

**PARENT & CHILD PLACEMENTS**

**FOSTERING PROCEDURES**

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| **Role of the Foster Carer** |
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| Whenever possible the foster carer should introduce themselves and provide an outline of their family circumstances to the parent before a placement commences. Ideally a pre placement visit should take place for the parent and child. |
| The foster carer will need to work effectively with the parent and the child’s social workers, be involved with all relevant professionals and be invited to all meetings. The foster carer will also need to be aware of the Care Plan and told of the other assessments which are being sought in respect of the parent and child, and any Court dates/Hearings. |
| It is important that all relevant information relating to the placement is provided to the foster carer prior to any parent and child placement proceeding. The social worker for the child must provide the carer with other relevant background information, such as the most recent case conference minutes, which would give an overview of the parent’s previous parenting history and their family/friends support network. The placement plan should contain all the above information together with information on the future Care Plan for the parent/child. The foster carer should know about the impact of any past parenting issues, and the potential impact of these upon the parent’s current parenting capacity. Every foster carer is required to have a safe storage place in their home for confidential information. |
| The foster carer will be expected to offer guidance and assistance to the parent in managing the care tasks for the baby. This may include direct instruction or modelling. It may include responding to questions, or it may include practical support such as accompanying the parent to parent/baby groups, health visiting clinic, shopping etc. The placement should provide a safe and friendly environment to provide supervision and support to the parent in order to assess, improve and consolidate parenting skills. |
| The foster carer will be expected to show the parent how any technical appliances work, so that they are able to use cooking and cleaning facilities appropriately. If the placement progresses positively it must be expected that the parent demonstrates less reliance on the carer’s support. |
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| The foster carer should promote and support the key attachment between child and parent. |
| The foster carer will be expected to keep a daily record noting observations of the parent’s ability to respond to their baby’s needs, manage the routine and manage the practical tasks of washing, ironing, shopping, budgeting etc. These observations will inform any parenting programme or assessment that has been agreed. The foster carer will be expected to be open and honest about the parent’s strengths and difficulties when recording their observations and the parent must be given the opportunity to read and comment on these observations. |

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| The foster carers will agree to provide 24hr support and to transport the parent and baby when appropriate and agreed. |
| The foster carer may undertake limited babysitting subject to agreement with the parent and social workers. |
| The foster carer will complete and provide an updated Safe Caring Plan in relation to the individual parent and child placement. The foster carer will inform the parent of any household rules and routines and the Safe Caring Plan. |
| The foster care will be expected to periodically check on the care and safety of the child in placement and therefore must have access to the child at all times whilst in the home environment. Foster carers must intervene if the level of risk to the child from a parent would be detrimental to their welfare. |
| The foster carer will always seek medical advice or treatment for any fall or injury that a child has sustained. A report of any injury should be made to the child’s social worker and supervising social worker a soon as possible. |
| The foster carer will respect and give recognition to the importance of a parent and child’s ethnic origin, cultural background, religion, language, gender, sexuality and disability. |
| The foster carer will attend a pre-placement meeting, family centre service agreement meetings, reviews, Core Group meetings, planning meetings, child protection conferences and any other meetings required. |
| The foster carer will liaise with the child’s social worker, health visitor, their supervising social worker and any other professionals involved. Should the placement be terminated because of a decision made by the authority relating to a serious issue where the wellbeing of the child is compromised, or because the parent has left the placement without the agreement of the authority, the expectation will be that the child will be moved to a child only placement. Although the progress of the placement will be reviewed, the child may also be subject to the child in care review mechanism, as will the parent if also looked after. The foster carers will remain subject to the foster carer review mechanism.  |
| Any financial issues should be addressed at the start of placement so that it is clear who is responsible for all expenditure. |

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| **Responsibility of the Parent** |
| The parent will be expected to care for their child at all times (getting up, bathing, feeding, changing under supervision from carer until it is agreed it is no longer necessary). |
| The parent will be expected to manage the day and bedtime routine, which fits in with the foster carer’s household. When the parent is settling a child for bed it is their responsibility to check on the child throughout the evening and during the night as required. |
| The parent will be expected to demonstrate their competence in attending to all their child’s physical needs as well as interacting positively with their child. |
| The parent will be expected to shop, budget and generally care for themselves and their child. One of the placement aims will be for the parent to achieve greater independence and skill in these areas. |
| The parent will keep their room tidy and leave the kitchen, bathroom and any other communal areas in a tidy, clean condition after use. Personal clothing and belongings must be kept in parent’s own room. The foster carer cannot be responsible for property or articles that are lost or damaged. |
| The parent will contribute to the wellbeing of everyone in the foster carer’s home and in public by demonstrating non-aggressive, non-threatening behaviours. |
| The foster carer may make random room checks to ensure the safety of parent and child and therefore all bedroom doors must be kept unlocked. |
| The foster carer will write accurate daily record sheets, which will be shared daily with the parent and signed by both parent and carer. |
| If there are any differences of opinion on childcare these should be discussed and recorded. However, the parent will need to accept the final decision from the foster carer who will endeavour to contact the health visitor and/or social worker at the first opportunity. |
| The foster carer will complete and share the safe caring plan with the parent. |
| Smoking is not permitted inside the foster carer’s home. If a parent smokes it must be in the designated outside area. On returning to the home, the parent must wash their hands before contact with their baby. |
| If there are other children in the household the parent in placement must not provide any practical or supervisory care. |
| No alcohol should be kept by the parent in the carer’s home. |

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| No involvement with any illegal substances is permitted in the foster carer’s home. However, it is recognised some parent’s may be supported in a parent and child placement whilst the parent is supervised by a treatment programme for drug or alcohol misuse. |
| The parent should inform the foster carer and child’s social worker of any appointments, and check if childcare cover is required. |
| The parent’s circumstances and history is strictly confidential to the named foster carers and not their families or friends. Parents can feel reassured that no discussions will take place between family members and friends. |
| All parents over the age of 18 will have a DBS enhanced check and/or Police National Computer check and the results will be fed into the pre-placement risk assessment. |
| **Role of Supervising Social Worker** |
| All parent and child foster carers must be fully supported by a designated and experienced supervising social worker who will offer support and supervision. |
| Any known or potential risks to foster carer and their family from members of the child’s family or others must be assessed. No foster carer or member of the fostering household should knowingly be placed at risk as a consequence of providing a placement. |
| The supervising social worker should ensure that full parent and child information is passed on by the child’s social worker to the foster carer prior to placement. |
| The supervising social worker will be responsible for monitoring/supervising and supporting the management of placement. |
| The supervising social worker will visit in the first week of placement and thereafter, as agreed, providing supervision and support, as well as telephone contacts. The supervising social worker will also undertake unannounced visits to the placement. |
| The supervising social worker will read and sign off all daily record sheets and report any issues that are appropriate. The supervising social worker will discuss with the carer their recorded observations to ensure objectivity remains. |
| The supervising social worker will check with foster carers that they have researched/accessed groups or courses available (if appropriate) for the parent and baby in the local area. |

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| **Role of the Child’s Social Worker** |
| The child’s social worker should visit the placement regularly, along with phone/e-mail contact. During these visits social workers should discuss individually and together with the parent and carer how the placement is going and provide opportunity to share concerns/worries. |
| The child’s social worker should regularly undertake a room check. |
| The child’s social worker will arrange and chair regular placement reviews following the placement agreement. Placement reviews should be structured around the original placement agreement, and the reviewing process should highlight placement progress. Every review should consider future plans for the family. |
| The child’s social worker should check out any arranged appointments and childcare cover that needs to be approved by the carers. |
| The child’s social worker needs to consider the second parent, if appropriate and attention and scrutiny must be given to the parent’s relationships, both of their involvement in the assessment process and future planning. |
| Should a dispute arise within the placement, the supervising social worker and the child’s social worker will initially undertake a joint visit. If necessary the child’s social worker will then arrange a follow up meeting. |
| To ensure prompt payment to the carers, the child’s social worker will inform of the placement start date, confirm the status of the parent and if the child is subject to care proceedings. If the parent is not a Child in Care then the financial arrangements of the placement need to be discussed. |
| The child’s social worker must ensure that the carer has all relevant information at the latest by the date of the pre-placement Planning Meeting. If the placement is made in an emergency basis, placement information must be supplied within 5 days. |
| **Looked After Parents** |
| The child’s social worker must visit the placement to meet with the parent and the foster carer. The parent’s social worker will provide an opportunity for the parents to discuss any issues or worries and will assist the parent to address them. |
| The child’s social worker and supervising social worker and support worker must work closely together in monitoring and reviewing the placement. |
| The placement agreement meeting is an essential meeting in preparing for a change of placement for the looked after young person. The parent’s responsibilities in this document will be referred to and adjusted within the placement agreement meeting. |

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| The foster carer will support the parent in relation to education, home tuition and legal appointments and provide transport and childcare if necessary. Regard must be given to the parents contact with their family members, time out (with and without baby), babysitting, household tasks and level of practical support. |
| A list of daily tasks for parent to complete, in relation to the child, and their own routine may be developed and shared with the carer to support expectations of parent. |
| Any known or potential risks to foster carer(s) and their family from members of the parents’ family or others must or others must be assessed. No foster carer or member of the fostering household should knowingly be placed in a position of risk as a conseque3nce of providing a parent and child placement. |
| Daily written evidence based reports will be shared by the foster carer with the parent to highlight and encourage further discussion. These reports will be signed by both parties and may be used in Court Proceedings. The reports will be shared with the child’s social worker regularly. |

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