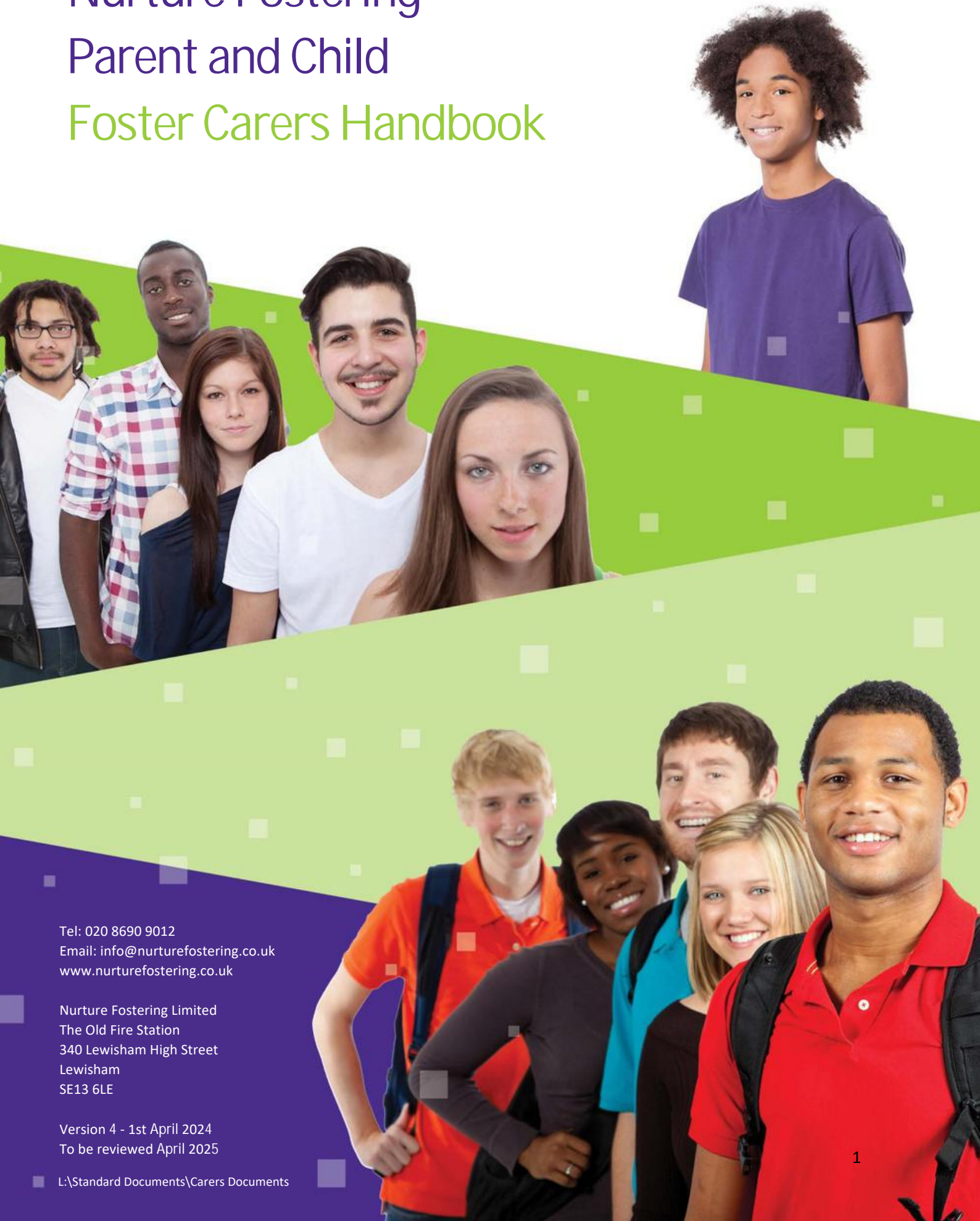


Nurture Fostering Parent and Child Foster Carers Handbook



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Version 4 - 1st April 2024
To be reviewed April 2025

Fostering Parents and Babies Together

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1. Introduction

Parent and child fostering can be very rewarding to provide as you will be teaching parenting skills to help a young or vulnerable adult parent. However it can also be very complex and foster parents should be sure that they understand what to do if something goes wrong and they need to step in to protect a child. Foster parents should make sure that they are clear what kind of arrangement this is, because the action you take will depend on each legal situation. For all parents and child placements you should be clear that you will not keep any secrets about the risks to a child and your assessment will be shared openly with the social worker and other professionals. You should keep a detailed log of significant events on eCare, which will be required weekly by the child's social worker. Daily recordings will be required for a parent and child placement. You may even have to give evidence in Court.

2. What you need to ask when accepting a placement

- Is the aim of this placement to teach parenting or to monitor and observe?
- Are there risks to your household from parents' mental health, drug or alcohol use or domestic violence?
- What will the baby's father's or mother's role be?
- Where will the baby sleep?
- What will I be responsible for i.e., baby's feeds, clothing etc.
- How much supervision am I being asked to provide?
- Is the matter before the Court?
- Who is undertaking the social work assessments for the parent?

3. What you need to consider when accepting a placement

- How will this placement fit in with the current household?
- How can I manage any school runs?
- The level of observations and recordings; can I manage this? They will be required to be uploaded onto eCare every single day.

4. Placement stability and variation

Foster parents should be mindful that a parent and child placement can commence with one plan but dependent on how the parent responds to and works with all the professionals the plan may change considerably. During the placement period parents can become reluctant to engage, meaning your role as the foster parent to safeguard the child could lead to a more active role in caring for a younger child / baby. It is unlikely that this change in behaviour can be predicted but foster parents need to be realistic that just as a child's needs change in placement, that of a parent and child placement may change over a period of time.

5. Why do we provide parent and child fostering?

A Local Authority sometimes wishes to commission an assessment of a parent's ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of his or her child, to inform its decision making about the provision of support services or intervention through care proceedings. Sometimes the Court will request such an assessment within the framework of care proceedings. Most commonly these are arrangements for parents and their babies.

The sections below set out the different scenarios whereby arrangements may be made for a parent (or parents) and their child (or children) to live with approved foster parents for the purposes of an assessment.

A Type 1 – A voluntary arrangement by the Local Authority where the child is not looked after

Where a Local Authority wish to assess a parent's parenting capacity in the context of support provided to the child/family under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 or pre care proceedings, this would need to be with the agreement of the parent. The Local Authority may decide to make an arrangement with the family to live with a Local Authority foster parent to make the assessment, rather than to make use of a residential family centre.

Since in this case the child is not looked after by the Local Authority, none of the provisions of the Children Act 1989 relating to looked after children will apply, and the foster parent will not be acting in their capacity as a foster parent under the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011. In such a case the Local Authority will need to be satisfied that the arrangement is appropriate, in the sense that the foster parents have the necessary skills to participate in the assessment, and will not place at risk the welfare of any foster child who is placed in the household.

B Type 2 – A voluntary placement by the Local Authority where the child is looked after

In a situation where the child is looked after by the council and the parents are 18 or older, the provisions relating to looked after children will apply in relation to the child only. The child will be placed with the foster parent under Section 22 of the Children Act 1989, and the social work team has a duty to make the most appropriate placement available for both the parent and child. In making the placement it will therefore need to consider the skills and capacity of the foster parent, although the assessment of the parent's ability is not covered by the 2011 Regulations.

Although the child will be fostered by the foster parent, the child's parent or parents will also be living with the child in the foster parent's household. As the parent will not be a looked after child, the provisions in respect of looked after children will not apply to them, regardless of whether the parent is under 18 or is older or has previously been a looked after child.

In these circumstances the parent will still hold parental responsibility in respect of their child, and be living in the same household as the child's foster parent. It will therefore be **vital** that respective roles and arrangements for delegated authority are clarified when the arrangements are being made. These must be set out in the child's Placement Plan and Care plan. The foster parent's task in

relation to undertaking an assessment of the parent's capabilities will not be governed by the 2011 Regulations, but will be closely matched with their responsibilities towards the looked after child.

The fostering service will need to satisfy themselves that the proposed arrangements will not adversely affect the foster parent's responsibilities towards other children. Any necessary support should be provided to enable the arrangements to succeed. As with any placement when another child is already placed with the foster parent, the social worker for that child would need to agree to the new placement in your home.

For the purposes of the 2011 Regulations, a parent living with a foster parent in the above circumstances is a member of the foster parent's household. The fostering service's safeguarding policy must include a statement of measures to be taken to safeguard children placed with foster parents before any arrangements are made for a parent and child to join the household. The 2011 Regulations allow for DBS checks on parents to be obtained but these are not required to be taken before placements.

C Type 3 – A voluntary placement by the Local Authority where both the child and parent are looked after

This applies where a young parent lives in a foster home with their child and they are both looked after children. They both will have their own Placement Plan and Care Plan. Again it is important to make a written plan setting out who is doing what for the parent and child, how finances will be arranged to make sure the parent learns to develop the skills to look after his or her child.

The Placement Plan will focus on the young parent's own development, preparation for independent living and helping them to meet the needs of their child. However the Placement Plan should also record what steps you will take if you have any concerns about the wellbeing of parent and child.

D Type 4 – An arrangement directed by the Courts where the child is looked after

You may be asked where care proceedings are in progress, to contribute towards the social workers' assessment for Court of the child and their parents. The placement is made this way because of concerns that the parent will need a lot of help or supervision to look after their child. Keeping the child safe will be your priority. You will need to be very sure what the plan will be, before the placement is made, for example, will the child be sleeping in a room with the parent or elsewhere. You will be responsible for the welfare of the young child as a foster child.

If the child is subject to an interim care order under section 38(6) and the Court directs a parenting assessment, the local authority may decide that the parent and child will live with a foster parent for the purpose. This will be a placement of a looked after child by the local authority and so the placement will be governed by the 2011 Regulations.

6. Placement with parents

Children who are in care may also be placed with their parents (or someone else who has parental responsibility for them) under regulations 15-20 of the 2010 Regulations. While such children are looked after children and fall within the 2010 Regulations, they do not fall within the 2011 Regulations as they are not fostered children. This includes where a child is placed with their parents and the parents and that child then live with foster parents.

7. Expectations of a parent and child placement

Foster parents caring for a parent and child placements need to be accessible and available 24/7 to the parent and child in addition to the following:

- Completion of daily logs on eCare.
- Additional monitoring and observation sheets as discussed in the parent and child training.
- Agreed care plans and any alterations to be followed in full.

- As the placement progresses be mindful and open minded to changes within the placement, in order to meet the changing needs of the child or children.

8. Placement Agreement

In line with the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations (2010): 9 - A Placement Agreement sets out how the placement will meet the child's needs. Schedule 2 sets out what should be included in the placement agreement such as:

- Contact arrangements
- Any order relating to the child by a court
- Arrangements for notifying any changes in contact arrangements
- Child's education and training needs
- Names and addresses of the child's medical and dental practitioners
- Where the child has an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP), details of the Local Authority that maintains the plan.

The Placement Agreement should be prepared before the placement is made but where this is not reasonably practicable; the placement plan must be prepared within five working days of the start of the placement and it should be shared with the foster parent. Also, within five working days of the start of the placement, a placement agreement meeting should be convened with the following invited; Supervising Social Worker, Child Social Worker, Foster Parent and Looked After Child – depending on age.

9. Recording

Recording for Foster Parents and all involved in the care of a Looked After Child/young person has a number of important purposes including:

- Recording must be written daily and completed online via eCare, you will be provided with your own log in details and your SSW will check your logs daily and forward to the child's social worker daily.
- Maintaining a history for the child
- Provides continuity for the child when social workers are unavailable or changed
- Protects a foster parent from allegations
- Provides an opportunity to reflect on the placement and review practice
- Highlights a parent's training and development needs
- Underlines issues for the child
- Saves time and energy by providing a future reference for Foster Parents and staff
- Allows analysis of patterns of behaviour highlighting achievements and identifying problematic areas

- Specific observations sheets are available and should be utilised either on a weekly or daily basis as directed by your supervising Social worker.

The following information is generic for all fostering placements and is Nurture’s standard practice:

REVIEW OF FOSTER PARENTS

The Fostering Services Regulations 2011 requires foster parents to be reviewed every year. The reviews of the foster parent's approval at sufficiently thorough to allow the fostering service to properly satisfy itself about their foster parents ongoing suitability to foster. The review considers your suitability to continue to foster and whether your approval terms remain the same. A review can also be held if there is a change in your circumstances, a complaint has been made against you, or there is concern about the standard of care you are providing.

Reviews will normally be carried out in your home and it is a two way process between you and your SSW, where you will have the opportunity to express your views about the child, the Fostering Service and the support you are receiving. The child’s Social Worker, child or young person being fostered (currently or previously) that has been provided. In addition, if the child in placement is involved with any other services for instance CAMHS, feedback will be required.

In accordance with the fostering regulations, foster parents are required to have a medical every 3 years, or if they have any health issues, a medical may be requested more often. A Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check will be carried out at least every three years for everyone in the household who is over 18 years of age. Back up parents and regular visitors (support parents) and babysitters who have unsupervised contact with children placed in your care (Looked After Children) must also have a DBS check at least every three years.

The first annual review is presented at the Fostering Panel but other reviews may not need to go to the fostering panel unless:

- There has been a major change to your terms of approval or in the circumstances of a member of your household
- There has been a significant complaint against you, the parent, the Registered Manager, must decide, in consultation with the Supervising Social Worker, if the complaint is significant but this should normally be taken to include all child protection investigations
- If it is proposed to terminate your approval as a Foster Parent.
- If a significant change to your approval is being recommended.
- If there has been a Standards of Care investigation, the outcome of which necessitates a change in your approval.

You will be notified of the outcome in writing and you can have access to the Panel Minutes. You will need to sign a new agreement following any changes to your approval.

It is an expectation that all parents must inform the Fostering Service of any significant changes in their household, including people joining and leaving the family home. You are reminded that if a new partner is to join the household, this must not take place until a DBS check has been carried out and an assessment to include your partner has taken place with your Supervising Social Worker.

Foster parents will return to panel every 5 years unless the above instigates a return to panel

Unannounced Visits

Supervising Social Workers are required to undertake a minimum of two unannounced visits annually in compliance with Guidance and Regulations.

The main purpose of the visit will be to look at the home environment that a child is living in. Nurture Fostering recognises that our parents provide a high quality of care but we are constantly striving to ensure that children are safe in foster care, and unannounced visits are some of the mechanisms available to ensure this.

Supervising Social Workers will ask to see the foster child's bedroom and communal areas available to the child such as the bathroom, kitchen and living rooms. In addition, SSW are required to have access to all rooms and the entire home to undertake health and safety assessments. The visit will be carried out by your Supervising Social Worker or a suitably qualified and experienced support worker from Nurture Fostering who will already be aware of the general standard of your home.

Supervising Social Workers will also need to check:

- Who is in the home.
- Who is looking after the child.
- If you are not at home, what arrangements have been made for the care of the foster child.
- Regular visitors.

The Supervising Social Worker will need to talk to any foster children in placement that are home at the time of the visit.

If the child in placement is being looked after by someone other than the Foster Parent, or back up foster parent, the Supervising Social Worker should seek to identify that person. In this situation, the Supervising Social Worker should see the child and ensure their safety. The situation should be discussed with the Registered Manager and you as a matter of urgency. If you are not at home, the Supervising Social Worker will inform you that they have undertaken the visit.

TRAINING

Fostering is becoming an ever more complex task and although many of the skills you utilise in caring for children cannot be taught, there are always new skills and learning to be acquired and all parents are expected to complete a core training programme. Where there are two parents in a household, both are expected to attend such mandatory training or complete the training online.

Mandatory training topics are: -

- Skills to Foster - Pre Approval
- Introduction to Nurture Fostering
- First Aid
- Safer Caring - Household Members and Adult Care Givers
- Dealing with allegations
- Keeping Good Records
- TSDs (Training, Support and Development Standards)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection, Level 2
- Parent and Child Placements
- Child Sexual Exploitation, Level 2
- Sexual Abuse and Recognising Grooming

You will need to undertake further training and development as identified in discussion with your SSW or during your supervision or annual review of registration.

All foster parents are expected to maintain an individual training profile. This should include details of training and development undertaken and future training needs. Your Supervising Social Worker will help you produce and maintain this during their regular supervisory visits.

We will ensure that you are notified of available training and development opportunities on a regular basis. We will also ensure that all mandatory training is accessible to all foster parents and endeavor to ensure that all other training and development activity is accessible to all foster parents.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Nurture Fostering believes that support groups can make a valuable contribution to the range of support services available for parents. Nurture Fostering currently runs support groups for all registered foster parents. It is an expectation that foster parents should attend these groups so as to share experiences, and also as another source of support. They are organized bi-monthly and the expectation is that a minimum of 4x are attended annually.

INSURANCE

It is your responsibility to advise your household and car insurers that you are fostering. Premiums are not usually affected and most household content policies include accidental damage.

We strongly advise you to ensure that you have adequate insurance in place, in particular for accidental damage.

If you are using your car to transport foster children you must have a fully comprehensive insurance cover for business use.

CONTACT ARRANGEMENTS

Research shows that it is beneficial and desirable for most children to continue to have regular contact with their parents, relatives and friends. Positive, regular contact will help a child to settle in placement, especially when the child sees the Foster Parent promotes and respects this contact. Where a child is to be permanently placed, contact can have benefits to a child such as promoting a child's identity and keeping alive options for relationships later on in their life.

Contact is a key part of the fostering role and can be very different for each placement and thus be very time consuming to the Foster Parent. Some form of contact is expected for most placements and you will have a significant role to play in this. You will therefore need to discuss the proposed arrangements with the placements officer at Nurture and consider these in the light of your own circumstances.

Questions you should consider include:

- What sort of contact is required – face to face, letters or telephone calls?
- Who is the child to have contact with and what is the purpose of this contact?
- Where is contact to take place?
- How often will it take place and for how long?

- If contact is to take place in your home do you have the physical space and what are the implications for other members of your household?
- Please note that you will be expected to transport the child to and from contact
- Will a social worker be present at contact?
- Will you be expected to supervise contact?
- Has a court made particular stipulations regarding contact?
- If there is a history of difficulties with the parent, for instance alcohol, drug abuse or aggression. Has a risk assessment been undertaken?

LOOKED AFTER CHILD (LAC) REVIEWS

Every child who is looked after must have a child in care statutory review. The first review must be held within 28 days of the child becoming looked after. The second review must be held within the next 3 months and subsequent reviews must be held within 6 months of the previous review.

All Reviews are chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) and attended by some or all of the following:

- The child
- The child's parents (Where appropriate or still hold full PR)
- The Child's Social Worker and their manager
- The foster parent and their Supervising Social Worker
- A staff member from the child's school
- The Independent Visitor
- The child's advocate
- Others who are playing a significant role in the child's life (e.g. Therapists, Health Visitor or any other professional).

The review will usually be held in your home (depending on the circumstances and time), therefore it is important that this is done at a time that is convenient for you, and fits in with the needs of other members of your household such as your own and other fostered children. On occasions the review may be held at other venues such as the school or Local Authority office, they can also be held virtually via Teams.

The review will consider all aspects of the child's life including their health, education, and contact with family and how their placement is progressing. Both you and the child will both be asked to complete a Consultation Paper which can be used to record your views about how well the plans are going and what needs to happen over the coming weeks and months.

The Supervising Social Worker is expected to attend all reviews to support the foster parent as important decisions about the placement will be made at the review. After the review, the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) will produce written minutes of the review normally within 2 weeks of the review. The Supervising Social Worker should obtain copies of the minutes and ensure the foster parent has a copy. If necessary, the Care Plan will be revised and there may also be a need to revise the Placement Agreement.

WORKING WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS

During your career as a Foster Parent, you will come across many different types of professionals who work with the children you are caring for. Some of these you will be familiar with, such as GPs, Teachers and Health Visitors. There are others that you are unlikely to have come across before.

Children's Guardians

A Children's Guardian is an independent court appointed social worker who looks after the interests of children subject to Court proceedings, such as the Local Authority applying for a Care Order. They are appointed by and report to the Court. Their job is to advise the Court as to what they think is in the best interest of the child.

They will:

- Listen to what the child wants.
- Talk to everyone who is important to the child such as their parents and grandparents.
- Talk to Health Visitors, Teachers, Social Workers and anyone else with relevant information.
- Read all the paperwork that we have relating to the child and their family.
- Work out what they think is best for the child.
- Make recommendations to the Court.

It is probable that as part of this process they will want to talk to you to find out how the child is progressing and possibly to seek your views over issues such as your observation of how contact between the child and their parents has been.

Children's Guardians have considerable influence on the final outcome of any Court hearing.

Out of Hours Team

As family problems do not always arise during office hours, Nurture Fostering has an out of office service. We are on call overnight and at weekends. The Team should be your first

port of call outside of office hours if there is a major problem relating to a child in your care for example a child going missing.

Out of hours contact number: 0208 690 9012

First Aid

There is an expectation that all Foster Parents will undertake First Aid training offered by the agency. This will be discussed with you by your Supervising Social Worker. Most childhood accidents can be dealt with fairly easily although, if you have any doubts, you should seek medical advice.

It is advisable to keep a small first aid box, which should ideally contain the following:

- Antiseptic wipes
- Safety pins
- Sterile dressing pad with tie
- Sterile eye pad
- Disposable triangular bandages

Some children are allergic to some ointments and lotions in common use and it is advisable to check at the beginning of the placement about whether the child has any specific allergies.

Hygiene

The use of good hygiene practices in all daily activities will prevent cross-infection of many infections, including HIV and Hepatitis B.

The Government recommends the following basic hygiene precautions as good practice in all situations:

- Clean cuts and sores with water and dressing
- Wash your hands thoroughly before carrying out any first aid on cuts or broken skin
- Wash your hands after clearing up any body fluids such as blood, semen, urine or faeces
- Use plastic gloves for first aid whenever possible
- Use rubber gloves for heavily soiled material
- Do not share toothbrushes, razors or towels
- Cuts should be washed with water

- Any splashes of blood should be washed off immediately
- Domestic bleach, diluted one part in ten, should be poured on to spilled blood as soon as possible and then covered with paper towels
- Disposable items, such as paper towels, tampons, etc., should be burnt or flushed away
- Non-disposable items, such as terry nappies or bedding, should be washed in a machine at 80°C

HIV/AIDS

Where it is known that a child is HIV positive, the information will always be shared with the foster parent. Deciding who “needs to know”, and the issue of confidentiality generally, will form part of the continuing discussions with the Child’s Social Worker.

Where a child is known to be HIV positive, prospective foster parents will be approached to explore the issue in principle without the identity of the child being revealed. Only when agreement had been reached about the placement will identifying details be shared.

You must not share the HIV status of a child or their family without first obtaining the agreement of the Child’s Social Worker.

Nurture Fostering will ensure that foster parents who are working with children who are potentially at risk of developing HIV infection, receive appropriate training, education and support. This will ensure that foster parents with worries or concerns about HIV are reassured and that services are provided appropriately and sensitively. We are equally committed to ensuring that people, including children, are not put at risk by cross infection.

An HIV infected child may be vulnerable to picking up infections, and exposure to measles and chicken pox is of particular concern. Ailments and minor accidents may require immediate medical attention.

The virus itself is not very strong and easily dies outside the body. Even in the wet state the virus can only live for 20 seconds when exposed to the air. The virus is destroyed outside the body by heat, drying, soap and water, detergents and bleach.

- You cannot get the virus from ordinary social contact.
- The virus cannot be passed on through touching, shaking hands or through saliva or tears.
- Sharing cups, cutlery, glasses, food, clothes, towels, door-knobs, etc., present no risk and neither does using the same toilet seat as a person who has AIDS or the virus.
- The virus is not transmitted by social kissing, coughing or sneezing.
- Swimming pools are safe.

- Nurture Fostering will not consider authorising a child to be tested for HIV, other than where medical advice indicates that the outcome will undoubtedly be of significant benefit to the child's health.

Where appropriate, the child will be involved in the decision-making process. The consent of those who have parental responsibility will always be sought.

SAFE CARING

Safe Caring Policies

A Safe Caring policy must be provided and kept up to date for each foster home.

The Assessing Social Worker should have ensured that guidelines were produced during the assessment process. The Assessing Social Worker should have ensured that all members of the household were involved in this process and agreement reached on the final policy.

A copy of your safe caring policy should be retained by your Supervising Social Worker on your file and these should be discussed with the Child's Social Worker at the point of Placement Agreement Meeting. Consideration will need to be given at this stage to the needs of the child and implication of the policy. In some cases it may be apparent that the proposed match is not suitable and an alternative placement should be identified.

The policy should be shared with the child, in an age appropriate way, as early as possible in the placement. In most cases the policy will need to be adjusted because of the specific needs or background of the child and the placement agreement meeting should be used as the opportunity to agree any required changes.

Safe caring policy will need to be revised as the circumstances of the household change.

This should be done immediately if there are significant changes such as someone joining the household or you move house. In such cases the revised policy will need to be cleared with the social worker of any child in placement.

The policy should also be consider the appropriateness of transporting some children alone in a car, in particular if the child is known to have been abused. Where possible, this should be avoided. If you have to travel alone with the child, then you may feel the need for the child to sit in the back of the car. You must ensure

Transporting Children by Car

The foster parent may need to consider the appropriateness of transporting some children alone in a car, in particular if the child is known to have been abused. Where possible, this should be avoided. If you have to travel alone with the child, then you may feel the need for the child to sit in the back of the car. You must ensure

that children traveling in your car are properly restrained using an approved car seat or booster seat and/or seat belt. Children under 1.35 meters in height or under the age of 12 years must use a car seat or booster seat designed for their age and weight. Young people over 1.35 meters tall or over the age of 12 years must always wear a seat belt. This is a legal requirement and if broken the parent may be personally responsible for the fine of £500. Parents must have a fully comprehensive Insurance cover.

IDENTITY, ETHNICITY, CULTURE AND RELIGION

Valuing Diversity

We recognise that there are groups in society that face disadvantage and discrimination. As an organisation that specialises in providing services to these groups, we will strive to counteract this through a policy of equal opportunities for all in relation to all our activities and services.

Nurture Fostering's Equal Opportunities policy seeks to ensure that, within the framework of the law, no service user receives less favorable treatment on grounds such as gender, marital status, disability, ethnicity, religious beliefs, age, or is otherwise disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified.

We expect all staff and Foster Parents to abide by this policy, but also expect staff and Foster Parents to actively promote equality of opportunity by valuing diversity in all its forms.

You should ensure that children are exposed to experiences that celebrate diversity. This can be achieved in a number of ways including:

- The provision of appropriate play and reading materials.
- Visits to museums and other appropriate places of interest.
- Encouraging the child to form relationships with a diverse circle of friends.
- Ensuring the avoidance of stereo-typical roles within the fostering household.
- Adults providing a positive role model and demonstrating a value and appreciation of difference.
- Encouraging the child to explore and develop their talents, interests and hobbies.

Ethnicity, Culture and Identity

It is a very emotional experience for a child to leave his or her family for whatever reason and be placed in a foster home. All children will be unsettled by the experience and will require patience and a period of time to adjust.

Due consideration of ethnicity origin, culture, religion and language should be the right of every child. We seek therefore to place children with families appropriate to their

ethnicity and culture. This does not always happen and children are then placed transracially with a foster parent who does not reflect their ethnic origin.

As racial origin is central to our sense of self and our identity it is important that as a foster parent you explore and promote the child's sense of identity and address these needs especially for a child who is not of the same ethnicity or culture as you:

- Think very carefully before taking responsibility for a child from a different religion, ethnicity or culture. How will your family feel? What might the problems be? Will you be able to cope?
- Find out all you can about the child's religion, background, history and culture. Do this with the child if appropriate. Talk to the child's family. Use local libraries and specialist churches
- Remember to concentrate on the fun things as well as serious issues e.g. celebrations, festivals, carnivals, music and restaurants. Talk with the child and her or his parents about what food they like to eat and then find ways of incorporating these foods into family menus. Make sure you have a range of images representing different ethnicities images in your home such as pictures, books and dolls..
- Participate in any training on racial awareness and how discrimination operates. Ask for training from your Supervising Social Worker if it is not offered. Use your support groups to raise and discuss issues. Learn from other foster parents.
- Raise ethnic, culture and religious matters in a proactive and constructive way at the child's review. Ensure that you and Children's Services are attending to the Looked After Child's identity needs.

Racism

Each individual will have a different understanding, awareness and experience of racism. However, as foster parents of ethnic minority children it is important to be able to recognise racism if you are to effectively respond to it for the protection of children. The impact on their lives is dependent on many factors including the level of security and support young people have.

Black children also need positive role models to provide valuable guidance, experience and learning for adulthood.

Racial identity is a fundamental aspect of an individual's sense of identity and racism can damage a young person's ability to secure a strong racial identity.

Any incidents of racism directed towards a child in your care or towards yourself by organisations or individuals should be reported to your Supervising Social Worker. This also applies to incidents you are not sure about.

Culture is part of a child's identity and heritage. All foster parents should aim to respect and value a child's cultural heritage. Discrimination does not just mean treating someone differently; it can mean using names or words which seek to put people down. People are not all the same and no one should be discriminated against because of their difference. Children in your household may need help to respect these differences.

Religion

The Children's Act identifies a child's religious upbringing as being of prime importance. The child and their parents have a right to express their views on this. We must always consider these views and meet the child's needs arising from their religious upbringing and background.

Many parents do not state any particular preferences, although it is recognised that many foster parents are regular attendees at religious services and hold strong beliefs.

Whilst religion is an integral part of their family life, it should also be recognised that the children have a right to their own views.

The child's religious background and the needs arising from this should be considered before the child is placed with you. Foster parents are expected to support a child in their own religion and the Placement Agreement and Care Plan should set out who is going to help the child practice their religion.

Sexuality and Sexual Orientation.

Human sexuality is the capacity of humans to have erotic experiences and responses. A person's sexual orientation can influence their sexual interest and attraction for another person. Sexuality may be experienced and expressed in a variety of ways; including thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles, and relationships. Sexuality also affects and is affected by cultural, political, legal, moral, ethical, and religious aspects of life. No matter how much we might wish it, children and young people are neither ignorant of sexuality and gender nor are they outside of its influence.

Giving children appropriate information, support, and opportunities to ask questions and talk about their thoughts and feelings is better than saying nothing.

It is so easy for silence to lead to kids being confused and feeling ashamed. More opportunities to talk to children and young people is a good thing.

Foster parents should be made aware that children with experience of gender transformation should be treated with extreme sensitivity and they should seek support if necessary.

Have your say compliments and complaints

If the complaint is about decisions or plans made about your child this must be put to the child's Social Worker or their respective department from the Local Authority. Most Local Authorities have a customer relations officer based at a main office like a Town or County Hall. Your Social Worker will be able to advise with this process.

If you want to make a complaint about Nurture Fostering please contact the Registered Manager

Nurture Fostering
The Old Fire Station
340 Lewisham High Street
London
SE13 6LE

info@nurturefostering.co.uk

For details on how the complaint process works, please refer to the 'Handbook for 11-18 years of age'

You can also contact Ofsted. This is a government organisation with which Nurture Fostering is registered with. Their details are as follows:

Ofsted

Ofsted Chief Inspector
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

0300 123 1231
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Children's Commissioner for England

Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

0800 528 0731
Info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

We also want to hear your good comments. These can be made via our website www.nurture-fostering.co.uk

Notes from Weekly Parent and Child placement meeting date:	
Child's name:	Care First no:
Present:	
Please make brief comments on those issues that are relevant. There is no need to make comments in each box unless relevant. The aim of the meeting is to see what has changed and to agree what issues should be the focus of the parent/foster parent/support for following week	
Basic Care e.g. feeding/bathing/hygiene	
Ensuring safety e.g. how child is held/carried/ sleeping arrangements/keeping room clean and safe	
Emotional warmth e.g. how does parent interact with child	
Stimulation e.g. how does parent teach/encourage child to try/learn new things	
Guidance/boundaries e.g. has parent got a routine/is parent focused on child	

Seeking and accepting help or advice e.g. does parent ask for advice/does parent put advice/learning into practice

What has gone well

What needs to change to reduce the risk to the child

Plan for next week

What needs to be done	What we are trying to achieve	Who will do it

Any other Issues:

Signed:

Parent:

Foster Parent:

Social worker:

Supervising Social Worker:



Parent and Child Placements: Daily Log Sheet (based on observations)

Day and Date:

Assessing Parenting Capacity (from DOH Assessment Framework 2000)

Basic Care — How does parent meet bay's basic physical needs?

Comment on for example: feeding, sterilising, temperature of feed, bath water safety, child's personal hygiene needs being met, bedding kept clean, appropriate clothing for weather, health needs met (routine and other), is parent organised, can they plan ahead. Give examples where possible.

Ensuring Safety — How does parent keep child safe at all times?

Comment on for example: appropriate handling, prevention of avoidable hazards/accidents, any injuries to child (how it happened) etc. does parent prioritise child's safety (e.g. when phone rings, over TV/computer/other interests) Give examples where possible

Guidance and Boundaries — has parent got a routine/focussed on child/consistent with responses?

Comment on for example: has parent established routines around the child, are distractions minimised, is child responded to/settled if crying, child is allowed to explore surroundings safely, parents needs (e.g. around substance misuse) are secondary to child. Give examples where possible

Stability — Does parent provide a stable base/consistent daily routine for child?

Comment on for example: time out of placement is in accordance with agreement, parent is consistent in responses to child, parent prioritises child over external distractions or relationships, parent is able to budget and prioritise child provisions. Give examples where possible



Emotional Warmth — How does parent speak to/interact with child?

Comment on for example: how parent speaks to and interacts with child, tone of voice used, response to child's signals and cues, is child shielded from parents emotional distress. Give examples where possible

Stimulation — How does parent play/teach child to learn new things?

Comment on for example: use of age appropriate toys and baby gym, singing, reading to child. Give examples where possible.



Other Information

Does parent ask for advice?

YES/NO/SOMETIMES GIVE EXAMPLES

Does parent act upon advice?

YES/NO/SOMETIMES GIVE EXAMPLES

How does parent respond to advice (when not asked for)?

YES/NO/SOMETIMES GIVE EXAMPLES

Does parent act upon advice (when not asked for but offered)? YES/NO/SOMETIMES GIVE EXAMPLES

Signature of parent.....

Date read.....