**LIFT PROJECT PROCEDURE 2018**

1. **PROJECT AIM 2018**

LIFT stands for 'Lancashire Intervention for Families Team' and utilises the skills of existing foster carers as mentors to assist children and families. The project has 5 specific aims and it must be clear at the point of referral which aim we are working to achieve:

* To work with birth families when children come into care for a short period and where rehabilitation home is the plan.
* Support to the Post Adoption Team to help prevent Adoption breakdown and a potential return to the care system for children.
* Support to our own foster carers from a LIFT mentor to prevent a placement breakdown where carers are struggling due to a variety of reasons but most commonly, behaviour management issues.
* Support to families where there is a CIN plan to help prevent the need for an admission to care.
* Support to birth families who are at breaking point and who have requested respite to help prevent further breakdown.

1. **REFERRALS**

* All referrals must come in via email so that they can be transferred to the R drive and stored in the LIFT project folder. Information must include the name, DOB, address and SU number of the child/family and give an outline of the issues. They should be sent in the first instance to the LOCALITY DUTY BOX and it will be the responsibility of whoever is on duty that day to process it.
* To process the referral you must create a folder in the childs/family name in the LIFT project folder on the R drive and the matching to a mentor. You should also alert any LIFT project coordinators (if there is one) that a referral has come in.
* Read through the LIFT mentor spreadsheet and try to identify a suitable mentor and SSW contact them to discuss. This matching process will be completed at team brief.
* If you link a child/family to a mentor the SSW will need to update the mentor spreadsheet to state which child/family a mentor is working with.
* LIFT coordinator will monitor referrals to ensure they are linked to a mentor.

1. **AGREEMENT MEETINGS**

Once a mentor has been found for a child/family it will be the responsibility of the SSW to carry out the LIFT agreement meeting using the LIFT agreement form stored on the R drive. If the SSW is on leave or sick the designated LIFT coordinator can step in and conduct the meeting on the SSWs behalf. Wherever possible the meetings should be held at the birth family home and these meetings should cover:

* specifying what the mentor will be doing and the areas of support most needed eg, is it day respite, help with behaviour management, boundaries or routines and organisation. Often it's about finding alternative sources of support and linking the families to them.
* Drawing up an initial action plan of dates/times of involvement so that the family and the mentor know what they will be doing and when.
* Identify any risks not only to the mentor going into the birth family home but any risks if the child goes into the foster carers home. Any safer care issues need to be discussed and the CCSWs and IROs of any children placed will need to be notified if mentors are taking children for day respite while foster children will be present.
* Ensure mentors are clear regarding boundaries i.e. they cannot offer more support than is agreed at the meetings, parents should not be phoning them outside of agreed limits other than to rearrange visits or cancel visits etc.
* Set a date for review of the plan ( also the responsibility of the SSW to carry out reviews)
* When a case is agreed as closed the SSW completes a closure summary form and stores it in the child/family folder in the LIFT project folder and the R drive.

Those present at the meeting/s should be:

* Child if appropriate
* The family
* The mentor
* The CCSW
* The SSW

Once completed the LIFT agreement forms (and review forms) should be saved in the R drive folder. A case note should then be added on LCS with the date and brief details of the meeting and after each review meeting.

1. **PAYMENT STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURE**

Carers who provide services to LIFT will be paid on an hourly rate of £10 per hour. Providing the child they are supporting is accommodated by them, or another approved Lancashire foster Carer, these monies are exempt in the same way as fostering boarding out payment's are. As a guide, a maximum of 8hrs per family per week will be used, giving a total of £80 per week additional payment for foster carers. This is flexible but the hours of involvement MUST be agreed on the LIFT agreement form.

*However, any work carried out by the LIFT carer AFTER the child has returned home or PRIOR to child being admitted into care is not exempt and will be subject to tax and national insurance contributions dependant on the carers individual circumstances. Foster carers will be responsible for informing HMRC of these additional funds and for making appropriate arrangements to pay any dues.*

* A separate LIFT finance form must be completed per child/family per month and submitted to the SSW for processing. These must be collected regularly to prevent a backlog.
* Mileage forms must be completed for LIFT work on a separate foster carers mileage form as they do NOT get the first 3 miles deducted for any lift work.
* Mentors cannot claim their hourly rate for travel time.
* Any finance forms received can be sent to the relevant support worker to complete the claim on LCS.
* When the support worker has processed the claim they MUST save a copy of the form in the relevant child/family folder in the LIFT folder on the R drive.

1. **SUPERVISION OF LIFT MENTORS**

This will be the responsibility of each mentors SSW and should be discussed and recorded during each supervision and support visit. The LIFT coordinator can assist if additional support is required. It will also be discussed in supervision between SSWs and the practice manager.

SSW to record on the carers LCS details of LIFT set up meetings, reviews, and closure meetings.

1. **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

* All families referred to the project should be risk assessed as suitable by the CCSW
* All families referred to the project should express a wish to be involved i.e. it should be voluntary.
* All LIFT carers are required to identify a buddy from their own support network who they will keep in contact with via mobile phone when they are out working with birth families. The LIFT carer and Buddy will have a code word for use during phone calls so that the buddy is aware if the carer considers themselves at risk. The buddy will be responsible for contacting the relevant authorities if they deem the LIFT carer to be at risk i.e they do not make contact after a visit or they use the code word.
* Details of the buddy for each carer will be recorded on the LIFT vacancy spreadsheet
* During the LIFT agreement planning meeting any risks and safer care issues will be discussed and appropriate actions noted.

1. **INFORMATION STORAGE**

* Everything will be stored electronically on the R drive in the LIFT project folder and on the child's DMS. Each child/family will have their own folder for any: diary sheets, reviews, mileage forms, closure sheets etc.
* Data will be added to the statistics spreadsheet by the SSW to ensure the relevant statistics can be accessed. The statistics spreadsheet will include all relevant details for each child and family the LIFT project works with and will be stored in the R drive.

1. **STATISTICS SPREADSHEET**

Records will be kept of all families involved with LIFT and will be maintained by either a LIFT coordinator or the individual SSWs in order for future statistics to be produced regarding:

* The number of families who have been referred to the project
* Which mentors we have successfully used
* The length of LIFT involvement for each referral and outcome
* The number of families who have successfully worked with LIFT and achieved one of the 5 project aims
* The number of families who have been referred but have not achieved one of the 5 identified outcomes
* The number of children who return or enter the care system within a year of using LIFT.
* The possible savings from utilising LIFT
* Financial cost of the LIFT intervention (ie: £10 per hour + mileage costs)

**PROCESS MAP**

REFERRAL NOT APPROPRIATE

NO FURTHE ACTION

APPROPRIATE FAMILY IDENTIFIED BY LOCALITY TEAM

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LOCALITY TEAM BRIEF LOOK FOR AN APPROPRIATE LIFT CARER

EMAIL SENT TO THE LIFT COORDINATOR AND PRACTICE MANAGER

SSW AND CCSW TO ARRANGE MEETING

A HOME AGREEMENT MEETING IS ARRANGED BETWEEN THE CCSW, LIFT COORDINATOR, PARENTS/ CARERS/ ADOPTERS, SSW AND LIFT FOSTER CARER AT THE FAMILY/FOSTER HOME IF POSSIBLE.

THE SSW FOR THE LIFT CARER ENSURES THE LIFT VACANCY SPREADSHEET IS AMENDED AS APPROPRIATE

SSW's KEEPS DETAILS OF THE INVOLVEMENT FOR STATISTICAL USE

SUPPORT WORKER/BUSINESS SUPPORT FORWARDS PAYMENT DETAILS TO FINANCE TO ENSURE CARER GETS PAID.