

Preamble

This document should be read in conjunction with the main Recording Policy and Guidelines. Its main objective is to clarify and strengthen aspects of the main policy.

Child's file

A child's file in Chrysalis Care is a confidential, legally mandated record (retained for at least 15 years) containing all critical information about a child that was looked after by us. It includes daily logs, education/medical records, contact details, incident reports, agency care plans, and information provided to us by the local authority responsible for the child. Foster carers and agency staff maintain this file to track development, support care, and contribute to reviews, using CHARMS.

Key components and practices regarding the child's file include:

- **Contents:** Referrals received, matching considerations, risk assessments, safe care plans, up to date photograph, daily records, medication logs, contact records, education details, reports of accidents/incidents, and missing periods.
- **Purpose:** To understand the child's history, aid in future planning, contribute to court proceedings, and ensure continuity of care.
- **Confidentiality:** Files must be stored securely (e.g., in a locked cabinet or password-protected system) and only shared with authorised individuals.
- **Child's Access:** Children are encouraged to read their files and add personal statements or memorabilia, helping them understand their life history.
- **Return of Files:** When their time with a foster carer has come to an end, foster carers must return all records to the agency.
- **Accuracy:** Records must be up-to-date, legible, signed, and distinguish between fact, opinion, and third-party information.
- **Multiagency:** Information (e.g. care plans, essential information, referrals, PEPs, health plans, transition plan, contextual safeguarding plans) must be sought and consideration given to triggering the Escalation Policy if requested documents have not been received.

Foster Carer's File

A foster carer file in Chrysalis Care is a comprehensive, confidential, and secure record containing all documentation related to our approved foster carer's assessment, training, approvals, and ongoing supervision. These files, which must be retained for at least 10 years after a carer leaves, include the foster carer's assessment (Form F), review records, placement history, and supervision notes.

The main purpose is to determine the foster carer's suitability and continued suitability to be a foster carer and to meet the needs of the children that are (or might be) in their care.

Foster carer's files are securely kept on CHARMS.

Key Components of a Foster Carer File

- **Approval & Assessment:** Assessment reports (e.g., Form F), references, documentation of approval/review of approval terms, DBS and associated risk assessments, medical records, and outcome letters.
- **Personal Information:** Name, address, date of birth, up to date photograph, and background information.
- **Placement Data:** Records of children placed, including dates and placement agreements.
- **Supervision & Training:** Notes from supervising social worker visits, training record and certificates, and development plans.
- **Legal & Confidential Records:** The Foster Care Agreement and documentation of any incident reports.
- **Complaints and Allegations:** Information pertaining to the nature of the complaint/allegation and outcomes.
- **Other key documents:** Safe care plans, pet assessments, health and safety checks, details of back up carers (with checks).

File Management and Access

- **Security & Location:** Foster carer's files are maintained via CHARMS.
- **Access Rights:** Carers can request to view their own files, usually via a Subject Access Request to the agency.
- **Confidentiality:** Files are highly confidential and access is restricted to authorised agency staff.

Chrysalis Care Fostering Files

Chrysalis Care maintains a number of records and files, to assist the Registered Manager to monitor all mandatory matters under Schedule 6 of The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011. Some of these records are maintained via CHARMS (children and foster carer's files) and others are held in another secure system that is maintained within the agency.

Other records that are maintained include financial records, recruitment and retention of foster carers, staff training records, and development work and their progress, and building checks (electrical, PAT, health and safety, fire safety, and equipment). The records pertaining to building checks are manual records.