

SAFE WELL PROSPEROUS CONNECTED

North Lincolnshire Council Statement of Purpose for Fostering 2023 - 2024



**North
Lincolnshire
Council**

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This information can be made available in other languages, in large print, Braille or on audiotape. Please phone 01724 297024 if you need any of these or any other help to access North Lincolnshire's services.

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1. Introduction and Context

This Statement of Purpose is produced in compliance with the Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (NMS) 2011 and Regulation 3 of the Fostering Regulations 2011. All information is correct as at 31st March 2023. This document will be revised annually. Significant in year changes will be put in writing to the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). The Young Person's Statement of Purpose has been produced in partnership with foster carers and children in care.

North Lincolnshire Fostering delivers fostering on behalf of North Lincolnshire Council. All involved in the planning and delivering of care, work together as a team around the child (TAC) where all views, wishes and feelings are taken into account including those of the child or young person and their parent(s) and carer(s).

North Lincolnshire Fostering is registered with;

OFSTED

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Telephone 0300 123 1231

Email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

In North Lincolnshire, our **One Family Approach** aims to create a system that works for all children, young people and families where we work together to provide and commission integrated help for children and young people.

We have high expectations of ourselves as partners with families and communities to deliver positive outcomes and we have high aspirations for our children and young people. Using their strengths, assets, views and experiences and by working together using our values, influence and statutory roles, we will make the best decisions regarding local help and support, to help achieve the very best for our children and young people.

North Lincolnshire Council believes that family care is the best provision of alternative care for most children or young people who enter the care of the Council. It has therefore invested heavily in the development and expansion of its fostering provision.

Furthermore we are of the view that a high quality of care is best achieved by providing foster care that protects children, promotes their rights and maximises their life chances. We are ambitious for the future and for our children and young people, and we have high expectations of ourselves as a partnership. Working holistically with children, families and communities, through the **fewest, best interventions** to improve outcomes. By listening, learning, reviewing and adapting; by taking account of our performance information and intelligence, by listening to our children, young people, families and taking account of the **Children's Challenge 2020/24**, we will continue to identify and highlight specific areas of focus to 'shine a light' on.

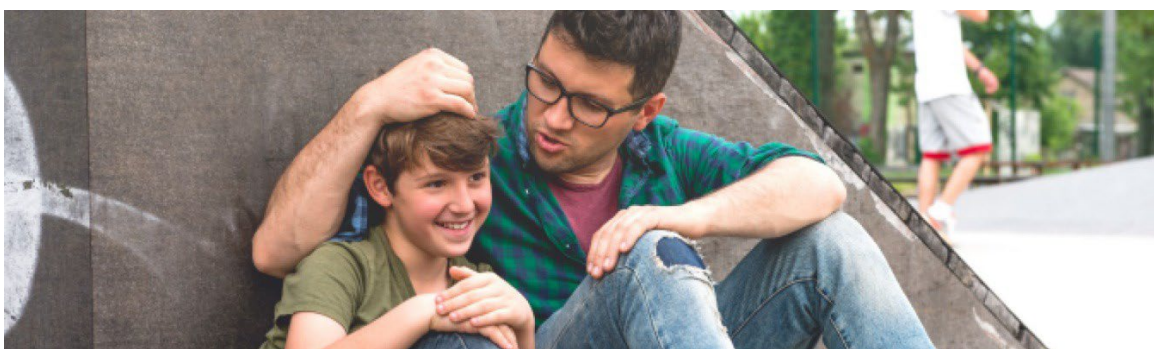
We hold a long-standing and deeply held ambition for all children and young people within North Lincolnshire. Being the champion for the vulnerable child is our over-riding purpose. We ensure that every child has equitable opportunities to be the best they can be: irrespective of their individual backgrounds or circumstances. We use our values, influence and authority to engender greater aspiration for children across our partner agencies - so that all children achieve outstanding outcomes.

North Lincolnshire Council and partners are committed to work together to safeguard, promote and improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people. Good health and wellbeing for children and young people means:

- Good physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Protection from harm and neglect
- Education, training and recreation
- Opportunities for contributing and being involved
- Economic wellbeing

In line with this vision continued improvement is reflected in the progress made, this includes:

- There continues to be an improving picture of stability for children in care.
- In North Lincolnshire, 81% of Children in Care live with approved Foster Carers and 98% of all children with a foster family are placed with a Local Authority carer.
- Low numbers of children in care in agency placements - this has been reducing year-on-year from 2012/13
- Children in care are able to be part of their communities in North Lincolnshire and the number of children in care placed out of North Lincolnshire area remains low
- Every child in care has access to an Independent Advocate and they know the name of the advocate. Any child who has been missing from care is offered an interview with the Independent Advocate upon their return. Every child placed out of North Lincolnshire is visited by the Independent Advocate on a regular basis.
- Any child that has experienced a change of carers is seen by the Independent Advocate and any comments made are fed back to the Child's Social Worker and Fostering Social Worker with actions required.
- Children in care consistently say that they feel listened to and are able to articulate any issues or concerns.



2. Aims and Objectives of North Lincolnshire Fostering

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 care for children and young people who are not able to live at home with their parents, are not able to live with their relatives or friends (who are not approved as foster carers), are not able to live independently in their own accommodation cannot be secured permanence through adoption, Special Guardianship or a Child Arrangements Order.

We continue to support children's birth family and regularly assess the potential of reunification in line with children in care reviews. The reunification processes ensure that where it is achievable for children to live with their families this is supported.

Foster care should provide care for planned periods of time to meet the individual needs of children. This includes supporting children remaining with their foster families into adulthood in line with their needs. The 'You say who' process empowers young people to advocate who is important to them and who they wish to remain in contact with. This includes birth family members but also people they have met on their life journey who they view as important. Building and strengthening their support network is key to lifelong resilience and foster carers play a vital role in nurturing these relationships.

The aims and objectives are underpinned by the key drivers detailed within the North Lincolnshire Children's Strategy 2023 and the Fostering National Minimum Standards (NMS) 2011 core values which underpin fostering in North Lincolnshire. These include:

- The child's welfare, safety and needs are at the centre of their care.
- Children should have an enjoyable childhood, benefiting from excellent parenting and education, enjoying a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills leading to a successful adult life.
- Children are entitled to grow up in a loving environment that can meet their developmental needs.
- Every child should have his or her wishes and feelings listened to and taken into account.
- Each child should be valued as an individual and given personalised support in line with their individual needs and background in order to develop their identity, self-confidence and self-worth.
- The particular needs of disabled children and children with complex needs will be fully recognised and taken into account.
- The significance of contact with their family for children in care, and of maintaining relationships with birth parents and the wider family, including siblings, half-siblings and grandparents, is prioritised, recognising the foster carer's role in this.

- Children in foster care deserve to be treated as a good parent would treat their own children and to have the opportunity for as full an experience of family life and childhood as possible, without unnecessary restrictions.
- The central importance of the child's relationship with their foster carer should be acknowledged and foster carers should be recognised as core members of the team working with the child.
- Foster carers have a right to full information about the child.
- It is essential that foster carers receive relevant support and development opportunities in order to provide the best care for children.
- Genuine partnership between all those involved in fostering children is essential for the NMS to deliver the best outcomes for children; this includes the Government, local government, other statutory agencies, fostering providers and foster carers.
- Children should have the opportunity to identify the people who they see as important to them and be supporting in maintaining and nurturing these lifelong relationships.
- Every child has a right to permanence and this should be achieved at the earliest opportunity.

The key priorities for Fostering with partners are:

- Build Sufficiency and increase placement choice through enhanced recruitment, support and retention of carers
- Enable children to remain in and return to live within their families and communities
- Fewest, Best interventions
- Continue to increase stability through enhanced support
- Deliver the early help offer
- One family approach to integrated working
- Celebrate and engage young people
- Manage change and continue to develop staff to respond to the changing needs of the care population
- Improve the education and employment of children in care and care leavers
- Collaborate with young people to shape the help they need and want
- Children should remain in their family, communities and schools

The Aspirations and Actions as detailed in the Children in Care and Care Leavers Partnership Plan are embedded in our aims and objectives.

We aim to:

- Provide a safe, secure and enabling environment for children in care for varying lengths of time, including short breaks, dependent upon their assessed needs. To this end foster carers will be appropriately assessed, trained and supervised in order to provide high quality care that values diversity and individual identity as well as promoting healthy development and emotional security.

- Promote relationships between the looked after child or young person and their birth family and friends, in line with the child's care plan. North Lincolnshire Fostering acknowledges the importance of family and friends of a looked after child or young person and foster carers are expected to encourage and facilitate contact. Children will be supported to maintain relationships with people they identify as important to them.
- Ensure that children who are admitted to our care are returned to their own family and community networks at the earliest opportunity. Where reunification to the child or young person's family is not in the child's best interests, we will endeavour to work with everyone concerned to help the child or young person move on to become part of a stable and permanent, alternative family which is maintained into adulthood whilst promoting and supporting relationships with the child's birth family and communities..
- Provide each child in foster care with the opportunity, through health care, education and social and leisure activities, to have high aspirations for themselves, to develop to their full potential and achieve the five outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying life and achieving their aspirations, enjoying economic wellbeing and making a positive contribution to society.
- Encourage children and young people in foster care to access community resources and facilities. Foster carers will be financially supported to encourage children in care to partake in community and out of school hours leisure activities. We will offer a community approach to support through events, peer support and training.
- Ensure that all children and young people in foster care have written care plans which detail how the child or young person's needs are to be met. These plans are reviewed on a regular basis.
- Ensure that all children who wish to remain with their former foster carers upon reaching 18 years of age are supported to do so, in a "Staying Put" arrangement, if this is agreed by both the young person and the foster carer.
- Recruit foster carers who understand our values and put children's needs for stability, nurture and support at the heart of their actions. We will support carers through training and advice to be able to understand and adapt to their role.
- Ensure that each child understands their permanence plan and that this is achieved without delay.
- Be a resilient, resourceful, and committed corporate family to all children in care and care leavers; utilising opportunities across the partnership to offer experiences, support and learning to young people.
- Work with the wider community to promote opportunities for recruitment of foster families and employment or training opportunities for young people.

North Lincolnshire Council believes that children are best placed within their own family and community networks. Friends, relatives or significant people 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.

Recruitment of foster carers will be in line with the Council's strategy to meet the sufficiency duty under Section 22G of the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and the Sufficiency Statutory Guidance on Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Children in care 2010.

North Lincolnshire Council celebrates diversity and will not act in a discriminatory manner in relation to issues of age, marital status, 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.

The Foster Carers' Charter:

North Lincolnshire Council acknowledges the excellent care, support and commitment shown by North Lincolnshire Foster Carers. The Foster Carer's Charter demonstrates and recognises the joint responsibilities to the children and young people in care, and builds on the success and achievements of fostering in North Lincolnshire.

The Government launched the Foster Carers' Charter in March 2011. It was jointly produced with fostering organisations, charities and children in care. Recognising the invaluable work of foster carers, it sets out clear principles. These are based on the core belief that children come first, how foster carers should be treated, and the pivotal role played by carers in helping children achieve to their full potential.

North Lincolnshire has embraced the principles of the Charter and through consultation and involvement of children, young people and foster carers, developed the '**North Lincolnshire Foster Carers' Charter**' which is regularly reviewed.

This Charter builds on the existing solid foundations and ongoing commitment by North Lincolnshire Council to its Foster Carers. This is through:

- Ensuring foster carers have the support and development opportunities they need in order to provide their foster child with the best possible care.
- Ensuring foster carers receive day-to-day support, events and activities for foster families.
- Listening to both carers and children. Children's and young people's views will be sought on all decisions concerning their daily lives and the future. Children and young people are actively encouraged to attend planning meetings and reviews. Where decisions are made which are not taken in line with the child's or young person's wishes a clear explanation will be given.
- Treating foster carers with openness, fairness and respect as a core member of the team around the child and support them in making reasonable and appropriate decisions on behalf of the foster child.
- Supporting children to develop their own identities and aspirations.

- Further development and expansion of foster care in North Lincolnshire.

The charter is reviewed on a regular basis in partnership with carers, children in care and social workers for the children and carers.

3. Facilities and Support

Foster carers are core members of the team around the child (TAC) with an important contribution to the planning and decision making about children in their care. The TAC will also include the child's parents, child's social workers and fostering social workers alongside all other relevant partnership agencies, for example colleagues who work within education, health or other specialist services,.

Team around the Child:



To enable Foster Carers to work as equal partners as described in the diagram, North Lincolnshire Fostering is high quality, responsive and child centred in relation to its 4 core functions. These are:

- To recruit new Foster Carer applicants from within the local community. The aims are to increase the number of foster carers in our locality to ensure that children and young people requiring foster care remain as near to their families as possible and to offer a wider foster placement choice for all children requiring alternative care provision including teenagers and children with complex care needs.
- To prepare applicants, through training, discussion, meeting existing foster carers and children in care to be able to effectively understand and manage the fostering task in a manner that is strengths based and solution focused.
- To assess each applicant comprehensively, in line with the competency framework, to ensure that they are suitable and able to carry out the role.

- To supervise Foster Carers on a regular basis through a minimum of monthly visits and regular telephone calls to ensure that they are supported and fully informed. To support every foster carer to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in line with the Foster Carer Training, Support and Development Standards (TSD's) to enable them to competently, confidently and safely fulfil their role.

4. Types of Fostering Provision Offered by North Lincolnshire Council

In order to maximise the flexibility in responding to the individual needs of children requiring alternative care, there are a number of different types of foster placement available in North Lincolnshire. Foster carers can be approved for one or more of the following types of foster care placements:

- **Mainstream Fostering**

Provides care for children and young people - from one overnight to permanence into adulthood depending upon the child's individual needs. Applicants wanting to consider fostering need to be able to move children on: either back to their birth families, or on to other forms of permanency such as adoption, Special Guardianship, Child Arrangements Order where this is in line with their plan.

Children who cannot return home or to birth family members but for whom adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangements Order is not appropriate, may have a plan of permanence within foster care and they will remain with their foster carers as long as is needed into adulthood in a staying put arrangement.

- **Mainstream Short Breaks Fostering**

A short break involves caring for a child for a weekend on a regular or impromptu basis in order to offer children the opportunity to enhance their life experiences and support parents or carers to care for the child or young person on a permanent basis. Short breaks can also involve caring for a child whilst other foster carers are away on holiday.

- **Short Breaks + Scheme**

This scheme provides care and support for children and young people with disabilities. This can include day-care or a limited number of overnight stays per month, consistently caring for the same child. Children are specifically matched to carers based upon the child's individual needs. This scheme has been developed through recent investment by the council to provide for children with disabilities and their families requiring additional support.

- **Connected Person Foster Care**

Whenever possible, children who require alternative care are placed with friends or extended family members, such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, close neighbours and so on. These placements often work well for children, as they go to live with people they already know. Friends and family foster carers are only assessed and approved when children are subject to interim or full care orders.

- **Parent and Child Care**

Parent and child placements are provided under the specialist foster carer scheme and receive an allowance for the child, a fee in recognition of the specialist nature of this arrangement. A fostering allowance is also received in respect of caring for a young parent under the age of 18 and an additional allowance if supporting a young parent over the age of 18. There are no other children in placement for the duration of a parent and child arrangement.

- **Urgent Unplanned/Alternative to Remand Care**

Some children need a placement on an unplanned basis for a variety of reasons, including conflict within the family home, homelessness, missing from home or as a result of alleged criminal activity as an alternative to being held overnight in Police custody. Individual foster carers are approved specifically to fulfil this role and have the skills and resilience to meet the needs of children in an emergency situation.

- **Staying Put**

North Lincolnshire Council is committed to preventing social exclusion amongst care leavers and has developed a “Staying Put” policy in order to ensure that they can continue to live with former foster carers after their 18th birthday and make the transition to independent lives at a pace that suits their needs.

- **Supported Lodgings**

The North Lincolnshire Supported Lodgings scheme offers young people a ‘stepping stone’ into greater independence. Some young people may be ready for semi-independence but require some additional support which can be provided from living within a household. The scheme is available to young people aged 16 to 21 years (24 if in education). Supported Lodgings offers young people the support they need to successfully develop their skills in order to eventually move to independent living. A Supported Lodgings provider will be expected to create a safe and supportive environment where the young person can develop their confidence and life skills, this will include helping them to; budget, cook, clean, do their washing, complete forms, make and attend appointments and interviews etc. For further information, including capacity, recruitment and assessment, support and training, please refer to the **Supported Accommodation statement of purpose**.

Children joining a foster family

Children will enter Foster Care following an assessment that has deemed that they are:

- Unable to live with their own family.
- Unable to live within their extended family or with friends who are not Foster Carers.

Except in urgent unplanned situations, referrals for North Lincolnshire Fostering will be made through the weekly Legal, Tracking and Decision Making Meeting following being referred by the child's Social Worker via the Children's Social Work Lead, for consideration at the meeting.

In-line with the recommendations of that meeting, North Lincolnshire Fostering will carry out a child-focused matching process to match the child's needs with the most appropriate Foster Carer taking into account the child's previous experiences and consider any specific risks identified. A Matching meeting will be held with potential carers and this will be recorded on a Fostering Matching and Risk Assessment Form. The Foster Carer will be contacted, matching meetings held and all information will be shared to agree whether the match should proceed.

Unplanned urgent admissions are accepted following the agreement of three Lead Officers, they must agree that entry into care is in the best interests of the child. Procedures require the gathering of a basic minimum of information before settling the child into the home. An urgent-planning meeting is held the next day in order to complete the normal CiC care planning process. All unplanned admissions to foster care are considered at the next Legal, Tracking and Decision Making Meeting.

5. Capacity

Number of foster carers

There are 116 approved foster carers as at the end of March 2023. Of these 87 are mainstream foster carers (10 short break only) and 19 are connected persons carers (10 with full approval).

Number of children looked after in foster placements

As of 31st March 2023:

- 150 children live in foster care,
- 121 of these children live with North Lincs approved foster carers.
- 26 of these children live with connected person carers.

It is anticipated that on average a full time Fostering Social Worker will support up to 20 foster carers or undertake approximately 4 assessments at any one time. They will also have input into the recruitment, selection and training of foster carers.



6. Recruitment, Preparation and Assessment of Foster 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 North Lincolnshire Fostering and to encourage members of the North Lincolnshire community to apply to become Foster Carers.

Activities that are identified within the strategy include:

- Planned recruitment drives within the local community over the year.
- Use of media, on-line information and advertising, virtual open evenings and other on-line tools.
- Articles in the local 'Direct News'.
- 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.
- Publicised road show events at venues within the local authority.
- Stalls at community shows and fayres.
- Posters in the local community, e.g. doctor's surgeries, community centres, libraries, supermarkets, local businesses and other strategic points within the community etc.
- Permanent advertising displays at Scunthorpe, Crowle and Brigg libraries.
- Representatives from the team and North Lincolnshire's cohort of foster carers appearing on local TV and local radio stations and purchased Radio advertising campaigns.
- The deployment of banners at key points across North Lincolnshire.
- Use of North Lincolnshire Council digital screens, including in the town centre and community hubs.
- Revamped fostering specific pages on North Lincolnshire Council's website.
- Awareness raising on all North Lincolnshire Council's employee's computer desktops.
- Advertising on local businesses and organisations websites', media, newsletters and premises.
- North Lincolnshire Council is a foster carer friendly employer offering extended special leave and flexible working conditions for employees who are or who would like to be foster carers. North Lincolnshire Fostering is encouraging other organisations and businesses to become foster carer friendly too.
- The introduction of the Fostering Friendly scheme, which allows partners in the community to champion fostering and be supportive of their workforce who wish to foster or already fostering.

- North Lincolnshire Fostering has developed a fostering ambassador scheme where trained frontline staff can advise the public on how to become a foster carer. This is now being rolled out across other businesses and organisations in North Lincolnshire.
- Recruitment materials incorporates the corporate parenting strapline developed by children in care, new illustrations are regularly developed and the communications team to recruitment materials and generate new interest. A full time communications officer has been recruited to implement this communication plan.
- Robust recruitment programme of activity over fostering fortnight.
- The increasing use of social media including Facebook and Twitter including sponsored adverts.
- Regular meetings between North Lincolnshire Fostering and communications teams to review the recruitment campaign. A rolling calendar of events is identified and maintained which includes several recruitment events across the county and beyond.
- An information booklet developed in consultation with the fostering community. The aim is to generate interest in becoming a foster carer by creating a positive impression on applicants by being in keeping with the branding and being written from the perspective of a foster carer, with a friendly and person focussed feel to the content.
- Video's have been created and are displayed during recruitment events, screened in public access areas and are accessible on the North Lincolnshire Fostering website as well as via social media. The video's are refreshed and new ones developed to maintain interest.
- A rolling enquiries tracking form is maintained and updated on a frequent basis in order to track and progress the stages of recruitment from enquiry to approval. This is to assist in identifying new/varying trends in successful recruitment activities as well as reasons for not wishing to proceed in order to aid learning and to ensure regulation compliance.
- A 'Friends of Fostering' mailing list will be launched in the summer to maintain contact with those interested in supporting fostering through advertising or may be ready to foster in the future.

Through effective management and analysis of data and performance; North Lincolnshire Fostering 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. Priority recruitment activity concentrates on recruiting foster carers who are able to provide mainstream foster care for teenagers and unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children (UASC), short breaks foster care for children with disabilities and foster care for children and young people with complex care needs as well as carers motivated to provide short term care for babies and children with alternative permanency plans including adoption, Special Guardianship, Child Arrangements or long-term care for older children.

North Lincolnshire Fostering has developed timescales for responding to enquires related to fostering, these are;

- **Telephone and text**

A dedicated fostering support worker is available during office hours to answer any enquiries. Enquiries will be answered during office hours on the day the enquiry is made and a brochure will be emailed or posted on the same day.

- **Online**

Enquirers can read the information about fostering online and complete an expression of interest form if they wish to have further information. There is a short film accessible for prospective Foster Carers to watch providing them with information from current North Lincolnshire Foster Carers. There is also a video reel showcasing the activity during Foster Care Fortnight 2023. A live web chat function will be trialled on the fostering website as a method of providing a quick response to questions.

Follow up contact is made within 5 working days to arrange for an initial visit at a mutually convenient time. During this visit detailed discussions take place about the benefits and implications that being a Foster Carer can have.

If the enquirer continues to be interested, they are asked to complete consent forms to enable checks to be undertaken and are invited to attend the next Skills to Foster course. A dedicated recruitment officer builds relationships with potential foster carers ensuring a consistent point of contact throughout their journey, answering any questions and preventing delay.

All fostering assessments are completed within 6 months of application and follow the two stage assessment process set out in the Assessment and Approval of foster carers: Amendments to the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations, July 2013.

Preparation of New Foster Carers

After an initial visit, applicants are allocated a place on a 'Skills to Foster Course'. This course helps to prepare and equip applicants to undertake the role of a foster carer. During this training course applicants have the opportunity to meet current foster carers and children in foster care, to discuss any issues with them.

Children in care also undertake a Young People's Home Assessment visit to prospective foster carers. This was initiated by the Children in Care Council, who considered that there are unique insights that care experienced children can bring to the home assessment of Foster carers.

A session of the course is also delivered to children of prospective carers to ensure they have as full an understanding of the role as possible and is included in all aspects of the preparation process.

North Lincolnshire Council currently facilitates Bi- monthly Skills to Foster training courses, to ensure the initial assessment stage (stage one) is completed within an 8 week period.

Assessment of Foster Carers

The initial assessment stage (stage one) ensures that all statutory checks are undertaken and if no issues arise, enquirers are invited to complete an application form for a formal assessment. The assessment focuses on integrating children in care into family life, 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 completed report is shared with the applicants and they are invited to make comments. The assessment process is thorough and detailed; regulatory timescales allows 8 months from initial enquiry to approval as foster carers, all assessments undertaken by the North Lincolnshire Fostering Team are completed within 6 months unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Applications are not considered from anyone or their household members who have committed offences specified under regulation 26(7)(b) of North Lincolnshire Fostering Regulations 2011. All applicants must also have satisfactory medical reports and will not be considered to foster children less than five years of age if they smoke.

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 a social work consultant who is independent of North Lincolnshire Council. The Foster Panel considers and recommends the approval, or not, of all Foster Carers. Their recommendations and reasons are passed to the Principal Social Worker – Children and Adults who is the Senior Officer designated as the Agency Decision Maker and with whom the decision-making responsibility rests.

All foster carers will receive information about expectations of them and North Lincolnshire Fostering, remunerations and council policies and procedures and they will be expected to comply with these. These agreements are signed prior to any children being placed.

Foster carer induction includes a 1-1 session with a fostering social worker introduction, expectations and handbook. It also includes the identification of a fostering buddy and multi-agency training day titled 'induction day' which provides the ideal practical information following on from the learning during the Skills to Foster training.

All foster carers are subject to a review of their status as Foster Carers annually at a minimum. 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. Reviews are chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer and held on a 9 monthly basis. Feedback is gathered from a range of professionals involved in the child's care, children who have been in placement over the previous year and their parents, if appropriate. The carer's children are also asked for feedback in relation to their experience of being a family who foster. A report including recommendations regarding suitability and approval is produced that is presented to the Foster Panel for a change of approval, their first review, three yearly reviews and any other occasion deemed necessary by the Fostering Practice supervisor and Panel Advisor. The Agency Decision Maker has sight of every review and makes decisions for final suitability and approval limits.

North Lincolnshire Council have recruited an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) to chair Foster Carer Reviews, the position is based at the Independent Review Team. The IRO will see children and young people independently as part of the Foster Carer Review.

Foster Panel

North Lincolnshire Foster Panel takes place on the third and fourth Monday of each month. It consists of an independent chairperson, local authority elected members; a social worker with fostering experience, medical advisor, former foster carer, mental health representative and an education representative. Panel will be made up of any number of panel members, ensuring quoracy is achieved. A central list of panel members is also maintained to ensure that additional expertise can be called upon when required and that panel is always quorate by calling on additional members when required. All panel members are recruited using safer recruitment policies.

All new assessments are presented to North Lincolnshire Foster Panel for consideration. The panel makes a recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM). The ADM is a senior manager with no line management responsibility for North Lincolnshire Fostering, ensuring independence is maintained. The ADM reads all of the paperwork presented to panel, minutes of the meeting and reaches a decision.

Foster panel hears all new applications, connected persons applications, long term matches, first review of foster carers, three yearly reviews of foster carers, requests to change the terms of approval of a foster carer, any Variations or Exemptions and reviews following allegations or misconduct by foster carers. The panel also has a role in monitoring the quality and receives updates on management information regarding placements, stability and sufficiency. Panel members monitor the quality of paperwork presented to panel and this is fed back to North Lincolnshire Fostering.

7. Support and Supervision of Foster Carers

Access to Support and Supervision

All foster carers will receive regular supervision and support as well as access to training to enhance the quality of care given. All foster carers will have access to a rolling programme of bespoke training as identified during supervision. North Lincolnshire Council believes that it is important that Foster Carers are able to access support at the time when they need it. Systems have been developed to ensure that support is available 24 hours a day 365 days of the year.

Fostering Social Worker - After approval each Foster Carer is allocated a Fostering Social Worker. This worker will usually be the first point of contact for the Foster Carer during working hours and will offer support, advice, guidance and supervision regarding most matters to do with fostering and the care they give to the child. The Fostering Social Worker will be responsible for the foster carer's supervision, support and development. Contact is maintained through home visits and regular telephone calls, video calls, texts and emails. The Fostering Social Worker is required to undertake a supervisory visit on a monthly basis minimum to mainstream foster carers, supervision of short-breaks only carers is a minimum of Bi-monthly. Supervision can take place virtually by video call or within the home. The visiting pattern is in line with statutory visiting patterns to children in care. It is envisaged carers with children in their care will have physical visits Bi monthly. Where no children are in the family visits will be no less than Quarterly. Support is also offered to the children of foster carers.

Allegations of abuse or neglect against a foster carer are investigated according to the procedures developed with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and in consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Duty Fostering Social Worker - If a foster carer's Fostering Social Worker is not available during office hours, a duty worker is always available at North Lincolnshire Fostering Team office to deal with any urgent problems or issues.

Child's Social Worker - Every child in care has an allocated Social Worker. 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.

Child's Duty Social Worker - If the child's social 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 Kingfisher Lodge for general advice or the Extended Hours Team for urgent or serious matters.

Health and Specialist Clinical Psychology Advice - Support will be offered to foster carers to ensure that they meet the health needs of the child or young person in their care. This will be through guidance and training from the fostering team and by the specialist services of the

nurse for children in care, including the Tiered Foster Care offered by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

Education Inclusion - Foster carers will be supported to meet the educational needs of children and young people in their care, by all partners including the Children in care in Education team, led by a virtual head teacher for children in care.

Foster Carer's Association Group - Support can be accessed by attending the Foster Carer's Association Group or contacting a group member.

Fostering Bi-monthly Information Meetings - All foster carers are invited to attend these meetings or have their views represented by members of the Foster Carer's Association.

Fostering Network Membership - All foster carers are given annual membership of the Fostering Network. This is an independent organisation that offers carers support advice and guidance on fostering issues including when allegations or complaints are made about a foster carer.

Foster Helpline - This is provided by Fostering Network for all approved foster families to access telephone advice and support when required.

UASC Support Helpline - This is provided by the Refugee Council and is available to foster carers, unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children (UASC), Fostering Social Workers and Children's Social Workers. The Refugee Council will also undertake home visits to foster carers and UASC in their care, they offer psychologist support and hold a monthly drop in for UASC in North Lincolnshire.

Children and Young People's Guide - North Lincolnshire Council believes that children should have accessible and child-focused information and support throughout the fostering process. All children, allowing for age and understanding, are provided with either a copy of a 'Children's Guide to Living in a Foster Home' or 'Living in a Foster Home, a Young People's Guide' depending on their age. These guides give simple but clear information around what it is like to live in foster home.

Support Group for Children of Foster Carers - The "CAJU" (Come and Join Us) has been set up to enable children of foster carers to meet on a social basis. This is facilitated by a member of the North Lincolnshire Fostering Team.

Tiered Fostering Meetings - These meetings are held with CAMHS, foster carers, education, child's social worker and the fostering social worker. This approach ensures that there is a team around the child well positioned to address that child's individual needs. Network meetings are held in relation to children with more complex needs ensuring positive working together towards that individual child's needs.

Fostering Support Workers - Foster Support Workers will offer a high level of support to children in care, children of foster carers and their foster carers when placement stability may be under threat. The support has ranged from taking the child or young person out for a recreational activity, provide a short break without an overnight stay with alternative carers,

provide 1:1 support to a child or young person enabling them to attend activities and groups that otherwise they would not have been able to attend, supporting children who foster and have used Restorative Justice Techniques with children and their foster families. All foster carers receive supervision from their Fostering Social Worker at least once a month as a formal supervision arrangement. They receive additional visits according to their needs and depending upon the needs of the children they are caring for. Regulation requires that an unannounced visit to a foster home should be undertaken at least annually. In North Lincolnshire such visits are undertaken at least on a quarterly basis thereby exceeding this national minimum requirement.

Corporate Parenting co-ordinator – Liaison between young people and corporate parents who can offer employment, learning and development opportunities.

Counselling - In recognition of the challenges and impact on foster carers North Lincolnshire Fostering provides access to a counsellor.

Experienced foster carer 'buddy/mentor' - A buddy/mentor will support them in their new role. As foster carers establish themselves within the fostering community, they are able to utilise support from within the North Lincolnshire fostering community. Where specific issues arise they may be linked to another foster carer with experience of similar situations. Examples of this include utilising the support of a Muslim carer to assist White British carers caring for Muslim children and also providing day care with the Muslim carer to support the child maintaining connections within the Muslim community.

Foster Carer Friendly Employer - North Lincolnshire Council is a fostering friendly employer and supports employees who are or are applying to be foster carers for the Council by offering extended leave and flexible work opportunities where applicable to enable foster carers to attend training, meetings and appointments in order to meet the child(ren) in care's needs.

Allowances - North Lincolnshire Council believes that Foster 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. Payments will be made to foster carers in a timely fashion and in accordance with government guidance. Following consultation with carers the council introduced a 2 level allowances scheme.

Level one Allowance - The Council has assessed what it believes to be the weekly cost of caring for a child and all foster carers are paid in line with the National Minimum Fostering Allowance to enable them to do this. The level one fostering allowance 2023-24 is:

AGE GROUP	AMOUNT £
0 - 4	159.00
5 – 10	175.00
11 - 15	199.00
16 PLUS	233.00

Level two Allowance - Foster carers following completion of all required training and the Training, Support and Development Standards (TSD's) portfolio, receive a fee in addition to the national minimum fostering allowance. The weekly payment is:

AGE GROUP	AMOUNT £
0 - 4	181.00
5 – 10	206.00
11 - 15	262.00
16 PLUS	314.00

These payments are made to foster carers as they are required to carry out duties associated with looking after children for the Local Authority such as attending Children in care's (LAC) Reviews, Medicals, Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings, receiving statutory home visits and completing the Training, Support & Development Standards workbook.

Extra payments are made to all foster carers for special events such as holidays, birthdays and Christmas, or other religious festivals.

Foster Carers who become Special Guardians (SGO's) are paid the basic weekly allowance excluding additional task enhanced payments and child benefit.

Additional Allowances - At times foster carers are asked to carry out tasks that are in addition to what are agreed as normal fostering tasks. When this occurs, an additional £20 fee can be paid. Foster carers can receive up to 5 additional fees at a time. These are reviewed on a three monthly basis.

Interest Free Car Loans - To enable foster carers to transport children safely, interest free care loans are available so that foster carers can purchase safe and appropriate vehicles. This does not include short term connected persons carers or CAO's.

Insurance Scheme - At times all children can have accidents that cause damage. 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 North Lincolnshire Fostering insurance agents.

Hobbies

In order to encourage young people to participate in sporting and recreational activities an additional payment may, in certain circumstances, be made to foster carers to enable the child or young person to participate in hobbies and activities such as horse riding, dancing or other sporting activities etc.

Support Events – North Lincolnshire Fostering recognises the importance of facilitating support events to allow foster carers, children and young people 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 families the opportunity to meet together and experience a day out at a theme park. In recent years Flamingo Land has proved to be the favourite, as it caters for all age groups.
- **Foster carers Christmas party-** This is an opportunity for the foster carers to enjoy some festive entertainment with the fostering team during the festive period
- **Fun day** - This event takes place mid-September and involves a wide range of activities and fun events. This may include a BBQ, disco/karaoke, various inflatables, rodeo bull, clowns, circus skills and craft activities. Each year we have a theme and fancy dress is encouraged for all.
- **Children's Christmas Party** - The children are entertained by very experienced high quality entertainers who engage children across the whole age range and also encourage foster carer participation. Father Christmas visits the party to deliver Christmas selection boxes to the children and young people.
- **Pantomime** - This annual event takes place at the local theatre on the morning of Christmas Eve and an additional date in the first week of January. This event is integral to our Christmas celebrations.
- **Children in Care Achievement Awards and Talent Show** - Following the success of the art show, an achievement award night is scheduled in the Autumn to recognise the achievement of our children in care in the following categories; Inspiration, Learning, Sport, Contribution to Community and Creativity. This is a highly popular event that offers every child in care the opportunity to perform on stage on their own, within a group or with children from their foster carer family.
- **Take Part Thursday** - Children in care are invited to join in the fun and activities and this has provided the opportunities to develop a friendship group as well as their social and emotional skills. The feedback from CiC and their carers has been very positive. Activities have included Forest School, games tournament in the park, multi sports session, artwork and games, nature trail, picnic in the park, Hibaldstow Sky team day and party day. Good fun is had by all. We aim to build on this and have invited corporate parenting champions to explore the opportunities their own areas and organisations can offer with a view to expanding the number of children partaking in a wider variety of activities.

Other workshops are run throughout the year in consultation with children and young people in care, for example recent workshops have included 'make a film in a week'.

Support Groups and Consultation Activities for Foster Carers and Children in care

North Lincolnshire Fostering recognises the importance of involving Foster Carers in development. A number of systems have been developed that enable carers to contribute to these developments, they also give and receive support from other foster carers.

- **Foster Carer's Association** – The association is well established in North Lincolnshire. The association is a group of foster carers that elect their own Chair to represent North Lincolnshire Foster Carers. They act as a consultation, information and advice body and are able to liaise with North Lincolnshire Fostering on any issues that affect foster carers. They hold regular support group meetings and social activities including a fortnightly meeting at a local soft play area.
- **Bi Monthly Information Meetings** - North Lincolnshire Fostering facilitates a bi-monthly evening meeting with senior managers and is open to 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 representatives from the Children in care's Education Inclusion Team, the Transport Team, the Contact Team, the Children's Advocate and the Children in Care Nurse have all previously been invited to talk about the work they do.
- **Foster Carer's Coffee Morning** - Foster carers hold a fortnightly coffee morning to get together to share information and have time for the children to play together. These are arranged by a foster carer and supported by the fostering team. Senior managers will be invited to these meetings on a regular basis for foster carers to ask questions, share feedback and build relationships with them.
- **Connected person's coffee Morning**- Connected person can gain additional peer support through coffee mornings specifically for them. These also include TSD support groups and information sharing.
- **Children in Care Council** - There are three groups spanning across all age ranges for children in care who are fostered, living in children's homes, children of foster carers, privately fostered children and adopted children. The groups meet fortnightly, during term time. They have been consulted on various issues that are relevant to young people living in care.
- **Creative Conversation Events** - North Lincolnshire Council has established a creative conversation forum between the Children in Care Council and senior managers directly involved with the strategic and operational development for children in care. Children in Care and care leavers have the opportunity to discuss any topics relevant to their health, wellbeing and care and will shape future delivery.
- **Support Group for Children of Foster Carers** - A support group and a series of events has been set up which runs monthly and is facilitated by the fostering support workers.

8. Foster Carer Training

Core Training Elements - All potential foster carers must attend the Skills to Foster course as part of their assessment and training to equip them as proficient foster carers. There are core training elements in the course that are considered essential for a foster carer to undertake. These are:

- Role of the Foster Carer
- Safeguarding Children
- Health and Safety
- Understanding behaviour as communication

TSD Training - All foster carers will be expected to complete Training, Support and Development Standards (TSD) in the first nine months of approval, in order to demonstrate their ability to provide safe and effective foster care placements. Workshops are delivered to support this in addition to 1:1 sessions within the carers' home.

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

- Pre-approval – Essential training commences during their assessment and contributes to the completion of the TSDs.
- Induction – post approval. All new foster carer approvals will be expected to complete the TSD Standards within 9 months of approval. All Connected People (family, friend and/or significant person) will be expected to complete these standards within 15 months of approval.
- Foster care development – the development and maintenance of a Professional and Personal Development Plan identifies and sets timescales for undertaking any relevant training.

Other training modules offered - Foster carers are expected to undertake training as and when required to enable them to meet children's needs. North Lincolnshire Fostering produces an annual training programme, in consultation with carers.

The Foster Carer Training Plan includes training courses and workshops available for foster carers on a wide range of relevant subjects as follows:

Required Training Courses

- Attachment and Development
- Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness
- Education: The Foster Carer's Role
- Diversity - An Introduction Workbook
- Paediatric First Aid
- Prevent Agenda
- Training Support and Development Standards Workshops
- Child protection

- E-safety
- Induction day
- Skills to Foster

Advanced Training Courses

- Welcoming refugees
- Child Development
- Child and Adolescent- understanding neglect
- Supporting children who have experienced developmental and relational trauma
- Challenges of supporting a child who has experienced developmental trauma
- Introduction to therapeutic parenting
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Mental health and resilience
- Child trafficking, exploitation and modern day slavery
- Growing with substance misuse
- A solution focused approach
- Understanding the impact of relational and developmental trauma
- Food Hygiene E-Learning
- Mental Health and Resilience
- Foster Carers Role in Adoption - Bitesize
- Relationship Building Through Play - Bitesize
- Safeguarding Adolescents and Understanding Risky Behaviour – Bitesize
- Understanding Neuro-development- Bitesize
- Managing allegations - Bitesize
- Safer care - Bitesize
- Understanding shame - Bitesize
- Compassion Fatigue - Bitesize
- Intro to Non Violent Resistance - Bitesize
- Working with Birth Families - Bitesize
- Exploitation - Bitesize
- Working with children with disabilities - Bitesize

Training Involving Foster Carers and Children and Young People

- E-safety
- Attachment
- Exploitations
- Substance awareness

E-Learning: Learning Lincs

- Various Webinars
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child development
- Diversity
- Understanding neglect
- FGM
- County Lines

- Prevent/ Radicalisation
- Self harm
- Domestic abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Diversity
- Honour Based Violence

The North Lincolnshire Fostering has policies and procedures for the assessment, approval, support and supervision, training and development of all foster carers. These will apply to all foster carers. However, family and friends/connected persons and short breaks carers will be treated in line with specific guidance and the agreed disapplication of certain regulatory requirements.

9. Monitoring and Quality Management

Supervision of Staff

All staff are supervised formally on a monthly basis where issues relating to individual foster carers, children in placement, fostering related matters, delivery, training, career progression and corporate strategy and aspirations to improve delivery are discussed. This is recorded and stored. Each foster family is discussed a minimum of quarterly.

All staff are able to access the Practice Supervisors or Lead Officer at all other times for the purposes of seeking guidance, support and advice in relation to any fostering related issue or corporate matter.

Placement Sufficiency Planning

Foster care recruitment drives occur regularly during the year. The frequency and focus of each drive is dictated by current as well as projected demand. The Lead Officer, Fostering and Commissioning liaises with the Lead Officer's responsible for Children's Social Work and Disabled Children's to ensure that the number of potential placement requirements is predicted. See also **North Lincolnshire Sufficiency Strategy 2022 - 2024**

File Audit

Audits are undertaken by Practice Supervisors on a monthly basis. Senior Managers also undertake audits throughout the year in addition to thematic audits. Random audits are also undertaken during supervision when specific issues are identified. Ad hoc audits of quality of recording on files and supervisory visits as well as frequency of visits and contact with carers are also undertaken.

Staff receive copies of their audits and any themes highlighted across audits are fed back to the staff group to identify positive models and highlight areas for improvement where necessary.

Observations of Staff

The Lead Officer, Fostering and Commissioning and Practice Supervisors undertake observations of staff. Staff receive feedback from the observations during supervision. Senior managers also undertake direct observations of staff and practice throughout the year including the Fostering Panel and supervision of staff.

Management Reports and Monthly Monitoring Reports

Monthly, bi-monthly and quarterly monitoring statistics and reports are prepared by the Practice Supervisors, Lead Officer and the Information Team. This includes numbers of carers recruited, numbers of carers attending the skills to foster course, the number of assessments currently being undertaken by North Lincolnshire Fostering, frequency of visits, number of foster families approved at foster panel, number of foster families deregistered at foster panel, number of foster carers being annually reviewed and reasons for delay, private fostering and connected persons regulatory compliance, the frequency and nature/content of the Children in Care meetings, staff vacancies, staff sickness, compliments received, agenda and issues raised from foster carer bi-monthly meetings, budget reports, health and safety related incidents, allegations, complaints, and number of exemptions etc.

Quality of Provision

North Lincolnshire Fostering was inspected by Ofsted in October 2022 and was graded as Outstanding.

To ensure high quality is maintained, the Lead Officer monitors performance against the descriptors on a quarterly basis which is presented in a report to senior managers. An annual Fostering Dataset is collated and returned to Ofsted.

Panel reports

The fostering panel reports on issues of quality, timeliness and consistency through the panel advisor and written summaries prepared by the fostering panel chair and Agency Decision Maker.

Quarterly North Lincolnshire Fostering Team Business Reports are prepared and shared with the Fostering Panel and senior management team.

10. Name and Address of the Registered Provider and Registered Manager

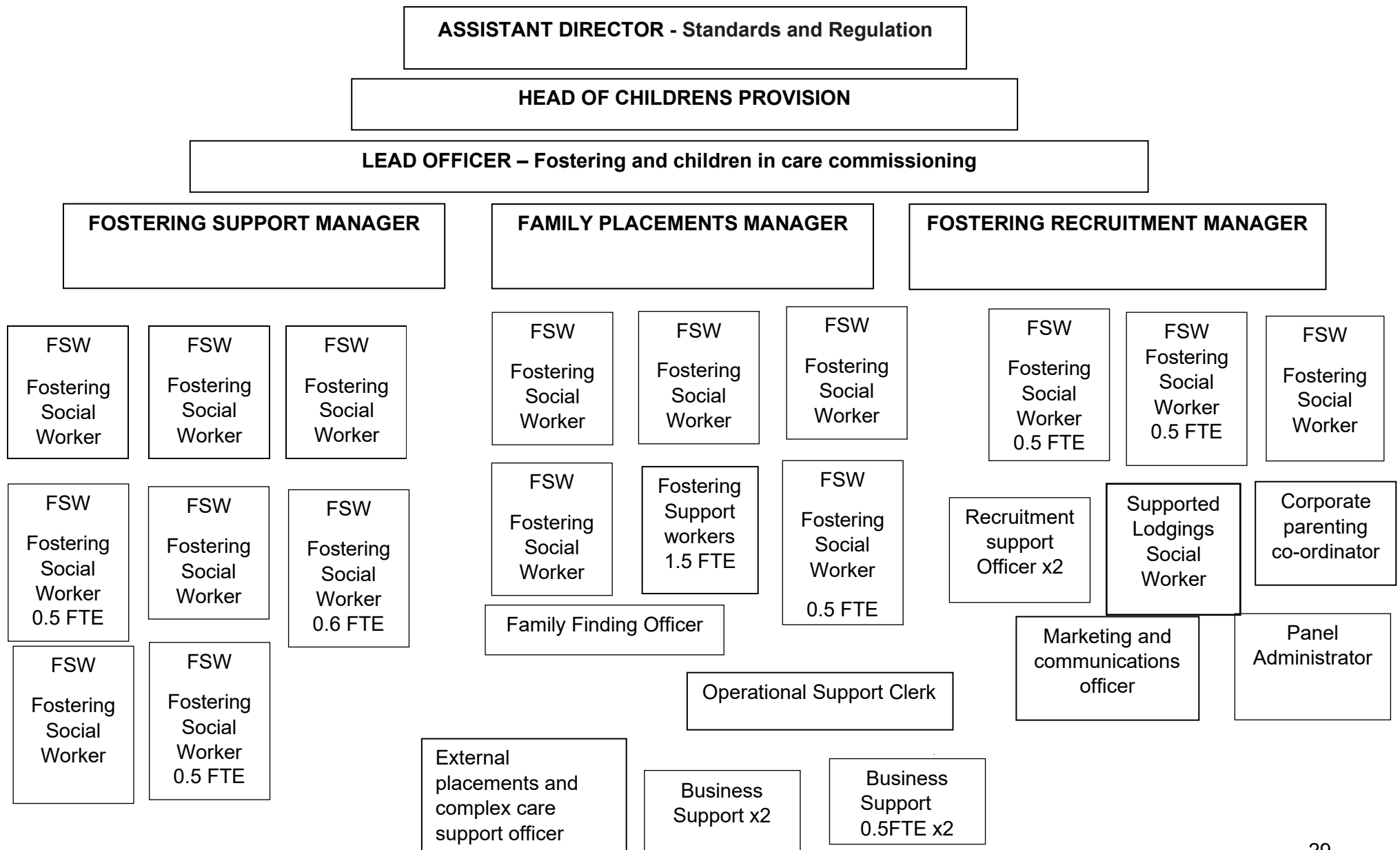
The Registered Provider: North Lincolnshire Council
Paul Cowling Assistant Director – Standards and Regulation Church Square House 30-40 High Street Scunthorpe North Lincolnshire DN15 6NL

01724 297024
The Registered Manager: North Lincolnshire Council
Jane Brennan Lead Officer – Fostering and Commissioning Church Square House 30-40 High Street Scunthorpe North Lincolnshire DN15 6NL 01724 297024

North Lincolnshire Fostering are delivered in North Lincolnshire through the North Lincolnshire Council North Lincolnshire Fostering team as detailed in the structure below.

11. Organisational Structure

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE FOSTERING TEAM



12. Staffing Qualifications and experience

North Lincolnshire Fostering is delivered and managed by staff with the appropriate skills and knowledge to do so in an efficient and effective manner. All staff are fully vetted and selected as being suitable to work with children and young people. They are managed trained, supervised and supported in order to ensure that the best possible outcomes for children in care are achieved. All employees are provided with appropriate written contracts, job descriptions and conditions of service. Personnel records of those working within the North Lincolnshire 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 North Lincolnshire Fostering Team having a working knowledge of each other's roles. If the designated Fostering Social Worker 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 Post holder	Date
Assistant director – Children's Standards and Regulation	Male	Diploma in Social Work (DIPSW) Diploma in Social Services Management	1995 1998
Lead Officer for Fostering and Commissioning	Female	BA Hons Social Work Studies Post Qualifying Award consolidation ILM 5	2008
Support team manager	Female	BA Hons Social Work Practice Educator 1 and 2	2013
Family placements manager	Female	BA Hons Social Work Consolidation module	2010 2012
Recruitment Manager	Female	BA Hons Social Work Practice Educator 1 CMI Leadership and Management Level 3	2017 2021 2022
Fostering Social Worker (0.7)	Female	BA Hons Social Work PQ Consolidating Practice	2010
Fostering Social Worker	Male	BA Hons Social Work	2012
Fostering Social Worker	Female	BA Hons Social Work and DIPSW	2001
Fostering Social Worker	Female	MA Hons Social Work	2019

Fostering Social Worker	Female	MA Hons Social Work PDP Level 1	2018
Fostering Social Worker	Female	BA (Hons) SW and DipSW Practice educator 2	2001 2008
Fostering Social Worker (0.5)	Female	BA Hons social work Post Qualifying Award Consolidation Practice Educator 1 and 2	2012
Fostering Social Worker (0.5)	Female	MA Social Work Post Qualifying Award Consolidation Practice Educator 1	2011
Fostering Social Worker (0.5)	Female	MA Social Work Post Qualifying Award Consolidation	2008
Fostering Social Worker (0.6)	Female	BA Hons Social Work Post Qualifying Award Consolidation Practice Educator 1	2010 2014
Fostering Social Worker	Female	Diploma in Social Work Practice Educator 1 and 2	1996
Fostering Social Worker	Female	MA Social Work	2020
Fostering Social Worker	Female	Bsc Hons Social Work	2017
Fostering Social Worker (0.6)	Female	BSc (HONS) Applied Psychology MA Social Work	2009
Fostering Social Worker (0.5)	Female	BA Hons in Social Work Diploma in Play Therapy Post Qualifying Award in Social Work Advanced Diploma in Therapeutic Play	1997 2001 2004 2006
Fostering Social Worker (0.5)	Female	BSC Social Work	2017
Supported lodging social worker	Female	Social Worker (BA)	2012
Recruitment Support Officer	Female	Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care	2017
Recruitment Support Officer	Female		
Fostering support Worker	Female	Ofqual level 3 diploma for the Children and Young people's workforce- 2014	2014
Fostering Support Worker (0.5)	Female	BA Hons Counselling	
Marketing and Communications Officer	Female	Masters Level PGCE in Lifelong Learning Masters in Journalism BA Honors English	2020 2011 2009

Agency Decision Makers

Name	Post	Decision to be made
Nikki Alcock	Head of Partnerships, evaluation and outcomes for children.	To make decisions about the approval of foster carers. To decide any terms of approval. To consider the first review of carers, and any other review if requested by North Lincolnshire Fostering provider, and to make a decision on the continuing approval of carers.
Di Rees	Head of children's practice and assurance (Principal Social Worker)	To make decisions on other matters, or cases referred by North Lincolnshire Fostering provider, including termination of approval in some cases.

13. Complaints, Representations and important contact information

At times, foster carers and children in foster care may feel unhappy about the support they receive. North Lincolnshire Fostering works within North Lincolnshire Council's complaints procedures. In the first instance North Lincolnshire Fostering will attempt to deal with any complaint or representation through discussion and mediation, 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. There are three stages to the complaint process and complainants have a right to contact the Local Government Ombudsman if they remain dissatisfied following completion of stage three.

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

Children's Advocacy
Hewson House
Station Road
Brigg
North Lincolnshire
DN20 8XJ
Telephone 01724 296639
Mobile 07717586247

The Independent Complaints Officer is:

Lesley Cooper
Church Square House
30-40 High Street
Scunthorpe

North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL
Telephone 01724 296426

OFSTED

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

Ofsted National Business Unit
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Telephone 0300 123 1231
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
Website www.rights4me.org.uk
Email theteam.rights4me@csci.gsi.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Children and Families

Councillor Julie Reed
Conservative Group Office
Church Square House
30-40 High Street
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL
Telephone 01724 297614
Mobile 077762056445
Email CLlr.juliereed@northlincs.gov.uk

14. Contact Details for North Lincolnshire Fostering

North Lincolnshire Fostering
Church Square House 30–
40 High Street Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL
Telephone 01724 297024

