts

Maureen Roberts started work in Knowsley in 1980 and undertook a range of youth projects including outdoor pursuits, community work and working with young offenders.

In 1994, Maureen gained the Diploma in Social Work and Diploma in Higher Education specialising in criminology. She worked in Huyton Children and Families Team for 12 months and then came to Knowsley Adoption and Fostering Service in October 1994 to start the Home from Home project, to provide respite and full time placements for children with additional needs. Maureen gained the PQ Award in 2004 and she is currently training to become an NVQ assessor for the training department and Fostering Service.

Fostering Supervising Social Worker – Denice White

Denice obtained the MA Diploma in Social Work qualification at Liverpool University in 2000 and prior to joining the Fostering Service she worked as a Child Protection social worker.

Fostering Supervising Social Worker – Rachel Chester

Rachel joined the Fostering Service as a newly qualified social worker in 2008. She studied her degree in Sociology at the University of Sheffield and graduated in 2006. In 2008 she gained an MA in social work at Lancaster University in 2008. Prior to getting her social work qualification Rachel worked as a Children Looked After fieldwork support Officer for Lancashire County Council in Preston.

Fostering Supervising Social Worker – Joan Gallagher

Joan joined the Fostering Service in 2008 having previously spent approximately eight years in various Child Protection teams throughout the North West area. Joan has a BA in Sociology which she gained in 1996 and MA and Diploma in Social Work which she gained in 2000.

Fostering Supervising Social Worker- Michelle Dunn

Michelle qualified at Liverpool Hope University in 2010 prior to her social work she spent four years working in a residential unit with looked after children and young people aged 4 to 18 years. Michelle began work in Knowsley Kirkby Assessment and Duty Team in June 2010 before transferring to Knowsley Fostering service in Jan 2011.

Fostering Supervising Social Worker - Therese Grace Therese qualified as a social worker in 2004. Prior to qualifying and until 2005, she worked in a Child Protection Initial Assessment team for a different authority. From 2005 to 2007 Therese worked in Knowsley's South Children & Families Team, following which she worked for a period in a team assessing and providing support to adults over 65 years. In November 2010 Therese returned to Children's Services in the Fostering Team. She completed her progression to Level 3 Social Worker in October 2008 and in September 2010 completed PQ Consolidation of specialist Social Work Practice.

Fostering Supervising Social Worker - Sue Blything

Sue completed a B.A. (Hons) in Applied Social Sciences and Sports Science in 1987 before qualifying as a Social Worker in 1989. She has also completed a BSc (Hons) in Psychology; an MA in Organization and Management and a PGCE. Sue started work as a social worker in 1989 working for Wigan MBC in their Child Protection Team before joining Lancashire Probation Service in 1995 where she was employed as a social worker undertaking assessments of sex offenders. She was a facilitator on the Home Office accredited sex offender treatment programmes, for offenders in the prison and also those on probation.

In 2001 she was employed by Ashworth High Secure Hospital on the Personality Disorder Unit with responsibility for safeguarding children and training of staff. In 2006, following redundancy, she worked as an associate lecturer at Edge Hill

University before joining Knowsley MBC in January 2010, initially as a social worker on the duty team before joining the fostering team in September 2010.

Fostering Supervising Social Worker – Rebekah Gresty

Rebekah qualified in 2011 and joined the team at this point. Rebekah has brought to the fostering team lots of experience of working with children and young people in a range of settings, including youth work and in residential children's homes. Rebekah also has experience of working within a busy designated team for looked after children.

Fostering Panel Administrator & Business Support Assistant – Kelly Billingsley

Kelly joined Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council in 2004 as a Clerical Assistant for Children's Residential Services where she provided support to the Management Team and the wider regulated service. Prior to this, Kelly gained varied administrative experience working for over 8 years in the Benefits Agency and the Home Office in roles including Training Coordinator, System Support and Nationality Caseworker. She transferred to the Fostering and Adoption Team in July 2010 as a Panel Administrator for the Fostering Panel. Kelly's qualifications include ECDL Advanced and ECDL Expert Certification, NVQ Level 3 in Business Administration, Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector and "A" Levels in Law and English.

Fostering Panel Administrator and Business Support Assistant – Karen Daly

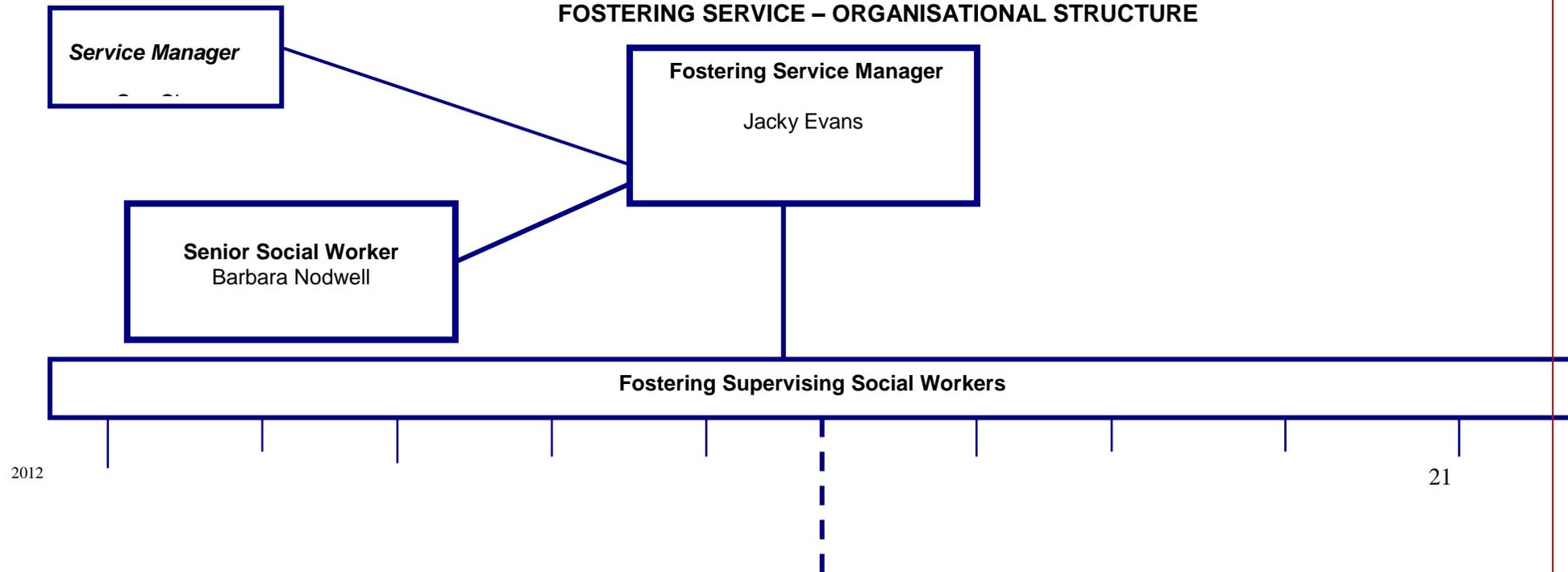
Karen commenced employment with Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council in 2007 working within the Quality Assurance Unit. Karen gained a variety of administration experience, minuting Child Protection/Allegation Management Meetings and providing administrative support to the Independent Reviewing Officer's, and was later promoted to co-ordinator. Karen left this post in January 2011 and joined the Fostering and Adoption Team, providing administrative support to the Social Worker's/Team Manager and providing administrative support to Kelly Billingsley, Fostering Panel Administrator. Karen's qualifications include 11 GCSE's, an "A" Level in English, ECDL Advanced and NVQ Level 3 in Business Administration.

Fostering Panel Administrator & Business Support Assistant – Amy Smith

Amy Smith has been employed by Knowsley MBC since March 2009 as a Business Support Assistant. Initially she was employed in Management Support team supporting service managers and PM. In October 2010 she transferred to the Fostering Service as a BSA and began to learn the role of fostering panel administrator from previous administrator Kelly Billingsley, who began maternity leave in January this year. From January Amy became the fostering panel administrator.

Organisational Structure Appendix 5

FOSTERING SERVICE – ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



Maureen
Roberts
(F/T)

John
Corcoran
(F/T)

Michelle
Dunn
(F/T)

Rachel
Chester
(P/T)

Joan
Gallagher
(F/T)

Therese
Grace
(F/T)

Sue
Blything
(P/T)

Denice
White
(P/T)

Rebekah
Gresty
(F/T)

Business Support Services
Business Support Assistant & Panel Administrator (F/T) Kelly Billingsley
Business Support Assistant (F/T) Karen Daly Panel Administrator
Business Support Assistant (F/T) Amy Smith Panel Administrator

REGISTRATION, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS INFORMATION

The Fostering Service Registration Authority is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) which is the new single inspectorate for children and learners in England. Ofsted has a legal responsibility to promote improvement and to register and inspect social care services such as council fostering agencies. The address of the National Business Unit is:

Address: **OFSTED**
Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA
T: 08456 404040
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER FOR ENGLAND

Children and adults can contact the Commissioner to give their views about current and future services.

Address: Sir Al Aynsley-Green
11 Million
1 London Bridge
LONDON
SE1 9BG
T: 0844 800 9113
E: info.request@11million.org.uk
W: www.11million.org.uk

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS DIRECTOR

Address: Roger Morgan
Children's Rights Director for England
Ofsted
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

KNOWSLEY CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY SERVICE

Knowsley commissions NYAS to provide access to independent advocacy services for all looked after children:

T E:

KNOWSLEY FOSTERING SERVICE

CONTACT DETAILS

Knowsley Fostering Service
2nd Floor
Yorkon Building
Archway Road
Huyton
Liverpool 36

T: 0151 4433958

F: 0151 4490134

E: adoptionandfostering@knowsley.gov.uk

W: www.knowsley.gov.uk/fostering