



## Match Foster Care

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### **Statement of Purpose**

**August 2018**

This statement has been produced in accordance with Regulation 3 of The Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011, Standard 16 of the National Minimum Standards; Fostering Services 2011, Chapter 4 of The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations, Volume 4: Fostering Services and any associated guidance and amendments.

This Statement sets out the Aims and Objectives of Match Foster Care and the Services and Facilities provided by the agency.

This Statement of Purpose is provided to Ofsted. Our Ofsted Registration Number is SC442843.

This Statement of Purpose is available on request to anyone working for the purposes of Match Foster Care, foster parents and potential foster parents, children placed with our foster parents, their birth parents and their Local Authorities.

This Statement of Purpose is reviewed and updated as necessary, at least annually. It is available on Match Foster Care's website:

[www.matchfostercare.co.uk](http://www.matchfostercare.co.uk)

Our Ofsted Registration Number is SC442843

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## **1. Key Principles of Match Foster Care**

- We will always place the welfare of the child and young people at the centre of our work.
- We are committed to safeguarding children, young people, their families, our staff and foster parents. Everything we do must promote the safety and well-being of the children and young people we work with.
- We will always work in an open, honest and transparent way with every person who comes into contact with our agency.
- We will treat our foster parents as core members at the centre of the team of professionals around the children they are caring for.
- We will support our foster parents in a way that achieves only the best outcomes for children and young people, striving to fundamentally improve the life chances of children and young people in our care.
- We will treat all children and young people as individuals and take their unique needs, wishes and feelings into account in relation to the care they are receiving.
- We will listen closely to what our service users have to say about our service and feed back to them on how this has led to service development.
- We will ensure that all children and adults, regardless of age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender, religion, language or class are treated equally and fairly and are fully included in the activities promoted by the agency.
- We will comply with all government legislation and good practice guidelines relating to our service provision.
- We will take care to always make sure we have sufficient resources to support any expansion of Match Foster Care so that the quality of the service is always maintained.

## **2. Aims & Objectives of Match Foster Care**

- To provide a high quality fostering service which offers the best possible standards of care, safety and protection for children.
- To recruit, assess, support and train a diverse range of foster parents who can provide safe and secure care to children and young people with wide ranging needs.
- To ensure that children and young people have stability and choice in placement and to ensure that children are carefully matched with foster parents who are capable of meeting their individual needs.
- To promote equal opportunities for children, foster parents and all staff.
- To ensure that people who work in connection with Match Foster Care are suitable to work with children and young people and are managed, trained and supported to ensure the best possible outcomes for children young people in placement.
- To ensure that children and young people are supported in making contributions to their Care Planning and to the service they receive from the Agency.
- To develop the skills and knowledge of foster parents so that they are able to support young people to prepare for, and build the skills necessary for, living independently.
- To ensure that appropriate records are kept in relation to foster parents, children and young people placed or referred to the Match Foster Care and that these are kept securely in line with our legal responsibilities.
- In line with the Every Child Matters outcomes, Match Foster Care will ensure that children are cared for in a way that promotes their ability to:
  1. Be Healthy
  2. Make a Positive Contribution
  3. Stay Safe
  4. Achieve Economic Well-Being
  5. Enjoy and Achieve
- To use the Secure Base Model (Beek & Schofield, 2004) to support our work with foster parents, children and young people.

- To ensure all services delivered by Match Foster Care are based on sound social work principles and good practice, in accordance with the standards set out by the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC).
- To recruit a range of people from diverse backgrounds to ensure that we can best match the religious, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, physical, emotional and social needs of any children or young people referred to our service.
- To ensure the assessment of prospective parents is robust and undertaken by suitably qualified social workers, ensuring the highest standards of care and safety.
- To ensure placements meet all of the individual needs of children and young people and will not discriminate because of disability, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender or class.
- To support each child and young person to achieve a positive sense of their own identity.
- To ensure placements offer children and young people the highest levels of stability and continuity of care.
- To maintain low caseloads for staff to allow them to provide sufficient support and supervision to foster parents and children.
- To ensure all children and young people are supported to feel “part of a family” rather than a “Looked After Child in a placement”.

### **3. Company Structure & Roles**

Match Foster Care Ltd is an Independent Fostering Provider. It is a Private Limited Company registered under the Companies Act 1985.

**Company Number: 07366358**

In accordance with the Companies Act 1985 and 1989, Match Foster Care has a Board of Directors which meets on a regular basis and is responsible for the corporate governance of the agency.

- ***Managing Director/Responsible Individual/ADM (Agency Decision Maker)***

**Carrie Marsh**

BA (Hons) Degree in Social Work

Registered Social Worker with HCPC

Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care (CYPS)

As the Responsible Individual, Carrie is responsible for supervising the management of Match Foster Care. Along with the other member of the Board, she will receive written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the service and monitor the management and outcomes of the service to ensure it is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children.

The Directors are responsible for the strategic management of the Agency. The Directors meet quarterly to discuss matters arising in relationship to the function and performance of the Agency.

As an Agency Decision Maker, Carrie takes account of the fostering panel's recommendations and any recommendation by the IRM before deciding whether or not to approve or continue to approve a person as a foster parent, and on what terms.

- ***Director/Financial Manager***

**Simon Marsh**

As the Financial Manager Simon takes the lead on any financial decisions, including the payment of foster parents, staff and subsidiaries.

The Directors are responsible for the strategic management of the Agency. The Directors meet quarterly to discuss matters arising in relationship to the function and performance of the Agency.

- ***Registered Manager/ ADM (Agency Decision Maker)***

**Jacqueline Dunster**

BA (Hons) Degree Law and History

Ex-Ofsted Social Care Regulatory Inspector (Fostering Specialist)

Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW)

Registered Social Worker with HCPC

The Registered Manager is responsible for recruitment and retention of staff and foster parents, writing policy, procedures and guidance, supervision and training of staff and foster parents and ensuring equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice are promoted within Match Foster Care. The Registered Manager runs the service ethically, effectively and efficiently to ensure delivery of a high quality service which meets the needs of children and foster parents and ensures that children placed are safeguarded and their welfare promoted. The Registered Manager ensures there are systems in place to monitor the quality of care provided in order to drive service improvements.

Jacqueline takes an active role in the development of the agency, which includes ensuring that our policy and procedures fall in line with relevant law, legislation and guidance.

As an Agency Decision Maker, Jacqueline takes account of the fostering panel's recommendations and any recommendation by the IRM before deciding whether or not to approve or continue to approve a person as a foster parent, and on what terms.

- ***The Team***

The team at Match comprises those above and a multi-disciplinary group of qualified, skilled and experienced professionals. It includes Assistant Managers/Supervising Social Workers, Senior Supervising Social Workers, Supervising Social Workers, a Registered Nurse/Health Specialist, Education Workers, Fostering Support Workers and Administrative staff.

All staff employed by Match Foster Care are appropriately qualified and subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS), renewable on a three-year cycle. Written and verbal references are sought for all members of staff along with checks relating to their educational qualifications and identity. These are followed up with telephone calls to confirm references.

All recruitment information is held on electronic personnel files. All those managing or working for the Agency are subject to Schedule 1 checks in accordance with The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011.

Match Foster Care holds insurance cover in line with Local Authority recommendations.

#### **4. Monitoring and Controlling**

- The management team is responsible for ensuring high quality practice. To support this, monitoring and quality assurance is undertaken on an on-going basis and reported to the management meetings which are recorded. Quality Assurance, Monitoring and Controlling activity is compliant with the legislation relating to fostering services.
- Roles are clearly defined between the Responsible Individual and Registered Manager. Line management roles and responsibilities within Match Foster Care are clear and are known to staff and foster parents.
- Reports are completed on a regular basis in line with Regulation 35 of the Fostering Services (England) Regulations, 2011. These identify learning from the monitoring which is provided to Ofsted and to the Board of Match Foster Care.
- Three monthly National Minimum Standard 25 Reports go to the Board of Directors on the management, outcomes and financial state of the service; the outcomes for children and young people; and compliance with the conditions of registration.
- Match Foster Care informs the relevant authorities of events and notifications arising under Regulation 36 of the Fostering Services (England) Regulations, 2011, within the required timescales.
- Communication between staff and foster parents is via regular Support Groups, newsletters, regular supervision visits and support visits / calls. Parents' views on all aspects of the agency are sought at least annually.
- Match Foster Parent contracts the services of an independent accountant to ensure that all financial procedures are up to date and these are monitored remotely via Xero accounting software.
- Each placing authority is given a contract detailing the charges for each placement and what services this will include. Our costs are open and transparent.
- Each foster parent is given a financial statement detailing the elements of maintenance (allowance) and salary (fee), which are paid by the agency.
- All approved foster parents have a Foster Care Agreement which outlines their roles and responsibilities as foster parents and the responsibilities of Match Foster Care to them.

- Match Foster Care ensures that staff contracts of employment and Foster Care Agreements require disclosure of any conflicts of interest either in working for or on behalf of Match Foster Care or in caring for a particular child.
- In line with our Supervision of Staff Policy, the designated line manager is responsible for monitoring and auditing records to ensure compliance with Match Foster Care's Policies and Procedures.
- The fostering panel provides independent scrutiny, reporting on the quality of reports presented to it and making recommendations about the suitability of people to foster. In addition, the panel can provide advice and guidance on other issues presented to it by the agency.
- Children and young people provide their views and comments on the suitability of foster parents for their annual reviews. Young people also take part in regular consultation exercises which influence aspects of the agency's practice.
- Young people play an active role in the assessment of prospective foster parents and the recruitment of staff.
- Regular consultation with foster parents, including at their annual reviews, provides an opportunity for foster parents to provide their views about the effectiveness of the service.

## **5. Services Provided.**

*Match Foster Care will meet a range of needs by providing:*

1. Emergency and short-term foster care
  2. Permanent care through long-term fostering
  3. Respite care
  4. Placements for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
- Match Foster Care employs Fostering Support Workers who can undertake direct work with children and young people, including work on their Life Story, Wishes and Feelings, and Emotions. They are also able to offer direct support to foster parents, when needed.

- Match Foster Care employs a Registered General Nurse with significant experience with Looked After Children and teenage pregnancy. She is able to undertake direct work with children and young people on all aspects of their health. She supports foster parents in meeting more complex health and medical needs of children. She coordinates group work with young people on aspects of their health. With the agreement of the Local Authority, she is also able to undertake LAC Health Reviews for children and young people.
- Match Foster Care is able to support individual Life Skills work with young people who are preparing to live independently.
- Match Foster Care is able to support supervision of contact where this is in the best interests of the children and agreed by the Local Authority.
- Match Foster Parent provides a large number of activities and events each year for children, young people, foster parents, children who foster and wider families. These provide opportunities to build supportive relationships for both foster parents and children.
- Match Foster Care advertises to recruit suitable foster parents. Following an initial visit, candidates' applications are processed and relevant checks undertaken, including DBS checks for all adults in the household. Candidates are asked to attend an 'Introduction to Fostering' training course and are offered the opportunity to attend other relevant training during the assessment period. When an application is accepted, the assessment starts with minimum delay.
- Once applicants have been recommended for approval by the Fostering Panel and the Agency Decision Maker has agreed approval, they are allocated a qualified social worker and regular, formal supervision takes place. Unannounced visits take place at least annually. Every foster parent must undertake a core training programme. They are supported to complete the Training, Support and Development (TSD) Standards for Foster Parents within 12 months of approval.
- Support Groups take place regularly to enable foster parents to develop informal networks amongst themselves and provide further opportunities to share and learn new skills. Each foster parent's approval is reviewed annually and more frequently in certain circumstances.
- Each foster parent is given an up to date set of Match Foster Care policies and procedures (Foster Parent Handbook). These are also available in the parent access

section of the Match Foster Care website. The Handbook is updated on an on-going basis and any changes or additions notified to foster parents.

- Staff and foster parents are supported to develop their skills and knowledge, which are monitored in formal supervision. There is an expectation that staff and parents attend regular 'core' training sessions. Specialist training is accessed to meet the identified needs of any child / foster parent especially if it is felt that to do so, would improve the skills of the parent in supporting a particular child or young person placed or expand the foster parent's knowledge, enabling them to meet more varied needs in children and young people.
- Each foster parent is provided with support to access up to 14 nights respite per annum in line with the child or young person's needs.
- Specific matching is undertaken on all placements demonstrating how a child's needs will be met by the foster parent. This establishes any areas where additional support will be required to support the foster parent in meeting the needs of the specific child.
- Ensuring that foster parents have access to as much information as possible either prior to or upon the point of placement is essential in managing any risks associated with the placement. A Matching Form and Risk Assessment are completed prior to the commencement of the placement. The Risk Assessment is reviewed and updated as risks change in relation to specific children and young people.
- All foster parents and Local Authorities have 24-hour support from a qualified social worker.
- Individual files are held for each child in placement on FosterTrack©, which is a secure electronic database. All Foster parents and staff also have personnel files on FosterTrack©, which include information on training, case records, statutory checks etc.
- Any allegations of abuse made against a foster parent are documented and dealt with immediately and appropriate referrals made to the relevant authorities. Ofsted is notified in line with Fostering Regulations, 2011. The Responsible Individual is responsible for ensuring Safeguarding systems and procedures are in place. The day to day responsibility for Safeguarding lies with the Registered Manager and, in their absence, with the Responsible Individual. Safeguarding is monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that policies and procedures are adhered to.

- Administrative records on FosterTrack© are maintained to ensure that there is clear accountability for, and evidence of, work undertaken. This is the responsibility of the Registered Manager and the Responsible Individual and is reviewed at management meetings on a regular basis.
- All records are stored securely on FosterTrack©, which is password protected. Information is only shared in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## **6. Fitness of Premises for use by a Fostering Service.**

- The Agency is based at Severn House, 30 – 32 Ombersley Street West, Droitwich, Worcestershire, WR9 8QZ, which is security alarmed with key pad entry. The Agency has a sub-office at 3 – 5 Vale Street, Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire, ST4 7LR, which is security alarmed.
- The agency is fully insured by Markel which is a leading health & social care insurance company.
- Match Foster Care has a contract with Peninsula, which provides advice and support on Human Resources and Health & Safety issues in the workplace.

## **7. Financial Requirements.**

- A Business Plan is in place and all matters relating to Match Foster Care's viability are overseen by the Director/Finance Manager and Chartered Accountants, Ormerod Rutter. These records are available upon request to placing authorities.
- The Agency has a clear breakdown of services and charges which will be made available to all placing authorities.
- Foster parents are self-employed and, therefore, will pay their own tax and national insurance. Guidance and support on this is included in the Foster Parents' Handbook. Foster parents are given annual financial reports. The Finance Manager also provides advice and support to foster parents in dealing with their tax and national insurance liabilities.

## **8. Comments & Complaints.**

- All children and young people placed with Match Foster Care are advised on the comments and complaints procedure and provided with a guide highlighting these procedures. The Children's Guide provides a list of numbers and appropriate helplines, including details of the child or young person's social worker and Independent Reviewing Officer, Ofsted and the Children's Commissioner for England.
- Foster parents and other professionals are also advised on how to make a comment or complaint about the agency. This policy is made available to all staff of the agency and, upon request, to others wishing to make a comment or complaint.