

Form F should only be used by registered social workers who have read, understood, and are familiar with the accompanying guidance notes ⁽¹⁾

FRONT SHEET

Name of applicant(s)	
Applicant	
Fostering service reference number	Protocol numbers: [REDACTED]

Social worker's recommendation ⁽²⁾
<p>I recommend for Applicant to be approved as a foster carer with Coventry City Council, for 1 child or a sibling group of 2 between the ages of 0-18 years, of any ethnic background and either gender. Applicant has an age preference for children between the ages of 5-18 years old. However, I am of the view that careful consideration needs to be given when placing children in the older category as Applicant is a single applicant and may be left vulnerable especially with older teenagers who may be physically challenging. As Applicant gains experience with time, she may be better equipped to managing even the very challenging older teenagers in her care.</p> <p>Applicant would like to be considered for short term fostering, with the view of being considered for long-term fostering once a permanent plan has been identified for the child/ren. The spare bedroom proposed for fostering is big enough to accommodate a sibling group as it can fit 2 beds or a bunk bed or a single bed and a baby cot.</p> <p>I also recommend Applicant to be approved as a Parent and Child Foster carer (0-18) with Coventry City council and the reasons for this have been summarised in the separate Parent and Child assessment.</p>

Name of fostering service	Coventry City Council
Address	4 th Floor, Broadgate House, Coventry, CV1 5FS
Name of social worker	Social Worker
Email	[REDACTED]

Professionals and Agencies details have been changed to ensure confidentiality

Telephone	██████████
Name of team manager	Team Manager
Email	██
Telephone	██████████

Date application accepted	Registration of Interest received on the 1 st September 2020
Date assessment completed	Date of last visit 6 th November 2020 Assessment completed virtually via MS Teams due to current pandemic and Government guidance.
Date assessment updated ⁽³⁾	N/A

Pen picture of the applicant(s) ⁽⁴⁾
<p>Applicant is a 59-year-old single White British applicant and lives in the Radford area of Coventry. Applicant stated that although she considers herself to be a Christian, religion is not an important part of her life. Applicant married Ex-Husband in 1987, and they divorced amicably in 2017 after several years of separation. Ex-Husband and Applicant have one child, 26-year-old Son who currently lives in America with his wife ██████.</p> <p>Applicant is currently unemployed and is homebased, however has caring experience as she has supported her mother to meet her care needs for several years and also cared for her father before he passed away in 2013. Applicant self-reported that she also hosted International students in the late 80's into the late 90's but unfortunately, I have not been able to verify this through references as the company she worked for no longer exists. Applicant also self-reported that she completed 20 months of a Nursing Diploma prior to finding out that she was pregnant with Son, and after giving birth could not return to complete this course as Son was born prematurely and later diagnosed with Developmental Delay and Cerebral Palsy. Again, I could not verify this through a reference.</p> <p>Applicant lives in a well maintained 2-bedroom property which she owns outright with</p>

the mortgage being paid in full. Applicant has 1 spare bedroom proposed for fostering which needs a bed and a wardrobe for the child. There are some decorative tasks still being completed in the spare room as highlighted under the household conditions. However, Applicant is confident that this will be done before panel.

Applicant has put forward her ex-husband Ex-Husband as well as her friend and neighbour [REDACTED] who will be able to provide her with emotional and physical support with fostering. [REDACTED] and Ex-Husband have received satisfactory DBS certificates. Applicant has an approved cousin called V [REDACTED] who has been fostering in Wales for 5 years and currently has 2 boys who she cared for under a Special Guardianship Order. Therefore, Applicant felt she had an insight into what fostering would be like. Applicant also has access to her cousin for advice.

Referees have described Applicant as a kind, loving and loyal person and they have also commented on how Applicant advocated for her son Son to accomplish everything that professionals had told her he would not be able to accomplish like walking as an example. All the referees I have spoken to have spoken highly of Applicant's parenting capacity and therefore feel that Applicant will be able to offer children in her care the same support and encouragement. Applicant's interests include watching movies, NFL (National Football League), walking, baking, sewing, going to the gym, swimming, reading, playing on iPad/computer, history, visiting museums, meeting with friends and going out to dinner.

SECTION A (PART 1)

APPLICANT 1

Family name	[REDACTED]		
Previous name	[REDACTED] ([REDACTED])		
Forenames	Applicant		
Other "known by" names	None		
Date of birth	[REDACTED]	Age	58 years old

Professionals and Agencies details have been changed to ensure confidentiality

Family name	██████████
Place of birth	████████████████████

HOME ADDRESS

Address ⁽⁵⁾	████████████████████ ████████████████████ ████████████████████
Length of time at this address	Since 05/07/2019

IDENTITY ⁽⁶⁾

	Applicant 1
Gender ⁽⁷⁾	Female
Sexual orientation ⁽⁷⁾	Heterosexual
Nationality	British
Ethnicity ⁽⁸⁾	White British
Primary language spoken in the home	English
Other language/s spoken in the home	None
Religion or faith group	None
Practising or non-practising	N/A
Does the applicant identify as disabled?	No
Does the applicant identify as trans?⁽⁷⁾	No

PARTNERSHIP STATUS

	Applicant 1
If the applicant is married or has registered a civil partnership, give date and place of marriage/registration	N/A
If the applicant is living with a partner, date on which they set up a household together	N/A

CHILDREN UNDER 18 LIVING IN THE HOUSEHOLD

Family name	Forename/s	Gender	Date of birth	Age	Relationship to applicant(s)

Professionals and Agencies details have been changed to ensure confidentiality

N/A					
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OTHER ADULTS LIVING IN THE HOUSEHOLD

Family name	Forename/s	Gender	Date of birth	Age	Relationship to applicant(s)
N/A					

CHILDREN (UNDER 18) FROM A CURRENT OR PREVIOUS PARTNERSHIP LIVING ELSEWHERE ⁽⁹⁾

Family name	Forename/s	Gender	Date of birth	Age	Relationship to applicant(s)
N/A					

ADULT CHILDREN LIVING ELSEWHERE ⁽⁹⁾

Family name	Forename/s	Gender	Date of birth	Age	Relationship to applicant(s)
██████	Son	Male	██████	26	Son

FORMER PARTNERS ⁽¹⁰⁾

APPLICANT 1

Name of former partner	Date relationship ended	Date of reference
Ex-Husband	Separated in 2014 and divorced from Ex-Husband for about 3 years.	10 th September 2020

Information should be provided where the applicant has separated, divorced or dissolved a civil partnership, or where they have set up home with a previous partner. Former partner references or write-ups of interviews with former partners may be included in Section C. Set out any contra-indications arising from former partner checks and how they have been considered/addressed, or alternatively, note briefly and cross-reference to the relevant section in the assessment report. Give details if any checks were not sought or not received.

Please refer to Section C for the full discussion I had with Ex-Husband. Ex-Husband did not share any concerns in regard to Applicant as a person, nor did he raise any concerns in regard to her parenting capacity.

APPLICATIONS TO FOSTER, ADOPT OR CHILD-MIND

Has the applicant previously applied to become a foster carer, adopter or child-minder?	NO
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Professionals and Agencies details have been changed to ensure confidentiality

If yes, give details of the date, name and address of the agency/service, type of application and outcome
N/A

Has any member of the household previously applied to become a foster carer, adopter or child-minder?	NO
If yes, give details of the date, name and address of the agency/service, type of application and outcome	
N/A	

Has the applicant been an approved foster carer in the preceding 12 months? ⁽¹¹⁾	NO
If yes, give the name and address of the fostering service, the date a reference was requested, the date any reference was received, and any further relevant details	
N/A	

ENHANCED DBS CHECKS (APPLICANTS AND ADULT HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS) ⁽¹²⁾

Name	Date check completed
Applicant	Certificate No: 001711846521 Issue Date: 02/10/2020
Give details of any contra-indications arising from Enhanced DBS checks and how these have been considered/ addressed. Alternatively, note briefly and cross-reference to the relevant section in the assessment report.	
Applicant received a satisfactory DBS and there are no contra-indications	

HEALTH ⁽¹³⁾

APPLICANT 1

Name of applicant	Applicant
Name of General Practitioner	Dr Doe
Name of GP practice	Medical Practice
Name of fostering service medical adviser	Outstanding

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Name of applicant	Applicant
Name of General Practitioner	Dr Doe
Date of medical adviser report	Outstanding
Medical adviser comments	
<p>Applicant attended her medical on the 23rd September 2020. Applicant's AH form states that she is currently not seeing any consultants in any hospital and that she is not taking any medication on a regular basis. It is further stated that Applicant suffered from post-natal depression in 1989 after giving birth to Son and that she also suffered from stress and anxiety in 2013 after her father's death. However, it is mentioned that Applicant did not see a Psychiatrist or Therapist for issues related to mental health. It is also stated that Applicant attended a private hospital/clinic in Cornwall in 2011 due to a left Thyroidectomy.</p> <p>In terms of exercises, Applicant walks the dog on a daily basis, goes swimming twice a week and does yoga/Pilates every day. It is mentioned that Applicant also tries to eat a healthy balanced diet as she understands that "you are what you eat". It is also stated that Applicant drinks occasionally, does not smoke and has never taken any recreational drugs. Applicant was last seen by her GP on the 6th February 2020 after a fall on the patio in which it is stated that she made a full recovery from. Applicant had a wrist surgery in 2007 and a carpel tunnel decompression in 2006.</p> <p>In conclusion, Dr Doe stated that "<i>there were no problems he was aware of about Applicant's lifestyle that might impair her capacity to care safely for a child or put child's welfare at risk</i>".</p>	
Give details of any contra-indications arising from the applicant's health and how these have been considered/addressed. Alternatively, note briefly and cross-reference to the relevant section in the assessment report.	
<p>From viewing Applicant's AH form, the doctor has not noted any significant issues identified that could impact her ability to foster a child.</p> <p>I observed Applicant in person when I was completing the Health and Safety home</p>	

Name of applicant	Applicant
Name of General Practitioner	Dr Doe
<p>visit on the 6th November 2020 and she seemed to be in good health apart from the week she attended the Skills to Foster training and stated that staring on the screen had caused her to feel unwell. We spoke about how Applicant would be able to manage this moving forward as most things are currently still virtually and she explained that she will not directly stare at the screen and will look away in order to give her eyes a break. Applicant also confirmed that she has fully recovered from all the health issues mentioned above and in her AH form.</p> <p>Applicant understands the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and she has demonstrated this by ensuring that she engages in a range of activities like swimming, going for walks and going to the gym. Therefore, I do not have any health concerns in regard to Applicant and I am of the opinion that she will be able to promote good health and wellbeing as stated in Standard 6 for the children in her care. I am of the view that Applicant appears physically able at the age of 59 years old to manage a child under the age of 10, even if they are quite active because Applicant comes across as quite active herself as she takes her dog Ollie walking daily and has been hands on with her home renovations. I have also viewed the report from Applicant's G.P and based on the information provided, I am in support for her to be approved as a foster carer.</p>	

HOME LOCAL AUTHORITY CHECK ⁽¹⁴⁾

Name of home local authority	Coventry City Council
Date of residence in this local authority	From 1967 till 2007 From 2014 till present
Name of referee and status	Operational Support Officer
Date check completed	7 th September 2020
Give details of any contra-indications arising from the local authority checks and how these have been considered/addressed. Alternatively, note briefly and cross-reference to the relevant section in the assessment report.	

Charms – Not known

Surfacs – Known

Information came back that Applicant was known on SURFACS. I have requested this information from PSS and have been advised that these files will be available on the 11th November 2020. However, shortly after I received an email from Iron Mountain stating that “*There are no paper files at Iron Mountain*”.

Therefore, a printout was requested which has a different case number on it and the files with this case number were requested but again there were no paper files under this case number or under Applicant name.

From viewing the Surfacs paper print out, there is CMHT involvement from 18/09/2007 - 29/11/2007. It is assumed that CMHT stands for Coventry Mental Health Team but as stated below, checks were completed by CWPT and it is stated that Applicant is not known to have accessed this service. I have also made attempts to get this information but it appears that the Surfacs information is no longer available.

However, from all the other checks I have completed, including the information provided in Applicant's AH form, there are no concerns of mental health disclosed.

Protocol – Applicant is known due to her current fostering application.

Care Director – Not known

Mental Health – This check was completed on the 7th September 2020 and it was confirmed that Applicant is not known to have accessed Mental Health Services within the Trust.

Analysis:

Mental Health checks did not raise any contra indications. Furthermore, there have been no concerns identified from Protocol, Charms and Care Director. As stated above, I am still waiting for information from Surfaces which I have requested twice already. However, I do not have any concerns as the information I have available including DBS, Ofsted and LADO checks did not raise any concerns and therefore I do not have a reason to believe that there will be any safeguarding concerns arising from this check.

HOUSEHOLD ACCOMMODATION ⁽¹⁵⁾

Describe the home including the number of bedrooms, proposed sleeping arrangements, play and garden space

Applicant purchased her current 2 bedroomed home in July 2019 and ever since has been completing ongoing renovations and decorating the property. Applicant was hoping to have it finished in July 2020, but with Covid-19 there has been some delays to the build as they have not been able to source some of the building materials. The house has been fully rewired and has new fire/smoke alarms fitted. The property is spacious and habitable although I have identified the below tasks that need to be completed before a child being placed in this property.

Ground floor: kitchen/diner, sunroom with door to garden, lounge/sitting room, front room and hall with stairs leading to the first floor.

First floor: Bedroom 1 (Applicant's room at present, but she may swap round), bedroom 2 which is a double room and could be used for fostering, the window in this room has been replaced, bathroom with shower only, and a large cupboard which is going to be changed into an office/craft room. The plan is to extend into the attic from the office/craft room but that's for in a few years' time.

Garden: secure garden with new fencing. The plan is to build a small decked area and lay some artificial grass.

Analysis

I completed a Health and Safety home visit on the 6th November 2020. The house is clean and habitable. However, it is a working progress in terms of the work still to be completed. The stairs are currently bare, and Applicant would like to paint them, leading into the landing. The bathroom is complete, and the spare room still needs to be painted on one side of the wall and this room needs to be fully furnished before panel or before a placement. Applicant has asked the Council to support her in purchasing furniture as she feels that she is not in a position to afford this financially. There are other decorative jobs that need to be done in the house, and these tasks need to be completed as soon as possible.

I will check on the progress of the above tasks weekly and I am of the opinion that Applicant has advised that she would have completed these leading to panel. Applicant has been consistent and committed with completing the tasks around the house and unfortunately there has been a delay due to Covid 19. However, as Applicant's ex-husband Ex-Husband is completing these jobs, I am confident that they will be done.

Briefly describe the neighbourhood, community and access to key services

██████████ is in the Radford area. Radford is a suburb and electoral ward of Coventry, located approximately 1.5 miles north of Coventry city centre. Radford Road is home to several small shops, and Gala Bingo Coventry Savoy. Radford's other main shopping area is Jubilee Crescent in the northern part of

Radford, which also hosts a library, community centre and doctors' surgery as well as many local businesses and branches of national retail chains like Tesco and Asda.

Barr's Hill School and Community College is the coeducational comprehensive secondary school in the area. Other secondary schools not far from Applicant's home include Cardinal Newman Catholic School a Specialist Arts and Community College, President Kennedy School Academy and Sidney Stringer Academy just to mention a few. Primary schools in the area include Radford Primary Academy, Hill Farm School, St Augustine's RC Primary School, and Joseph Cash Primary School.

In terms of the area, although where Applicant lives is believed to be a fairly safe area, just like any part of the country, according to Street check, in August 2020, there were 102 crimes reported within half a mile of [REDACTED]. Therefore, any child in Applicant's care will have to have adult supervision particularly outside of the home. Applicant stated that she understands the importance of taking precautions with any children in her care in order to keep them safe. I did not find any information regarding Child Sexual Exploitation or gang affiliation within this area. However, Applicant is aware that this is a concern within the Coventry area in general and the importance of ensuring that she protects children in her care from this exposure.

Date of home safety assessment (checklist may be included in Section C) ⁽¹⁶⁾

06/11/2020

Provide details of any outstanding home safety issues

Jobs that need to be completed as soon as possible preferably before panel

1. To book onto First Aid training – as soon as dates are available
2. To furnish the spare bedroom (purchase a bed and storage) and paint one side of the wall – before panel

Jobs that can be completed after panel

1. No internet within the property currently - She is hoping to install internet in her house before Christmas and understands that she will need to ensure that parental controls are also in place.

Professionals and Agencies details have been changed to ensure confidentiality

2. To purchase a stairgate when having a Parent and Child placement – after approval
3. To purchase anti-finger trapping devices – just before or after panel
4. To get business insurance - after panel
5. Redecoration is still ongoing
6. The ceiling needs to be painted and decorated – can be done after panel
7. The sunroom needs to be plastered and decorated – can be done after panel

PERSONAL REFERENCES (REQUIRED) ⁽¹⁷⁾

	Referee 1	Referee 2
Name	Mrs [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Relationship to applicants/s	Friend	Friend
Number of years known	35 years	37 years (since [REDACTED] was born)
Date interviewed	28 th September 2020	21 st September 2020
Written reports of these interviews should be included in Section C		

PERSONAL REFERENCES (OPTIONAL)

	Referee 3
Name	[REDACTED]
Address	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Relationship to applicants/s	Cousin
Number of years known	42 years
Date interviewed	22 nd October 2020
Written reports should be included in Section C (if undertaken)	

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Date when all of the Stage 1 information was received	LA Check - Bridgend, Wales (Outstanding)
Section A (Part 1) contains all the information required to complete Stage 1 of the fostering assessment. If a decision is made not to proceed to Stage 2, the fostering service may wish to use the BAAF Stage 1 Decision Sheet (Fostering). This decision must be made within 10 days of receiving all the Stage 1 information.	

SECTION A (PART 2)

VERIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS ⁽¹⁸⁾

	Applicant 1
Date birth certificate seen	Seen 21 st October 2020
Date passport or other certification of nationality seen	Seen 21st October 2020 [REDACTED]
Date driving licence seen	Seen 21st October 2020 [REDACTED]
National Insurance number and date seen	Seen 21st October 2020 [REDACTED]
If the applicants are married to each other or have registered a civil partnership, date certificate seen	N/A
If the applicant(s) are divorced/ have terminated a civil partnership, date certificate(s) seen	Seen 21st October 2020

PREVIOUS LOCAL AUTHORITY CHECKS ⁽¹⁹⁾

Name of local authority	Dates resident in this local authority	Date check Completed	Name of local authority person and status
Bridgend, Wales	1966 to 1967	Outstanding	I called them on the 12 th November 2020 and they advised that they had not received this check. Therefore, I re-sent it.
Cornwall	2007 – 2014	16 th October 2020	(Service Manager Family Placement Service, Together for Families)
Warwickshire	2014 – 2019	25 th September 2020	Operations Manager Fostering Team
Give details of any contra-indications arising from the local authority checks and how these have been considered/ addressed. Alternatively, note briefly and cross-reference to the relevant section in the assessment report.			

Warwickshire

Operations Manager stated that Applicant is known to Warwickshire People Directorate, Children & Families Department. It is mentioned that the records relate only to 2015-2017 Adult Social Care information regarding Applicant's role as carer for her mother. There are no safeguarding concerns recorded.

I have spoken to Applicant about this and she shared this was the time she was the main carer for her mother. Although this is ongoing, she is no longer as involved due to the carers having taken over.

Cornwall

Service Manager stated the below:

Adoption Unit – Not Known.

Safeguarding Children Unit – Not Known.

Social Care Management System – Not Known.

COURT PROCEEDINGS

Has the applicant been involved in any family court proceedings or in any proceedings about children and/or family?	NO
If yes, give details including the date, name of court, type of order made and the names of the children concerned. Alternatively, note briefly and cross-reference to the relevant section in the assessment report.	
N/A	

EMPLOYMENT OR VOLUNTARY ACTIVITY (20)

	Applicant 1
Current employment or voluntary activity (if any)	Currently unemployed
Name of current employer/organisation	
Current hours of work	

Professionals and Agencies details have been changed to ensure confidentiality

Any planned changes to hours of work	
Date reference was completed	
Employer and voluntary activity references should be included in Section C. Give details of any contra-indications arising from this reference and how these have been considered/ addressed. Alternatively, note briefly and cross-reference to the relevant section in the assessment report.	
N/A	

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT OR VOLUNTARY ACTIVITY INVOLVING CHILDREN OR VULNERABLE ADULTS ⁽²¹⁾

APPLICANT 1

Name of employer or organisation	Dates employed	Date of any completed reference
Host family - International students.	1988 – 1995	Not completed - reasons below.
Applicant completed the Nursing Diploma for 20 months at the Nursing School at Walsgrave	1990 – 1993	Not completed – reasons below.
Previous employer or voluntary activity references may be included in Section C. Give details if any checks were not sought or not received. Give details of any contra-indications arising from these references and how these have been considered/addressed. Alternatively, note briefly and cross-reference to the relevant section in the assessment report.		

Applicant completed the Nursing Diploma for 20 months at the Nursing School at Walsgrave – No reference completed as they could not find a record of Applicant.

English Studies Centre – International students hostess - No reference completed as they could not find a record of Applicant. Ex-Husband does remember that Applicant hosted international students and he recalls that they came from Japan and other parts of Europe. However, due to Ex-Husband's brain injury, he could not provide me with any further information.

Analysis

I had asked Applicant to put forward people she worked with during this time who would be able to provide us with any Safeguarding concerns, if there were any known. Unfortunately, Applicant could remember the name of one of her Lecturers but thinks that she has retired and would not know where she is. Applicant put forward [REDACTED] to provide a reference for the time she hosted International students but unfortunately [REDACTED] had mixed up Applicant with someone else and I sent her an email trying to explain who Applicant was and asking for a reference. Unfortunately, again she mixed Applicant with a teacher and was honest that her husband who unfortunately died in May 2020 worked directly with host families whereas she worked with the school side of things. I am of the view that references for the above would be favourable, however, even if I am not able to ascertain one, Applicant received a satisfactory DBS and is not known to Ofsted nor LADO and therefore I still feel confident recommending her to be a foster carer with the information I have available.

HOUSEHOLD FINANCE ⁽²²⁾

Has a financial statement/assessment form been completed? (If yes, this may be included in Section C)	YES
Provide details of the applicant(s) income and expenditure. Describe how this has been verified and note any implications for fostering.	

Applicant has a monthly household income of £550.39 which consist of Universal credit benefits of 281.39 and carers allowance of £269.00. Applicant’s monthly expenditure is £417.95, and she stated that she has a monthly surplus of £132.44. Applicant’s monthly expenditure is this low because she lives alone and she also does not pay any mortgage or rent for her current home as she owns it outright. Applicant showed me her Title Deeds documents on the 21st October 2020. Applicant sent me a bank statement on the same day as above, which I was able to use to verify her finances.

Analysis

At the beginning of the assessment I had concerns in regard to Applicant’s finances due to how little her income appears. However, after completing the financial assessment and viewing her bank statement, Applicant seems to be managing fine with the income she receives. Applicant has inquired with the benefits office and she is aware that her benefits will not be affected once she starts fostering and she will be able to continue using this money in between placements. Applicant also has savings from a trust fund to fall back on during the months where she spends more than usual.

PETS AND ANIMALS (23)

Has a pet questionnaire or checklist been completed? (If yes, this may be included in Section C.)	YES
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Provide brief details of any pets or animals in the household including species, number and age. Describe the relevance of the pets or animals in relation to fostering. Cross reference to section C as appropriate, or to the relevant section in the assessment report.

Below information taken from <https://dogtime.com/dog-breeds/maltese#/slide/1>

A gentle and fearless dog breed, the Maltese greets everyone as a friend. Their glamorous white coat gives them a look of haughty nobility, but looks can be deceiving.

Even though these are purebred dogs, you may find them in the care of shelters or rescue groups. Remember to adopt! Don’t shop if you want to bring a dog home.

This is a sprightly, vigorous dog who excels not only as a companion but also as a therapy dog and competitor in such dog sports as agility, obedience, rally, and tracking. But most of all, they love to be with their people. Even novice pet parents and apartment dwellers will find these pups to be excellent furry family members.

Child friendly?

All dogs are individuals. Our ratings are generalizations, and they're not a guarantee of how any breed or individual dog will behave. Dogs from any breed can be good with children based on their past experiences, training on how to get along with kids, and personality. No matter what the breed or breed type, all dogs have strong jaws, sharp pointy teeth, and may bite in stressful circumstances. Young children and dogs of any breed should always be supervised by an adult and never left alone together, period.

Analysis

I have not met the dog and I am hoping to carry out a home visit on the 6th November 2020 when I will be able to observe his temperament. However, from the information I have researched so far, and having seen him virtually whilst assessing Applicant, he appears to be a friendly dog.

Applicant understands that she is not to leave the dog and the child unattended at any time as with all dogs, we can not be sure how he may respond if provoked.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND INTERNET CHECK ⁽²⁴⁾

Has a check been made of social media websites or using internet search engines?	YES
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If yes, provide details, including any contra-indications arising from these checks, and how these have been considered/addressed. Alternatively, note briefly and cross-reference to the relevant section in the assessment report.

On the 1st of October 2020 I found Applicant's Facebook account and her account is set to the highest settings. She understands that she cannot post pictures or any information about children in her care. A Twitter and Google search was also completed on Applicant which raised no contra-indications.

I also sent Applicant our Social Media policy which she has read and understood.

SCHOOL, NURSERY, AND HEALTH VISITOR CHECKS ⁽²⁵⁾

Subject of check	Name of school or nursery	Name of referee and status	Date check completed
N/A			
<p>School, nursery and health visitor checks may be included in Section C. Give details if any checks were not sought or not received. Give details of any contra-indications arising from these checks and how these have been considered/ addressed. Alternatively, note briefly and cross-reference to the relevant section in the assessment report.</p>			
N/A			

OTHER CHECKS ⁽²⁶⁾

Subject of check	Type of check	Date check completed
Applicant	LADO	9 th September 2020
Applicant	Ofsted	9 th September 2020
Ex-Husband	DBS	Certificate Number: [REDACTED] Certificate Issue Date: 10/11/2020
[REDACTED]	DBS	Certificate Number: [REDACTED] Certificate Issue Date: 29/10/2020
<p>Give details if any checks were not received. Give details of any contra-indications arising from these checks and how these have been considered/addressed. Alternatively, note briefly and cross-reference to the relevant section in the assessment report.</p>		

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LADO Operational Support Officer confirmed that “*The applicant Name: Applicant Maiden Name: [REDACTED] D.O.B: 26/11/1961 is “NOT KNOWN” to LADO*”.

Ofsted ARC - Contact and Administration Team also confirmed that she checked “Applicant (Nee: [REDACTED]) DOB: 26/11/1961 on Ofsted’s database with the information provided and can confirm that they are not known to Ofsted”

[REDACTED] and Ex-Husband will be providing Applicant with physical support.

Both have received satisfactory DBS certificates

SECTION B

About the applicant(s)

1. Family background and childhood (including education)

Applicant stated that she was born in Gilfach Goch, South Wales to parents [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (82 years old) and [REDACTED] (died in 2013). Applicant stated that she recalls South Wales being surrounded by mountains and it being a beautiful place.

Growing up, Applicant stated that she lived with her parents and her siblings. She mentioned that she also spent a lot of time with her maternal grandparents. Applicant added that her brother M (56 years old) has learning disabilities and therefore her grandparents supported her parents to take care of him. Applicant feels that her grandmother was very involved in her life and feels that she was very influential in her life. Applicant stated that her mother was the boss and ruled the house. She mentioned that growing up, she remembers that her mother wanted everything her way in which her father always gave in and spoilt her until the day he died. Applicant does not recall any domestic abuse in her parents' relationship. Applicant stated that her mother was mainly a housewife and undertook a few cleaning jobs.

Applicant mentioned that her mother was a bit "slow" and she feels that she might have learning disabilities, although she does not have an official diagnosis. Applicant stated that when she was younger, she did not think that she was close to her mother. She feels that her mother struggled to look after her brother who had learning disabilities and therefore, he absorbed a lot of her time. Applicant states that her brother was very naughty and her mother found it difficult to instil rules and boundaries for him. Applicant felt that growing up she was the quiet child, and as a result, she feels that she was an almost forgotten child. Applicant recalls her brother breaking his 'femur' which meant that her mother stayed in the hospital for a long time with him. It was during this time that Applicant grew even closer to her grandmother. Applicant does not remember her mother being affectionate with her

nor telling her that she loved her.

Applicant said she had a really good relationship with her father. She described him as a “*fun, jolly and happy*” person. Applicant remembers that her father was affectionate and that he told her that he loved her all the time. She stated that her father was a coal miner. Unfortunately, Applicant’s father died in 2013 from lung cancer. Applicant feels that it affected her as she felt that she had let him down as he did not receive the care he needed and therefore died in a lot of pain. Applicant states straight after her father died, they had to look after her mother which meant that they did not have time to grieve. However, looking back, she does feel that she dealt with her father’s death over the years. It took her some time to be able to process and address her loss.

As already mentioned above, Applicant emphasised that her maternal grandmother played a big role in her upbringing. She feels that everything she lacked from her mother, she received from her grandmother in terms of emotional warmth, affection and attention. She also remembers her aunts and uncles and cousins from both sides of the family being around when she was growing up as well. Growing up, Applicant confirmed that she felt closest to her grandmother, even though she commented that she was very strict.

I asked Applicant to describe her relationship with her siblings. She stated that her brother M has learning disabilities and attended a Special School. Applicant stated that they did not like each other and did not get along at all growing up. She feels that she was frustrated by M as he was so naughty and would break her things. She was too young to understand about his learning difficulties and therefore his behaviour caused her a lot of frustration. Applicant stated that if ever she had anything she really liked, he would rip and break everything she had. As a result, Applicant decided to move in with her grandparents when she was 9 years old because she felt that she could not cope with her brother M’s behaviour. However, she added that she still saw both of her parents. Applicant explained that her mother always thought that they were picking on M and she always took his side and defended him. M currently lives In Coventry in sheltered, supported living.

Applicant is in contact with M and she sees him every few months. They have a positive relationship.

Applicant stated that growing up she had a positive relationship with her brother, D (47 years old). They were very close because they were so similar in character, loving, gentle and kind.

Applicant mentioned that D's wife [REDACTED] did not like M straight away. As a result, D's Wife and M did not have a positive relationship. However, Applicant commented that she and D's Wife maintained a good relationship. Unfortunately, when her father died in 2013, Applicant explained that D's Wife wanted Applicant's mother to be put in a care home which she did not agree with. Applicant also spoke about the fact that she felt that D's Wife was money oriented. Applicant added that she was upset because D did not stand up for her and did not say anything. Applicant feels that D's Wife hates her because she is not able to get any more money from her mother. She says that D's Wife has reported her to social services a few years ago, that she is mistreating her mother, which is untrue. Applicant stated that she sees D but added that they are not close as they used to be. D lives in Nuneaton.

In terms of good things she remembers about her childhood, Applicant stated that she remembers growing up being surrounded by her cousins, playing with her friends on the street and going on bike rides. She remembers playing games and states that there were rivers and there was a lovely scenery where she grew up. She also has fond memories she shared with her grandparents. Applicant moved to Coventry when she was 5 years old with her siblings. They also moved with her maternal grandparents leaving her cousins and friends in Wales. She stated that this was the only unhappy memory she has of her childhood because she felt lonely.

Applicant remembers that she started school in December when she was 5 years old in Coventry. She remembers the infant school being very strict and feels that they were scared to speak up. Applicant stated that at the junior school, they had a new headmaster who was nice and therefore she enjoyed her time there. She

states that she was class monitor and that she used to ask for more homework from teachers. Applicant added that she struggled in secondary school as it was a very big school. She mentioned that the children were very naughty, the teachers struggled to control them and that she did not feel safe.

Applicant described her overall experience of early childhood as “ok”. Although she feels that she was a generally happy child, she felt lonely because although her grandparents did their best to care for her, they were older and therefore could not take her to places and play with her. Applicant states that she was a typical teenager. She remembers having bad acne and that this did not help her self-esteem and that she was bullied at school. She feels that she did not have her peers for support and that her grandparents were also old to intervene. Applicant moved back home to support her mother when her brother D was born when she was 11 years old.

Applicant states that her grandparents were not educated and therefore encouraged her verbally to do well but did not actively help her with her homework as they did not understand the homework themselves. Applicant stated that her grandparents also did not attend parents’ evenings as she felt that it was her parents’ role to. Applicant does not feel that her mother in particular was supportive of her with education and does not feel that she valued education and that her father was often working to provide for the family. Applicant gained qualifications in English, Maths and typing from the CSEs’.

Applicant values education a lot and she feels that this is one aspect she is different from her parents. She also feels that when [REDACTED] was growing up, she spent lot of time with him. She feels that she has always been affectionate [REDACTED] which is something that her mother did not give her.

Applicant stated that they always went to Wales for holiday and has fond memories of this. She remembers sliding down the mountain on cardboard boxes and swimming in the river. Applicant stated that they were not a religious family but

celebrated birthday parties and celebrated Christmas. Applicant mentioned that her mother always saved towards holidays and Christmas presents and as a result, they always had a lot of presents. She added that they celebrated special occasions with her aunties, uncles and cousins and spent new year as a family. Even if her parents did not give her money, Applicant stated that her grandparents gave her money.

Applicant stated that overall, she was honoured and privileged to have her grandmother as a mother figure and feels that because of her, she would describe her upbringing as positive. Unfortunately, her grandmother passed away in 2001 from lung cancer. Applicant was sad when her grandmother passed away as she was a special person in her life, however, she had her s■■■■ to look after and therefore felt that she managed her grief well. Over time, she has learnt how to live with the losses in her life and reports that she still misses her.

Finally, I asked Applicant how she feels her experiences as a child have shaped the person she is today. She feels that she is who she is today because of her grandmother. She stated that her grandmother taught her to analyse situations and look at things logically.

Analysis:

Applicant overall reported a happy childhood. However, she was able to acknowledge that she did not have a close relationship with her mother and identify the fact that her mother did not offer her any emotional warmth. Applicant was reflective in understanding the reasons why her mother might not have been affectionate towards her as she believes that her mother might have undiagnosed learning disabilities. As evidenced throughout the assessment, Applicant was equally reflective regarding parents of children in care in that she understands that their parenting capacity is usually affected by other factors like Mental Health, substance misuse, etc. As a result, Applicant will be able to be empathetic with the parents she will work alongside with and not be judgemental based on her on childhood experiences. Over the years, Applicant has been successful in establishing a better relationship with her mother and now provides care for her in

collaboration with the carers who also support her mother.

On the other hand, Applicant feels that her grandmother and her father were the bridge that provided her with a secure base. Applicant recalls fond memories of receiving emotional warmth from them. I am of the view that this acknowledgement reflects the fact that Applicant understands the importance for children's development to receive emotional warmth from their care givers. As a result, Applicant ensured that she offered this to her son Son who confirmed this in his personal reference.

I am of the view that moving from Wales to England seemed to have been a significant event for Applicant and she recalls how lonely she felt having left her friends and family behind. This reflects Applicant's resilience and ability to adapt as over the years, she was able to settle in England and form relationships. I am of the view that resilience and the ability to adapt are an important quality which are transferrable to fostering.

It is evident that as a child, Applicant struggled with her brother M's behaviour due to his difficulties. As an adult, Applicant is now able to empathise with M and understand that they would have benefited from having clear boundaries and structure from their mother growing up. Again, I am of the view that Applicant will be able to be understanding and empathetic towards children with challenging behaviours and will seek to understand the reasons behind this. Furthermore, as discussed in the section regarding providing children with structure and boundaries, it is clear that Applicant has very good understanding of how important this is for children as she lacked this aspect growing up. Unfortunately, Applicant no longer has a close relationship with her brother D and reports that she does not see him often. However, I did not get a feeling that Applicant resents her brother and that although they are no longer close, she understands the importance of promoting positive relationships for children as evidenced in Standard 3 (NMS).

Finally, it is also clear that the passing of Applicant's father and grandmother was

difficult for her and these losses occurred during the times when Applicant was experiencing further changes in her life like the birth [REDACTED] and taking on the caring responsibility of her mother. Applicant acknowledges that these might have hindered her ability to grieve properly. However, over the years, Applicant feels confident in that she has grieved and found ways to live with her loss. I am therefore of the opinion that Applicant will also be able to empathise with children in her care who might have experienced loss and grief.

2. Adult life (including employment and previous relationships)

(Please refer to the Chronology in Section C for the full details of Applicant's education and employment)

Applicant self-reported and stated that she attended Access to health studies at the Butts college in 1990. Applicant also completed the Nursing Diploma for 20 months at the Nursing School at Walsgrave but did not complete it as she had to prioritise caring for her son [REDACTED] was born premature and diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy. Applicant also mentioned that she completed Maths equivalent to GCSE at the Butts College because she wanted to help [REDACTED] his homework.

Applicant stated that she would assess her computer and literacy skills as "*excellent*". Applicant stated that she uses the computer to send invoices and information to Warwickshire County council for her mother's care. Therefore, Applicant feels confident in her ability to keep and maintain a level and standard of record keeping. Applicant currently has no internet connection at her house and uses her neighbour's internet, with their permission. She is hoping to install internet in her house before Christmas and understands that she will need to ensure that parental controls are also in place.

As a parent/potential foster carer, Applicant believes that education is important and is the key to the future. She feels that it is important to identify the child's difficulties and encourage them to learn and achieve their potential. She feels that if she had parents who encouraged and supported her education she would have gone far in life.

I asked Applicant what opportunities she has had for training in her employment. Applicant stated that she completed some training through her Nursing Diploma courses such as First Aid which was incorporated into the course. Applicant feels that these courses gave her confidence, self-esteem and the ability to know that she was able to carry out her work effectively. Applicant stated that work is important as it gives people structure and the opportunity to mix with people. In terms of her ambitions/plans for the future with regard to work, Applicant would like to make fostering her full-time job. She wants to show children love, structure and equip them with skills for them to be independent.

As fostering will be Applicant's main job, she will not have any work commitments to fit around fostering. Applicant stated that she has carers who help to support her mother and she is only required to go to her mother's house for 4 hours in a day which she can do when the child is at school. In the event that she needed to be home with the child during the day for example the child gets sent home or during school holidays, Applicant stated that she has a robust support network of reliable carers who would be willing to step in to care for her mother. She is looking at putting her mother in a care home and this has been slightly delayed due Covid-19 as she feels that her mother needs stimulation. She is confident that she is able to commit to fostering and she does not feel that she could have done so last year as her mother did not have the same care support package as she does now.

Previous relationships

Applicant met [REDACTED] when she was 19 years old and this is when their relationship started. She stated that they were friends at the beginning and she moved in with him in August 1986 as she wanted to get to know him. This is because she stated that [REDACTED] had been married before and therefore they wanted to be sure about their relationship before getting married in September 1987. She feels the relationship was positive and that they were very happy together. Although she was young, Applicant stated that she was very mature for

her age compared to other 19 years olds. She also confirmed that there was never any domestic abuse in their relationship. Applicant mentioned that she did not fall pregnant straightaway and they had [REDACTED] 993 when she was 32 years old.

Applicant explained that [REDACTED] used to be a kind gentle and patient man but the head injury in 1998 changed his behaviour. Applicant explained that [REDACTED] fell from a ladder in a warehouse which caused a very bad injury. As a result of this, Applicant feels that it changed his personality and that he would get very frustrated as he is a “doer” and struggled psychologically, was slow and had to learn how to do things all over again. Prior to Ex-Husband’s head injury, Applicant stated that they used to do things together as a family, unfortunately thereafter, for a while, Applicant had to do a lot of things with Son as a single parent. Applicant feels that she had to put Son’s needs first and asked Ex-Husband to seek help and support. She feels that Ex-Husband’s head injury affected Son’s confidence and therefore recalls that she spoke to the school about Ex-Husband’s accident and the school referred the family to a Therapist. Applicant stated that Ex-Husband attended 1 session, but the therapist continued to work with Applicant and Son. She stated that Ex-Husband acknowledged that he was a different person and made the necessary changes and adjustments thereafter.

Applicant stated that they moved to Cornwall as a family at Ex-Husband’s request due to some work he had down there. She stated that initially, Ex-Husband has said that this was not permanent and that they would eventually move back to Coventry. Applicant stated that she did not like Cornwall and does not feel that Ex-Husband was willing to compromise about them moving back to the Midlands even though Applicant feels that she tried to give it some time. During this time, Applicant stated that she was going back and forth when both her parents were unwell until 2014 when she decided to move back to Coventry. Applicant stated that she had family ties in Coventry and felt isolated in Cornwall. She feels that this was also difficult for Son as well as he was close to his grandparents. Applicant stated that during this time, Son was an adult and was enrolled in college in Cornwall. As a result, she stated that a decision was made for Son to remain in Cornwall with his father for 8

months until he completed his studies. Applicant stated that Son would visit weekends and holidays and she maintained a close contact with him. Applicant and Ex-Husband eventually divorced in 2017.

Applicant stated that she does not feel that Son was affected much by their breakup as he also thought that they had become different people and was mature at that time (19 years old). She feels that Son was happier in Coventry. Applicant stated that even though they had separated, Ex-Husband kept visiting Coventry every 2 – 3 weeks and therefore Son had regular contact with both of them. However, Applicant mentioned that she had to stop Ex-Husband from visit her as often in 2016 as he had met someone else and this would not have been appropriate. Son was an adult at this point and could visit Ex-Husband or see him whenever Ex-Husband visited his family in Coventry.

I asked Applicant what she learnt from her previous relationship and she stated that “*she does not need him*”. She mentioned that she was with Ex-Husband from the age of 19 and therefore it was scary being alone and being divorced after being with him for such a long time. Applicant stated that this has also taught her that she is a resilient person as she was able to rebuild her life after that.

Adult Life

Applicant stated that the significant events in her adult life have been “*marriage, birth of Son, the death of grandmother and father, getting divorce, owning her own home and Son’s wedding*”. In terms of religion, Applicant stated that although she considers herself to be a Christian, religion is not an important part of her life.

In terms of her culture and how this is reflected in her upbringing and life now, Applicant feels that she upholds the British traditional values. She added that she celebrates Christmas and Easter, but equally embraces other cultures, which she enjoys learning about. To maintain a good level of health, Applicant stated that she eats a healthy and varied diet. She added that she ensures that she gets enough sleep, goes to the gym, swimming and takes regular walks. Applicant stated that

she also listens to music and talks and laughs with her friends for relaxation.

Applicant stated that she suffered from post-natal depression around 1994 which she fully recovered from. Since then, Applicant stated that she has not suffered from any significant illnesses, including any mental health difficulties. She confirmed that she feels that she is a strong person emotionally and feels that she has sought support and advice from family and friends to manage and respond to stressful episodes in her life. Applicant added that she has also looked for advice on the internet and also finds that writing down a "*pros and cons*" list helpful.

In terms of her attitude to smoking and alcohol use, Applicant stated that she does not and has never smoked. However, she feels that alcohol is acceptable in moderation for a special occasion.

Applicant stated that the breakdown of her marriage has been the biggest disappointment for her so far in her life. On the other hand, "*having her wonderful son, whom she is very proud of*" has given her the greatest satisfaction in her life so far.

Analysis:

I spoke to Ex-Husband on the 10th September 2020 and he also corroborated Applicant's recollection of their marriage although they both struggled remembering the exact dates. Overall, it appears that Applicant and Ex-Husband had a happy and health marriage. Both Ex-Husband and Applicant acknowledged that Ex-Husband's head injury put a strain on their relationship and family, but it is positive that Applicant sought help and support and as a result, they were able to overcome this difficult time in their lives. I am of the opinion that this demonstrated the fact that Applicant understands the importance for children to grow up in a loving and stable environment. Furthermore, I am of the opinion that this further demonstrates how resilient Applicant is as not only was she able to stand by Ex-Husband during his difficult time but was also able to support her son and overcome this.

It is positive that Applicant and Ex-Husband have maintained a positive relationship even after they separated and ultimately got divorced. As a result, Son has always

had and maintained positive relationships with both his parents.

3. Personality and current relationship

Applicant described herself as “*kind, caring, loyal, honest, fun, reliable, resilient and a good person*”. She added that her kindness, fun nature, lovingness, friendliness and being responsible are characteristics she inherited from her parents. In terms of strengths, Applicant stated that she has “*good communication skills, has good intuition, is versatile and flexible and overall a focused person*”. On the other hand, Applicant identified her weaknesses as overthinking certain situations and considers herself to be a perfectionist.

I asked Applicant about what evidence she can give that shows she is an organised, reliable and dependable person. Applicant gave an example of caring for her mother and stated that she schedules care routines, organises all her care with care agencies, organises her household finances and Warwickshire County Council accounts for her social care, etc. She added that she also has liaised with a range of professionals such as social workers, Occupational Therapists, doctors, physiotherapists and carers.

Current relationship

Applicant is currently single and does not have any plans to enter into any new relationship.

Analysis:

Applicant’s personal referees described her as a kind and a loving person. None of the referees described Applicant in a manner that would have caused me to be concerned about her suitability to foster. I have experience Applicant to be a bubbly, happy and talkative lady. At the beginning of the assessment I struggled to follow Applicant’s train of thought as she over-elaborates on everything I asked her. However, with time, I have discovered this to be one of Applicant’s strengths as she is very open and honest about her life and would divulge everything. Applicant is also able to make links regarding various episodes and times in her life with current

situations which again I feel evidences her strength in her ability to reflect and analyse situations.

4. Household members (including children) and lifestyle

Lifestyle

Applicant stated that currently she lives on her own, and a typical weekend for her would be (Saturday) breakfast or lunch out. She added that she would then look to find an event or activity that is on in her local area that she can attend and often has a movie night. Sundays are a relaxation day for Applicant, and she added that she has a late breakfast, takes a walk in the park and would also meet friends.

During the week, Applicant stated that she wakes up, drinks coffee, cleans the house, completes laundry, goes to the gym, visits her mother, completes food shopping on the way back, has dinner, would read, watch TV, play computer games and then talk to friends and family.

In terms of the written or unwritten “rules” that exist in the family, Applicant stated that no smoking is allowed in the house, encourages shoes to be taken off, as well as encourages individuals to tidy up after themselves. Applicant mentioned that she enjoys watching movies, NFL (National Football League), walking, baking, sewing, going to the gym, swimming, reading, playing on iPad/computer, history, visiting museums, meeting with friends and going out to dinner. Applicant confirmed that she has a computer and access to the internet.

Applicant affirmed that she celebrates special occasions like birthdays/anniversaries/religious festivals by having a nice dinner at home or at a restaurant. Applicant added that it is her ritual to have a birthday cake and to get together with family and friends to celebrate. She added that she mostly enjoys holidays abroad (for the sun) by the beach, in a nice hotel and where there are activities such as swimming pools etc.

Applicant stated that affection between her and her family is displayed through love

and kindness, kisses and hugs. She added that people's feelings in her family are always dealt with through talking. Applicant added that family members are able to pick up on how others are feeling through observation and thereafter discussions are encouraged. Applicant stated that if she knows something is wrong, she will ask the family member if she can help and ask how they are feeling. Applicant gave an example that, when her father died, she supported her Son by listening to him and being there for him. She added that they openly spoke about their feelings, sadness, pain, hurt, good times they had with him, etc. which aided in their recovery.

I asked Applicant about the people who visit the family home on a regular basis and asked her what role they would have with a foster child placed. She mentioned her friend ██████████ (known as ██████ who is her neighbour and friend. As discussed below, ██████ is providing Applicant with both emotional and practical support. Applicant added that ██████ accompany her on day trips.

Analysis:

I am of the view that Applicant makes effort to ensure that she engages in activities to ensure that she fills her free time with meaningful activities. This evidences that Applicant will be equally invested in ensuring that she offers children leisure activities as stated in Standard 7. As Applicant is currently unemployed, I am of the view that she will be able to prioritise her fostering duties adequately. Applicant's leisure activities will be able fit around fostering.

5. Other children (including adults) and social/ support network

Applicant has one child, 26-year-old Son who currently lives in America and is married to ██████ who was in England at the beginning of the assessment visiting his family and at the time, Applicant explained that he was looking to work briefly at a gym as receptionist in America once back in America.

Applicant explained that Son was born 11 weeks premature and as a result encountered a lot of problems including having a stoma and a Patent ductus

arteriosus (PDA) heart condition. Applicant stated that she was discharged from hospital before Son was and remembers that she visited him on a daily basis until he was discharged in their care. She added that as Son grew, she noticed that she could not turn his head and therefore she sought support and advice from relevant professionals and Son received a test at ██████ Children's unit which concluded that he had developmental delay. Applicant added that Son attended a Child development unit when he was 2 years old where he was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy and told that he would never walk as a result. Applicant said she refused to believe this and worked with physiotherapists and Occupational therapists and a range of other professionals until Son eventually walked at age 11. She stated that she felt Son was intellectually intelligent but stated that she had to teach him everything. Applicant explained that she made it a point that every time she was told that Son could not do something, she would find a way to enable him to achieve his potential.

Applicant stated that teachers wanted him to attend Special schools, but she advocated for Son to attend mainstream education as she knew that he had the capability and the intellect. Son initially attended ██████ school, but Applicant felt that he was not receiving the 1:1 attention he needed. Therefore, Applicant decided that it would be best for Son to attend ██████ School which was a private school. Applicant stated that she home schooled Son for secondary school as he only started walking when he was 11 years old. Applicant stated that he completed pre-GCSE's as he was often behind, and he completed this in ██████ College before moving to ██████ College to complete his GCSE's and A level in Performing Arts. Unfortunately, this was in 2013 when Applicant's father died. He struggled to continue with this studies and did not complete his College studies.

Applicant described Son as "*kind, fun loving, knows what he wants and would go and get it, confident, caring, loyal, fun, sociable*" etc. As Son currently lives in America, Applicant explained that she talks to him on WhatsApp every couple of days. Applicant added that she visits Son every year and would be willing to take the foster child with her on these visits. Son does not visit regularly due to not having enough annual leave days, only 10 days a year. If Son visited, Applicant

stated that he has a number of places where he would be able to stay including next door with her friend and neighbour [REDACTED] as well as Applicant's mother's house as she has a 3-bedroomed house.

Applicant confirmed that Son is supportive of her fostering application. She added that it is Son's point of view that she will a good foster carer and will be able to offer children stability. As Son is an adult and lives abroad, Applicant does not feel that she will need to meet his needs alongside those of the foster children, even when he visits. Applicant explained that she offers Son emotional support which she is confident will continue even when she starts fostering. Applicant mentioned that she does not feel that her relationship with Son will be impacted on for the same reasons. We discussed about what information Applicant would and would not share with Son and she agreed that she would only share on a need to know basis. To ensure that both Son and the children she fosters remain safe, Applicant stated that she would not leave the foster child alone with Son to discourage allegations from being made. Applicant feels that Son is a logical person and is likely to help her think logically about different fostering situations that may arise. She also envisages that Son will offer her emotional support. In terms of experience, skills or interests that could benefit a foster child, Applicant explained that he loves sports, is sociable and fun, likes playing games and is kind. Son does not have any children.

Social Support network (Please refer to the Eco-map in Section C)

- [REDACTED] is White British and Applicant's friend. [REDACTED] lives in Coventry and has known her for 36 years. [REDACTED] will be offering Applicant with emotional support.
- [REDACTED] is White British and Applicant's friend. [REDACTED] lives in Coventry and has known her for 37 years since V [REDACTED] was born. [REDACTED] will be offering Applicant with emotional support.
- [REDACTED] is White British and lives in Coventry. She has known her for 26 years and they met in hospital when Son was born. She will offer

emotional support.

- [REDACTED] is White British and lives in Coventry, next door to Applicant's mother's house. She has known [REDACTED] since 1988. She will offer emotional support.
- **Ex-Husband** is White British and Applicant's ex-husband. Although Ex-Husband lives in Cornwall, he is often in Coventry. Applicant has known Ex-Husband since 1987 and will offer both emotional and physical support. Ex-Husband's has received a satisfactory DBS certificate.
- [REDACTED] is Asian and works as Applicant's mother's carer. Applicant has known [REDACTED] for 5 years. She will offer Applicant her emotional support. She will step in to help her mother.
- [REDACTED] is White British and Applicant's friend [REDACTED] is also Applicant's neighbour and she has known her for 40 years. [REDACTED] will be offering Applicant both emotional and physical support. [REDACTED] received a satisfactory DBS certificate.
- **Son** is White British and Applicant's son. Son lives in America and will only offer emotional support.

Applicant stated that if she was unwell for a day or so, or if she was unable to care for the foster children for any reason, she would ask [REDACTED] or Ex-Husband to care for the child. However, if it was longer than a week, she would have to contact her social worker for respite care to be sought for the child. Whichever the case, Applicant confirmed that she would seek consent and advice from the social worker. Applicant stated that she feels closest [REDACTED] who lives next door as she sees her frequently. They have become very close and see each other every couple of days.

I asked Applicant to recall a recent stressful incident/issue. Applicant talked me

through this incident which involved her mother's carer who rang 111 because she thought her mother had been burnt, but really had picked the skin until she became sore. Getting this incident resolved was stressful according to Applicant and she stated that she confided in [REDACTED] and they were able to talk this through. She added that she talks through her problems with a few trusted friends, but prefers to think things through, analyse the reason why she is upset, worried etc. She added that she finds writing things down and problem solving in this way also useful.

Applicant stated that confidentiality is not telling someone information that has been trusted to you about someone else. Applicant stated that she talks to Son more as he is her son and she trusts him. She knows people who tend to gossip and therefore will not tell these people anything. Applicant feels that she is a private person and she does not tend to want people to know about her life. She stated that maintaining confidentiality is important when fostering because it will be her responsibility to look after the child, keep them safe and not allowing people to know where the child lives or about their background as this may lead to them getting harmed and is a way of respectful thing to do.

To ensure that a foster child remained safe from physical and sexual abuse in her network of family, friends and acquaintances and that they, in turn, remain safe from allegations, Applicant stated that she will not leave the child with just anyone. She added that she will only leave the child with people who have had a DBS check. She spoke about play dates and that she will not even leave the child unattended in these places. She would rather the children come to her house for play dates rather than letting her foster child to go to other people's houses. I asked Applicant what support she expects to receive while fostering. Applicant mentioned that she will need information about the child prior to the child coming to live with her and we spoke about the fact that although this is good practice and it is encouraged, it is not always possible in certain circumstances. She would also call the social worker for advice and support if she needed it but stated that in the initial instance, she would research the information on the internet at how she can best support the child herself. Applicant stated that she would also attend courses.

On the 7th September 2020, I discussed with Applicant national organisations, such as Fostering Network and CoramBAAF, that can offer independent, external advice and support. Since then, Applicant has visited the Fostering Network's website and familiarised herself with the web page. Applicant is aware that she can make complaints or compliments on behalf of herself or any children she might be fostering regarding the service she receives.

Analysis:

Applicant speaks fondly of her son Son and is evidently proud of all his accomplishments. All the personal referees that I spoke to felt strongly that Applicant advocated for Son from the time he was born to ensure that he received all the support he needed to be able to reach his full potential. Son and Ex-Husband also confirmed this. Applicant also went an extra mile to seek extra support for Son as well as ensuring that Son was in an educational provision that met his needs. Applicant dedicated her time to home school Son for his secondary school education. Therefore, I am confident that Applicant would be able to promote educational attainment for children in her care. Furthermore, not only will Applicant be empathetic towards any children she cares for with additional needs, I am also confident that she will seek to support, encourage empower and advocate for that child to ensure that they receive their full potential.

As evident above, Applicant has a robust reliable network of family and friends who will offer her both emotional and physical support. As fostering will be Applicant's priority, she felt that only 2 people needed to be DBS checked in cases of emergency who are Ex-Husband and [REDACTED] we spoken to Ex-Husband and [REDACTED] and they are in full support of Applicant becoming a foster carer and stepping in to offer her any support she may need.

Assessment of fostering capacity

6. Caring for children: providing warmth, empathy and encouragement

Applicant stated that being a parent means loving the child, encouraging, supporting them, helping them with schoolwork, being there, helping them when they have disagreements with their friends, having fun and doing things with children and teaching them life skills. Applicant mentioned that she had Son prematurely and this was difficult as she was only able to take him home at 10 weeks old. Applicant stated that Son was very small, but she feels that adjusting to motherhood came naturally to her and was able to get on with it. She remembers that her grandmother knitted a lot of clothes for Son as he was very small. Applicant stated that the rewards of being a parent have been the feeling of joy in having Son, watching him accomplish things that he was told he was not going to be able to accomplish, spending time with him, etc. She stated that the challenges of being a parent have been discovering that Son had Cerebral Palsy, supporting him with physio every day, attending SEN meetings for him to meet targets, etc. Having a child with disabilities, Applicant stated that she had to do everything differently, for example finding the right chair for Son, going to a drama group she would have to speak to the facilitators beforehand to ensure that they were able to accommodate him, etc. She stated that she could not be spontaneous, and everything took organising beforehand and took double the time.

Thinking of her own experience of being parented, Applicant stated that she shows love, kisses and hugs Son a lot more as she states that her mother was not affectionate. Applicant also mentioned the importance of praising children as she recalls that when she was young, she would colour in a picture for her mother and instead of her praising her for such a beautiful picture, she will point out the fact that Applicant had coloured out of the lines. Therefore, she confirmed that she has always tried to give Son confidence and built on his self-esteem.

In terms of experience of children, Applicant mentioned that she is very close to her friend [REDACTED] and therefore she would bring her children to the house to play with Son when their children were younger. She also mentioned that between 1988 and 1995 she hosted international students aged between 10 years to 18 years old. The children lived with Applicant for a maximum of a year. Applicant added that the

students came from Japan, Thailand and all over Europe and added that she felt that she learnt a lot from the children and their cultures.

I asked Applicant what she thought the differences between being a parent and being a foster carer were. Applicant stated that as a parent, she can take her child on holiday without seeking permission. However, as a foster carer, she understands that she needs to ask for permission before doing a range of things. She also acknowledged that the child in care's experiences will be different from a child she has given birth to and raised, and therefore she will have to learn and adapt. We also spoke briefly about what Delegated Authority is and that her supervising social worker will explain this further to her. Applicant mentioned that her cousin who lives in Wales called [REDACTED] is a foster carer and she has also acquired further knowledge from training and searching on the internet about children in care.

Applicant stated that a foster child might be upset, subdued and scared leaving their parents and coming to live with her. She understands that despite the circumstance's children may come from, their loyalties are often with their parents. Applicant stated that she would expect a child to be very upset being separated from their parents or carers. Applicant was able to put herself in the child's shoes by reflecting back to when she was growing up; that although she made the decision to go and live with her grandparents and had a fantastic life, she still found the experience difficult as she missed the familiarity she had with her parents like her bedroom. With children in care, they often do not have a choice and decisions are usually made to their best interest and Applicant affirmed that in these instances, children will be very upset and angry,

In order to make a foster child feel welcome in her home, Applicant mentioned that she would have the information about the foster child before hand for example whether they are a boy or girl, find out about their likes and dislikes and would get them a gift or something they like, to welcome them. Applicant stated that she would give the child space and time to settle in, not asking too many questions, spending time with them watching their favourite TV program, etc. To ensure that a foster child was happy living with her, Applicant stated that she would communicate

with the child, provide them support and reassurance, find out about how they are doing at school, whether they are being bullied and then talk to them and find out how to resolve their problem.

We had an in-depth discussion regarding how Applicant would expect a child who has been abused sexually, emotionally and physically in the past to behave in her home. Applicant said Son was worried about her safety particularly with the older children who might be physically aggressive. Applicant stated that with each child that she will care for, she will talk to them about why they feel how they feel and try and understand the root of the behaviour to find the best ways to move forward. If a foster child has started to tell Applicant about abuse that had occurred in the past, Applicant stated that she would listen to them and report and record appropriately.

Applicant was able to talk through different ways in which she might communicate with children for example verbally but as well as none verbal whereby she finds out their likes and dislikes to help them create happy experiences. Applicant also confirmed that she understands the importance of building a child's self-confidence and self-esteem. She mentioned that Son was picked on, called 6 legs because he used a walking frame, and that other children struggled to get along with Son. Therefore, Applicant invited the children for tea to help them understand Son's condition and by the end of this they were Son's advocates and got along with them. Applicant also confirmed that part of Son's achievements and development from his condition was due to the encouragement, affirmation that helped him to build his self confidence and self esteem to be able to achieve his full potential.

In order to encourage children to achieve their potential in education or other activities they try, Applicant stated that she would find out from the child what they want to get out of the particular tasks and help them to achieve this. She added that if ever the child did not get something right, she would reassure them and encourage them. With Son, she stated that she never hindered him from trying new activities because of his disability, but instead found different ways in which she could get Son involved in various activities. She always had to adapt and ensured

that he was included in clubs and groups. Applicant feels strongly that she would do the same for any children in her care.

I asked Applicant to think of examples of how she has treated children as individuals. Applicant could not give me examples as she only has one child, but mentioned that children have different personalities, different likes and dislikes and therefore it is important to be fair and respect the child as an individual. She spoke about how different she was from her other siblings even though they were born to the same parents. In order to help children and young people to make decisions and learn from any mistakes they make, Applicant stated that she would talk to them, encourage and praise them when they have done well. Even when the child has made a mistake, she would still talk to them and ascertain why they did what they did. She added that she would approach this situation in a child friendly manner but emphasised the importance of teaching children to know right from wrong.

I asked Applicant to think of any times when she helped children and young people cope with big changes in their lives and how she achieved this. She stated that Son attended a private school for his primary studies but was home schooled for secondary school. Applicant stated that she worked at his pace and worked according to his strengths and weaknesses. She mentioned that Son did not like working on a desk so they would go outside sometimes. She also ensured that he continued to mix with other people and other children in order to continue developing his social skills.

To help children and young people maintain a good standard of physical and emotional health, Applicant stated that she would ensure that the child had a healthy balanced diet, received exercise, had routine and structure and that she would listen and talk to them whenever they had worries, or if they were being bullied, etc. I added that with the older children she would like to care for, some might self-harm and therefore in such instances she would need to seek professional advice from health professionals and be there to support and

encourage them.

Analysis:

I am confident that Applicant was able to evidence how she would provide warmth, empathy and encouragement for children in her care using both scenarios as well as using examples from her parenting on how she supported Son with this. Providing emotional warmth is something that is very important to Applicant because she stated that she did not receive this from her mother, even though her grandmother ensured that she gave her hugs and kisses and told her that she loved her. Therefore, Applicant ensured that Son grew up knowing how much he is loved and also showed this affection towards him. As a result, I am confident that Applicant will also extend emotional warmth to the children in her care as she understands that this is an important element for children when they are growing up.

Applicant demonstrated and gave various examples of how she encouraged Son to achieve his full potential despite his disability. She understands that helping children to build their self-confidence and self esteem is an important component that aids them to achieve this. I am confident that Applicant will also do her best to encourage and ensure that children in her care achieve their full potential with their education, any activities they try and other aspects of their lives. As already mentioned, Applicant's personal referees feel that she advocated for Son to receive the best education possible.

Finally, Applicant has a wealth of experience both from her own upbringing as well as a parent and therefore I am of the view that drawing on these experiences will enable Applicant to care for the children in her care with empathy, whilst at the same time supporting them to overcome their difficulties.

7. Caring for children: providing structure and boundaries

Applicant was able to confidently tell me her understanding of child development by giving various examples. However, Applicant thought that attachment was a child getting close to one person and struggling to form relationships with new people. This prior to Applicant having attended Skills to Foster training and therefore I had an in-depth discussion of what Attachment is based on psychological definition. After Applicant had attended Skills to Foster training, she had adequate understanding of what attachment is.

Applicant confirmed that she understands how children can become stuck at different stages of their development. She mentioned that Son did not start walking until he was 11 years old due to Cerebral Palsy. We explored reasons why children in care can become stuck and she was able to identify that this could be due to children being brought up in environments whereby they do not receive nurture and stimulation. To manage children's behaviour, Applicant mentioned that she would allow the child to vent, and when they are calmer, she would try to speak to them, encourage them to talk to her. She added that she would explain why their behaviour is wrong but would do it in a way that they do not feel guilty. Applicant stated that she understands that she will need to exercise patience with children who present challenging behaviour, which she feels confident that she has.

To manage the behaviour of a child who was acting in a way that suggested they were younger than their chronological age, Applicant mentioned that she would teach them how to develop and get to the next stage without making them feel bad about why they are behaving the way they are behaving. In terms of children who were acting in a way that suggested that they were older than their chronological age, Applicant stated that clear boundaries will need to be established for them, monitor their friends who they hang around with and discourage them from befriending people who were older than them. We then had a discussion about Child exploitation, sexually, county lines, gang affiliation, etc. If she had these concerns Applicant understands that she will have to work very closely with professionals including the police. The strategies Applicant might use to manage the behaviour of children aged 5-18, she stated would be observing what they are

doing, talk to them, use diversion, encourage them to join clubs and engage them in activities they enjoy.

Applicant understands that, for some children who have been abused, punishments such as sending them to their room may not be appropriate as it encourages further isolation. We also discussed about time in instead of time out as well as other reasons why sending children to their bedrooms as punishment may not be appropriate. Applicant stated that it is important, as a foster carer, to keep clear, concise and factual records because these records provide information about the child to the relevant professionals. She added that for example those records might be needed in the future if the child moves to another family, can be used as evidence in court as well as protecting herself from allegations just to mention a few. Applicant was adamant that she does not believe in corporal punishment. She stated that she was never hit, and she did not hit Son.

In order to encourage positive behaviour, Applicant mentioned that she would use star charts, praise good behaviour, divert the child from negative behaviour and engage them in something more positive. She added that it is also important to be consistent and give children clear rules and boundaries. She stated that she would utilise similar techniques to reward children as well as giving them treats. To ensure the safety of the children of the age group she would like to foster, both inside and outside of her home, Applicant stated that she will ensure that she adheres to the Health and Safety regulations to keep the house safe, ensure that she has parental controls on the internet, monitor computer/internet use. She added that she would also teach children to balance safety with encouraging some independence. Applicant stated that it is important to allow the child to explore the world around them but would ensure that she supervises and monitors what they do to make sure that they are safe. If a child wanted to do something that was risky or dangerous, Applicant mentioned that if she felt that it was not appropriate, she would be firm and not allow them to do it. However, if they wanted to go ice skating or rock climbing, she would teach them safety, ensure that the child wears appropriate clothes, go with them and supervise the activity.

Applicant stated that consistent rules and boundaries are important with teenagers. She added that she would ensure that the child has means of communicating with her like having their phone on, give them curfews, ensure that their homework is completed in a timely manner, give them chores around the house to give them a sense of responsibility and prepare them for independence. To employ discussions or negotiations with teenagers, Applicant mentioned that she would ensure that she talks to them and make it relatable to everyday life.

Applicant confirmed that she has experience of discussing issues such as drugs, alcohol and sexual health with Son and stated that she did this in an age appropriate manner. With foster children, Applicant explained that she would be very clear that she discusses with children (age appropriately) about dangers of drugs, talk about sexually transmitted diseases, etc. She added that she will always encourage children to be open and honest about what they do. Applicant stated that she will exercise curiosity and observe children in her care and if they are engaging in harmful behaviours, she would explain the consequences and dangers.

Applicant mentioned that parents and carers have the duty to give the child the best education they can. However, she understands that children do not attain at the same level and would work with the school to get them to the level that they need to be in to be able to achieve. Applicant emphasised that children should have access to education and have support and encouragement and feels that a good routine would also be helpful.

Analysis:

From speaking to Son, it appears that Applicant was always flexible in providing structure and boundaries for him. It is evident that Applicant understands the importance of providing child friendly boundaries and structure and she has been open and honest in admitting that she lacked this from her mother growing up and how that made her feel. Therefore, she understands that structure helps to make children feel safe and she was able to establish child friendly structures and boundaries for Son. Applicant has booked to attend Therapeutic parenting and

behaviour management on the 12th November 2020 and I am of the view that this training will equip her with the knowledge and skills to managing the behaviour of children in her care. I also sent Applicant Coventry's Behaviour management policy on the 1st October 2020.

Furthermore, it is clear that Applicant has a very good understanding of the boundaries that are important for teenagers and I am of the view that open communication will be promoted within this household. Applicant was able to explore different techniques she would use to ensure the safety of the children that she will be caring for and how she will be able to balance this with promoting some independence. Applicant was able to support Son with his disability growing up, support him to achieve his full potential and was also able to support him to be independent. Son is now a married man and lives independently in America.

Finally, Applicant also supports with the care needs of her mother and therefore I am confident that she take record keeping serious as she has a good understanding of why keeping accurate, conscious, jargon free records is important for children in her care, as she already does this with her mother. Applicant has booked to attend the Record keeping for foster carers on the 28th November 2020.

8. Caring for children: providing durability, resilience and commitment

To manage stress in her life, Applicant stated that she has very good friends and she is able to confide in them and have a laugh. Applicant mentioned that she listens to music and dances which are also stress relievers. I asked Applicant to think of a stressful or difficult time she has experienced and say how she dealt with these. She mentioned that Ex-Husband was diagnosed with cancer when Son was 5 years old and added that this was very stressful for her. Applicant stated that getting support from family and friends got her through this difficult time. Applicant acquired a lot of information and feels that this helped her as she was able to think logically about how she needed to move forward. When Ex-Husband had a head injury, this was also a difficult time as this changed him completely as a person and this was on going. Applicant used the same skills as above and acquired

information to read and understand his situation to enable her to know how to move forward.

Applicant stated that her mother suffers from dementia and she can display challenging behaviour. Applicant stated that her father spoilt her mother and as a family, they struggled with her mother after their father died because she wanted to continue with the behaviour she had previously displayed with her father. Applicant was able to give me examples how her mother has been challenging behaviour wise as well as physically. She added that her mother is verbally abusive sometimes and can wave her fist at her when she is angry.

Applicant stated how she supported Son evidences resilience and determination to see things through to their conclusion. Applicant stated that behavioural problems displayed by children, shouting, screaming and slamming doors, lacking confidence and self-esteem may be some of the challenges she could face as a foster carer. I asked her how prepared she feels to manage these. Applicant stated that she will attend training and read more information in regarding to how to best approach various behaviours displayed by children. She stated that having information about the child and learning the child's personality will help her to manage these behaviours. Applicant stated that she will seek support from the Fostering network, training, other foster carers, social workers, G.P's, etc if she experienced difficulties.

To show a foster child that she was committed to caring for them, Applicant mentioned that she would provide a child with a safe quiet home, offer children continuity and routine, be consistent with the rules and parenting, spending time with them, loving them, show interests in what they like and what they are doing, etc. We also discussed the importance of not giving up on children and what that means to Applicant as a potential foster carer. Applicant stated that children need stability and security and therefore if a foster child was having to move between families in different areas, they may feel that they do not belong and leave them untrusting of adults.

To help a foster child who had no school place or who had been excluded from school, Applicant stated that she would speak to the school to find out why the child was excluded and make enquires on whether they can access Pupil referral units (PRU). Applicant stated that she has not heard positive things about PRU's and she would seek for the child to go back to school. Applicant stated that she also has experience of home schooling and she would consider this if it was an option whilst supporting the child with the behaviours or the reasons that led them to being excluded from school. Applicant stated that Son is an adult and therefore he does not have any needs that need to be met by her. In order to manage the differing needs if she had more than one foster child, Applicant stated that it is important to treat children as individuals. Applicant does not feel that there will be any conflict between the way she manages the behaviour of her own child and that of foster children as Son is an adult and lives in America.

As a foster carer, in order to show the child that she wants to offer them stability and security, Applicant mentioned that she would be consistent in her behaviour and offer children consistent routines. Applicant stated that she would consider the Stay Put arrangement in order to continue offering the child support. To measure her success as a foster carer, Applicant stated that she writes her thoughts down and she tends to learn from her experiences which is something she would continue into her fostering carer. She added that she would also know by seeing a child being productive in certain areas of their lives.

Analysis:

Applicant appears to have a good understanding of the importance of providing durability, resilience and commitment. I am of the view that throughout this assessment, Applicant has evidenced how she remained committed to ensuring that although doctors had told her son that he would not walk, she ensured that she sought the right support to enable him to walk and achieve in other areas of his life. Applicant also understands that children in care may present with challenging behaviour both physically and verbally and Applicant has experienced this with her mother who unfortunately suffers from dementia. Therefore, I am confident that Applicant will not give up on any children in her care at the first sign of difficulties as

she understands the importance of offering children consistency and stability. Instead, I am of the view that Applicant will seek methods and strategies to resolve the difficulties she will experience whilst working closely with professionals for support and advice. I have recommended Applicant to attend “*Understanding Challenging behaviour*” training as this will equip her with essential skills of how to manage challenging behaviour. Applicant has also booked to attend Therapeutic parenting and behaviour management training on the 12th November 2020. Applicant has overcome a lot of difficulties including losing her father and grandmother, supporting Ex-Husband when he was diagnosed with cancer and with his head injury as well as having to start over her life after she divorced from Ex-Husband. I am of the opinion that resilience is a skill that Applicant will be able to transfer into fostering and caring for children.

9. Working effectively with professionals and birth family

Applicant mentioned that some of the benefits of working as part of a team is that everyone brings different skills from their different backgrounds to contribute to the task at hand. Applicant understands that it is impossible to work in isolation. Applicant stated that when she was completing her Diploma in nursing, she was required to work as part of a team. In addition to this, she stated that she has worked closely with a range of professionals throughout Son’s life.

Applicant feels that she has a range of skills that she feels she can bring to a team. For example, she stated that she is a very good communicator, she is straight forward, has good intuition, is good at adapting to working with different people, etc. She stated that being respectful of other people’s views, acknowledge oneself that they play part of that team, acknowledging that no one person knows everything and having good listening skills help to make teams work successfully. On the other hand, she stated that poor communication can prevent this from happening.

As a parent, Applicant mentioned a range of professionals she worked with particularly when supporting Son for example Physiotherapist, health visitor, child development unit, G.P, Occupational therapist, orthopaedic consultant, etc. As a

foster carer, Applicant understands that she will work alongside all the above professionals as well as social workers, dentists, opticians and therapists to mention a few. As a foster carer, to maximise her contribution to this group and help it to work as effectively as possible, Applicant stated that she will write things down whenever she speaks to someone which will help her remember the conversation. She understands that there might be difficulties in working as part of this group and at the same time acting as an advocate for the child due to differing opinions, however, Applicant hopes to put her point across respectfully.

Applicant stated that parents have the difficulties that they do in caring for their children due to their own upbringings and backgrounds, mental health issues, alcohol problems, substance misuse issues, etc. She recalled that when Ex-Husband had cancer and having a child with disabilities, this took a toll on her and as a result she was offered respite.

Applicant confirmed that she has had involvement with contact arrangements with her friend who had cancer and had issues with her partner. As a result, Applicant recalls taking their little boy to a contact centre where they were met by a contact worker. This was in 1988.

According to Applicant, it is important for children to maintain contact with members of their own family or people who are important to them because children may be rehabilitated back to their family and therefore it is important to maintain family ties. To help make this as positive an experience as possible for the child, Applicant stated that she would talk to the child about how they feel, try distracting them if they are feeling anxious, etc. Applicant also added that she is a keen baker and would bake something with the child to take to their parents. Applicant mentioned that she learnt from Skills to Foster that family time commitments can be time consuming depending on the child's care plan. Applicant stated that as she is homebased, she feels confident that she will be able to support children in her care with these.

Applicant mentioned that family time can be maintained through phone calls, texts,

video calls, emails, messenger, letter, etc. Applicant understands that a child may feel excited before and after they have met with members of their family. Therefore, she added that she would always try to engage the child in an activity as a form of distraction. Applicant mentioned that the child would be feeling sad at times like birthdays and Christmas or other festivals because they will be missing their family. To promote the child's family for them in between periods of contact, Applicant stated that she would identify and focus on the positive aspects of the child's family, comment on this, ask them where they went and what they did with their family, etc. To help the child preserve their memories of their stay with her, Applicant stated that she would collect pictures, keep a photo book, keep a memory book/box to put in things like certificates, activities they have done, where they have gone, etc.

Applicant mentioned that she would be prepared to meet with the parents or other family members of the child once she has the information and when she has discussed this with the supervising social worker. She stated that the parents might be feeling positive meeting her and knowing their child is in foster care as they may have awareness of their inability to meet the child's needs. However, Applicant understands that some parents may be angry and resentful. If the parents became aggressive or threatening, Applicant stated that she would leave the situation and call the police and the social worker. Applicant would try and keep calm so that they are not agitated any further. Applicant mentioned that she would share the child's activities, achievements, friends they have made, etc with the child's parents or family. She added that she would not share her personal details with the child's family. If the Care Plan for the child is to return to their own home, Applicant stated that she will share what the child has been doing, shares the child's achievements with the family, etc. I spoke to Applicant about a transitioning plan and the information that will be contained within this plan for her to follow.

Applicant would not place any restrictions on working with the child's family. She stated that the term "whistleblowing" means reporting something harmful or dangerous to the professionals like social workers or the police. She gave an example that if a parent was taking substances during contact, she would stop the

contact immediately and report this. To establish a positive working relationship with her supervising social worker, Applicant stated that she will always be open and honest.

Analysis:

Applicant has experience of working in partnership with other professionals as a carer for her mother and also as a parent when Son was growing up. I have always experienced Applicant to be friendly, very open, bubbly and always honest about how she feels. Therefore, I am confident that Applicant will be able to form positive working relationships with her supervising social worker and the parents for the children in her care.

Applicant has a good understanding of why it is important for children to maintain contact with members of their family and she was able to identify different methods that she will utilise to do this, even in between periods of contact. Applicant also understands the importance of speaking positively about the parents of the children in her care as this has an impact on how the child feels about family time. If ever the child was feeling low and apprehensive about family time, Applicant was able to talk through some of the things she would be able to do to ease some of these anxieties for the children and make this a positive experience for them.

Applicant is a strong advocate for children returning to their parents if it is safe for them to do, so and I am confident that she will work closely with the relevant professionals to make this a positive experience for the parents and the children involved.

10. Understanding identity and diversity

Applicant mentioned that the term identity describes who the person is, where they come from, their culture, heritage, race, family experiences, etc. She feels that these are some of the component parts that make up your sense of identity or describe who you are. Applicant was able to describe her own identity in terms of gender, ethnicity, disability, class, culture, language, sexuality and spirituality. I asked her which groups of people she felt she belongs to and what sets her aside

as more of an individual. Applicant stated that she is close to her family and friends and feels that she can easily make friends. However, she stated that she does not follow the crowd, listens to her own instincts and has her own thoughts and ideas. Applicant explained that her name means 'worthy of love' and that she was named by her maternal auntie. She added that [REDACTED] is an 'occupational name meaning 'Tailor' referring to sewing.

Applicant stated that it is important to care for a child in a way that maintains a positive sense of their own identity because it is important for them to know where they come from and who they are. I gave Applicant some scenarios of how she can nurture the identity of a foster child who was from an Afro-Caribbean background, British and some Asian backgrounds. Applicant showed some understanding of using specific oils on black children's skin and hair, she is aware of Muslim and Hindu festivals. Applicant understands that this is only a generalisation of various backgrounds of children she may foster and the most important thing is for her to be aware and seek to be educated about the diverse backgrounds to be able to meet the needs of the children in her care.

Applicant mentioned that Britain today is a multicultural and multiracial society and she feels that people are tolerant. She added that she lives in the Radford area of Coventry which has people from diverse backgrounds. Applicant stated that her lifestyle does reflect the fact that we live in a multiracial/multicultural society (i.e. food, friends, interest, etc but not so much music). She added that she mixes with people from various backgrounds and she stated that she enjoys trying new foods. In terms of her experience of prejudice or bullying, Applicant explained that she has experienced ageism as she feels that youngsters have a perception that older people cannot do certain things. She added that she was also picked on at school and called "4 eyes" because she wore glasses and that Son was called 6 legs because he had a walking frame. Applicant was able to give examples of reasons why people might be discriminated against in society i.e race, religion, sexuality etc.

If she felt that a foster child was a victim of prejudice, bullying or discrimination of

any kind, Applicant stated that she would find out the source of where it is coming from, for example, the school or the internet. She would speak to the relevant people as well as her supervising social worker in order to support the child and find solutions. Applicant would also speak to the child and reassure them; find out about solutions. Applicant was able to talk me through the different people she has had contact with from different ethnicities, people with a learning or physical disability or those of a sexuality different to her own. She also spoke about the various students she hosted from Japan, China, Thailand, etc. Applicant feels that she does have people in her social and support network who could offer her help with caring for a child of a different ethnicity, faith or sexuality to her own or with a child who has a learning disability. However, Applicant emphasised that she will always do her own research and also educate herself.

We spoke about how Applicant's parents and extended family relate to people from different racial and religious backgrounds or people who are disabled or gay or lesbian. Growing up, Applicant mentioned that her parents held traditional White British values and they were not tolerant or accepting of people from other backgrounds. Applicant remembers the first black child in their school, and she states that they followed the child around fascinated as they had never seen a black person before. Applicant added that gay and lesbian people could not freely come and speak about their sexuality as well. However, Applicant stated that her mother currently has carers from diverse backgrounds and as Britain has become more diverse, her family's traditional values about issues of diversity have also changed. On the other hand, Applicant stated that she was brought up in a different era and mixed with people from diverse backgrounds. She has brought up Son in a similar way and has always encouraged him to learn about different cultures, bought him geography books and took him to the library, etc.

If she was asked to care for a child from a different racial/cultural/religious background to her own, Applicant stated that she would not treat them any differently, however she would research on the internet about their culture, dietary needs, celebrations, etc. I asked Applicant how she would communicate with a child

whose language was different to her own and Applicant stated that she would use pictures, books, gestures, etc. Applicant gave an example of her experience with the International students she used to host, particularly the children from Japan who could not speak English. Applicant would also teach the child the English language. If she was asked to care for a child with a physical or learning disability, Applicant would not be comfortable to meet the needs of children with physical disabilities due to her age. She stated that when she did this with Son, she was younger in age and had Ex-Husband for support. However, in terms of learning disabilities, she would find out more about the child's specific disability, the medication they take and ask advice from the social worker on how she can support the child to achieve their full potential. If asked to care for a young person who was gay, lesbian or uncertain of their sexuality, Applicant stated that she would read and research about how to best support the child who was gay.

Applicant understands that foster children may come from backgrounds where their own families hold and express discriminatory views, and they may have absorbed some or all of these attitudes and values. In order to help a child, develop a positive view of Britain as a multiracial/multicultural society. Applicant stated that she would talk to the child and try to re-educate them. She added that she would give the the child the opportunity to mix with children from various backgrounds for example clubs like Brownies, Cubs, Guides and Scouts.

Analysis:

Applicant understands that diversity covers more than issues of race and ethnicity and was able to evidence how issues of sexuality, gender, disability and religion also contribute to diversity and that people can be discriminated again because of this. I am of the view that Applicant was able to demonstrate a flexible, inclusive and open perspective. As Applicant has experienced bullying and discrimination herself and also had to support her son Son with the same issues, I am confident that she will be empathetic with children experiencing any form of discrimination in her care and will seek to get this resolved for them. During my informal discussions with Applicant, she has also demonstrated knowledge and understanding of how bullying can take place face to face but also on the internet and the importance of

ensuring that this is identified and dealt with as early as possible. Applicant understands that failure to support children who are facing discrimination and bullying of any kind impacts on the child's self confidence and self-esteem. During my interview with Ex-Husband, he informed me that Applicant made it a point to encourage Son to recite words of affirmation in developing his self confidence and self esteem and for him to believe in himself, despite his disability.

Although we did not receive the reference when Applicant was hosting international students as this company closed down several years ago, Applicant was able to self-report on the experience she drew from this. I am of the view that Applicant will be able to meet the needs of children from any cultural, religious and sexual background. I am of the view that Applicant will seek to educate herself in order to meet the needs of the children in her care, in a way that promotes their identity.

Preparing to foster

11. Motivation, timing of application, and anticipated impact of fostering

Applicant stated that she started thinking about fostering in December 2019. However, during this time, Applicant purchased her property and needed to decorate it before making her fostering enquiry. Applicant explained that prior to this, she also did not have much support from social services for the care of her mother. Currently Applicant stated that her mother's care is adequately covered by carers which has given her time to be able to focus on becoming a foster carer. She stated that the starting point was getting her own property as she was able to offer the child a room and space. I asked Applicant if there are other reasons why she would like to foster. She stated that she would like to offer children continuity and stability as she feels that she did not have this with her mother due to her being consumed with caring for her brother. Applicant wants to find something that the child is good at and she would like to build on and value the child in whatever they do. She also wants to be able to offer a child a safe space where they can grow up in. Applicant added that she feels that she would make a good foster carer because she is firm but fair. Applicant stated that she feels that she is a loving, kind and fun

person and is looking forward to engaging children in fun education activities and exploring things with them.

I asked Applicant about the type of fostering she felt might be best suited to her. It was at this point that she asked to be considered for Parent and child fostering as well as short-term fostering for children aged 5-18 years old with the possibility of being considered for Long-term fostering based on the child's care plan. I have completed a separate Parent and child assessment which can be referred to. In addition to this, Applicant would also be open to emergency fostering and stated that as she is homebased, she will be open to taking and caring for children at any time of the day.

Applicant stated that she is hoping that fostering will give her the satisfaction of knowing whatever little input she gives, will make a difference. Applicant is also looking forward to spending time with the child and taking part in a range of activities, teaching them about life skills, etc. Applicant stated that she saw Coventry Fostering Services being advertised on a leaflet or booklet. Applicant was aware of Independent Fostering Agencies but felt that the Local Authority was a bigger entity.

Applicants with children

Applicant explained that she had Son when she was 32 years old because when she initially got married to Ex-Husband, they were trying to establish their finances and she struggled to conceive when they were ready to start a family. Applicant stated that she then decided to start her nursing course, and this is when she became pregnant with Son. As Son was born premature and diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy and developmental delay, Applicant stopped her nursing course and they decided not to have any more children as they wanted to put all their effort to Son and teach him and support him to reach his full potential. Applicant does not have any plans to have any more children and confirmed that she is currently not taking precautions to prevent pregnancy as she is single. She laughed and said, "*I am 59 years old!*"

Anticipated impact of fostering

Applicant mentioned that her cousin V is a foster carer and is currently caring for 2 boys in Wales. She mentioned that V has had these boys from a very young age. Applicant has seen her cousin's fostered children a few times. Applicant confirmed that she has not spoken to V in depth about fostering but would feel confident consulting her cousin for advice. Applicant feels confident that fostering will fit into her day to day lifestyle and does not feel that she needs to make any changes. Applicant stated that since receiving the care for her mother, she has the flexibility to be able to meet the needs of the child. She will still be able to visit her mother in the afternoon whilst the child is at school. Applicant stated that she would ensure that she takes the child with her to America when she is visiting Son with permission. She stated that the child in her care will be part of the family and will be included in what she does including special occasions. Applicant understands that this will be dependent on the child and whether they would like to be involved.

Applicant is understanding of the commitments involved with contact, other meetings for foster children and training and supervision and will prioritise these. As already mentioned, she is confident that she will be able to make space for these alongside other commitments she may have as she is unemployed and is homebased. Applicant also feels confident that she will make and have plenty of time to complete the record keeping expected of foster carers. Applicant feels that fostering will have a positive impact on her financially, however, understands that she will not receive fostering allowance in between placements which she is fine with and feels confident that she will manage. Applicant has made enquiries and was informed that the fostering allowance will not affect the benefits she is currently in receipt of. We also spoke about registering as self-employed and she confirmed that she had already read about this on the Fostering Network website.

Analysis:

I am of the view that Applicant's motivation to foster is genuine and realistic and is based on meeting the needs of the child. Applicant has carefully considered

fostering and chosen a time whereby she has adequate support and care for her mother to give her the time to meet her fostering duties and has also purchased a home, redecorated it to ensure that children in her care have a comfortable, safe and stable home to grow up in.

I do feel that the financial element of fostering will have a positive impact on Applicant's finances as current she is in receipt of very little money. However, the fact that Applicant has been able to manage financially with the money that she receives evidences that the financial element of fostering is not the only motivation for Applicant. I also found that she did not bring up finances throughout the assessment and instead was always enthusiastic to discuss about children in care and how she would be able to meet their needs. Applicant is confident that she will be able to manage financially, as she has been, in between fostering placements and as already mentioned above, Applicant has savings from a trust fund to fall back on during the months where she spends more than usual.

Applicant would like to make fostering a career for the foreseeable future and therefore she will not need to make significant adjustment to her lifestyle to accommodate fostering. I am confident that Applicant is realistic about the time commitment needed for fostering and has spoken about how she will be able to spend time with her mother alongside fostering. Applicant understands that this will not be possible if she has a Parent and Child placement and is she content with this.

Finally, I am of the view that Applicant can manage the number of children and type of fostering for which she is being recommended.

12. Understanding of safer caring

Applicant understands how and why allegations can be made by children about foster carers. Applicant stated that children may be angry about being taken away from their parents and they may think that they will be sent back if they made up allegations about their foster carers. She added that children who have been exposed to sexual abuse by men may make allegations against males if left alone

in their care as this may trigger past traumas.

Applicant stated that Safer caring is important as it protects her and the children in her care. She added that, she knows that an allegation might will be made against her and understands that this allegation would be fully investigation. We spoke about the possibility of her mother's care agency being made aware as well as Warwickshire if ever the allegation was substantiated. Applicant was worried that if ever an allegation was made against her, she would have to present herself at the police station, have her photograph and fingerprints taken and was worried that this could affect her travelling to America to see her son Son. She stated that she had spoken to her cousin V in Wales who is a foster carer and she had stated that this is what she had to do. I did research on this and also spoke to my manager about this and reassured Applicant that this would not happen if an allegation was made only, but perhaps could become a police investigation if found substantiated.

Applicant emphasised that Safer caring is protecting herself and the child. She spoke of the importance of keeping factual records and daily logs and observing the child for any patterns in behaviours. During the Skills to Foster training, Applicant stated that she learnt of the above and the different ways children can be exploited, gangs, trafficking, sexual exploitation, county lines, etc and how to keep children safe particularly on the internet. Applicant stated that she has started reading the Safer caring book and she described it as an "*excellent*" book.

I asked Applicant about the principles on which to build a safer caring plan and she mentioned that she would ensure that the Health and Safety checklist is completed, observing the child and identify patterns and seek early intervention. Applicant explained that she would not leave children in the care with family and friends who have not been DBS checked. She added that her support network, Ex-Husband and [REDACTED] would be used only in cases of emergency and I added that it is important for her to share the plan with her family and friends. This will enable Applicant to prepare members of her family, extended family and regular visitors to the house to adopt a safer caring approach.

In terms of the areas in which Applicant felt that she would need to change to accommodate a safer caring approach, she said she would read books to children downstairs instead of reading for them in their bedrooms, will ensure that she wears a gown or robe before leaving her bedroom and will always be sensitive about the child. Finally, Applicant stated that she will share information about the foster child with members of her household or extended family and friend's network on a need to know basis. She understands the importance of protecting the child's dignity and respecting them and understands that people who will offer her physical support will need to know more information about the child in comparison to others.

Analysis:

Applicant completed a detailed Safer caring plan, giving each scenario much thought in terms of how she would ensure that the child and her are protected. Applicant also completed a detailed, easy plan in case of a fire which she hopes to share with children coming into her care so that they are aware of what do to if a fire erupts. Furthermore, I am of the view that Applicant understands that the Safer Caring plan will facilitate in keeping the child, herself, friends and family safe from any harm that could arise through fostering, including the risk of complaints or allegations against her. On the 19th October 2020, Applicant attended the Intro to safer caring and health and safety and I am confident that this training embedded the knowledge and the information that Applicant already had.

13. Preparation, training completed, and future development needs

Skills to Foster applicant(s) feedback

The Skills to Foster training is held over 3 days covering 6 sessions; 2 per day. The training was delivered by, Fostering Recruitment Worker/Training Coordinator, and, Senior Practitioner, from the Fostering Service. The training was delivered virtually due to Covid-19. The following feedback is a combination of observations made by these professionals.

Applicant(s) name(s): Applicant

Dates attended: 19th, 28th & 30th September 2020

Overview of Skills to Foster Training

Day 1

Session 1 focuses on 'What do Foster Carers Do?' Applicants are split into small groups to complete exercises/case studies covering 'child developmental stages' and 'what do children need from foster carers'

Session 2 focuses on 'Identity & Life Chances'. This covers identity of children past, present and future, prejudice and discrimination. Applicants watch a film 'Brown Eyes, Blue Eyes', an experiment completed by JE, about racism and discrimination.

Day 2

Session 3 focuses on 'Working with Others' and 'Contact'. Applicants learn more about the team around the child, all professionals involved and their roles. A case study 'Megan' is read concerning Megan needing an emergency placement due to suspected sexual abuse. As a whole group exercise, applicants are asked to choose the role of an individual involved and stand by the name pad. The facilitator will then ask applicants how they are feeling in the role of that person and what they think they need to do.

Session 4 focuses on 'Understanding & Caring for Children'. Applicants learn more about secure and insecure attachment, providing a secure base, understanding and changing behaviours, difficult behaviours and promoting positive behaviour. They also watch a film on the benefits of using PACE and therapeutic parenting.

Day 3

Session 5 focuses on 'Safer Caring'. Applicants learn more regarding impact of abuse and neglect upon children, the safer caring plan, keeping the child safe and also themselves and other family members. We also cover challenges foster carers

may face in complaints and allegations.

Session 6 focuses on 'Transitions' and the different situations of children moving into placements and moving them on to independence.

Overall comments: Applicant attended all virtual sessions being prompt to login on time each day and when returning from lunch breaks. She was attentive and involved throughout all 6 sessions and engaged well with the other participants and the trainers.

Participation:

Applicant showed a good level of involvement and engagement in all the sessions. Applicant contributed to the group sessions and fed back from the breakout room tasks. She was reflective and thoughtful and made some insightful comments particularly over advocating for the child. She asked relevant questions and gave good feedback on issues being discussed on all 3 days.

Listening:

Applicant was a good listener, and this was evident from her questions and contributions. She completed the feedback sheet for day one only and this was a good summary of the day's learning.

Communication skills:

Applicant showed good communication both verbally and in the written form. She demonstrated being able to work and communicate with others and professionals. She will make a good advocate for any children placed with her.

Ability to reflect:

Applicant would often reflect to earlier points in the course when contributing to the discussion which showed that she had understood and taken the course content in. She gave good feedback regarding abuse and neglect and promoting a child's identity.

Understanding of key issues of fostered children and fostering tasks:

Applicant showed a good understanding of the issues relating to children in care with the questions she asked and her contributions to the group discussions. Her feedback sheet for day one showed a good awareness and summary of the day's learning.

Learning need (from applicant's own session feedback sheets):

From the day one feedback sheet that Applicant completed, she had no questions. She did have questions about furnishing the spare bedroom and was advised to discuss this further with her assessing social worker.

Area's for assessor to explore:

None

Applicant feels that she learnt a lot at the Skills to Foster training and that she enjoyed reading the Safer caring book. Applicant stated that she feels that she has been prepared and feels that professionals have been approachable and was able to ask questions.

Applicant explained that she would like to learn more about Internet safety. I encouraged Applicant to book into Online Safety and Cyberbullying, Pornography and the Potential Impact on Young People and Social Media, Selfies and Sexting which she can book via AC-Education online courses. Applicant stated that she learns best face to face in a classroom as she enjoys the interaction with people. She found it interesting having Skills to Foster training on zoom and although she felt that it was successfully run by the facilitators, she struggled to focus her eyes on the screen and stated that she was unwell for several days thereafter.

Applicant understands that she needs to complete the TSD (Training, Support and Development Standards) Red folder within 12 months of being approved and that she needs to have completed 60% prior to attending panel.

Analysis:

Applicant has been proactive in booking and attending training courses that are available. At the beginning of the assessment, Applicant made it clear that she would like to be offered the opportunity to develop her knowledge regarding various topics on how she can keep children safe. Although online training is not suited to Applicant's preferred method of learning, she understands that due to current circumstances, this is the best method to deliver training to foster carers. Therefore, I am confident that Applicant will be able to adhere to Standard 23 of the National Minimum Standards – Learning, development and qualifications of staff.

Applicant understands the importance of completing her TSD (red) folder and I am confident that she will actively work through this and would have completed the required 60% prior to attending panel.

SECTION C

Supporting information

REFERENCES

Item	Attached	If yes, provide names	Applicant has seen references
Personal references	YES	[REDACTED]	NO
Household member references	N/A	N/A	N/A
Former partner references	YES	Ex-Husband	NO
Employer references	N/A	N/A	N/A

Professionals and Agencies details have been changed to ensure confidentiality

Previous references employer	YES	<p>Applicant also completed the Nursing Diploma for 20 months at the Nursing School at [REDACTED] – No reference completed as they could not find a record of Applicant</p> <p>English Studies Centre – International students hostess - No reference completed as they could not find a record of Applicant</p>	NO
School, nursery, health visitor references	N/A	N/A	N/A

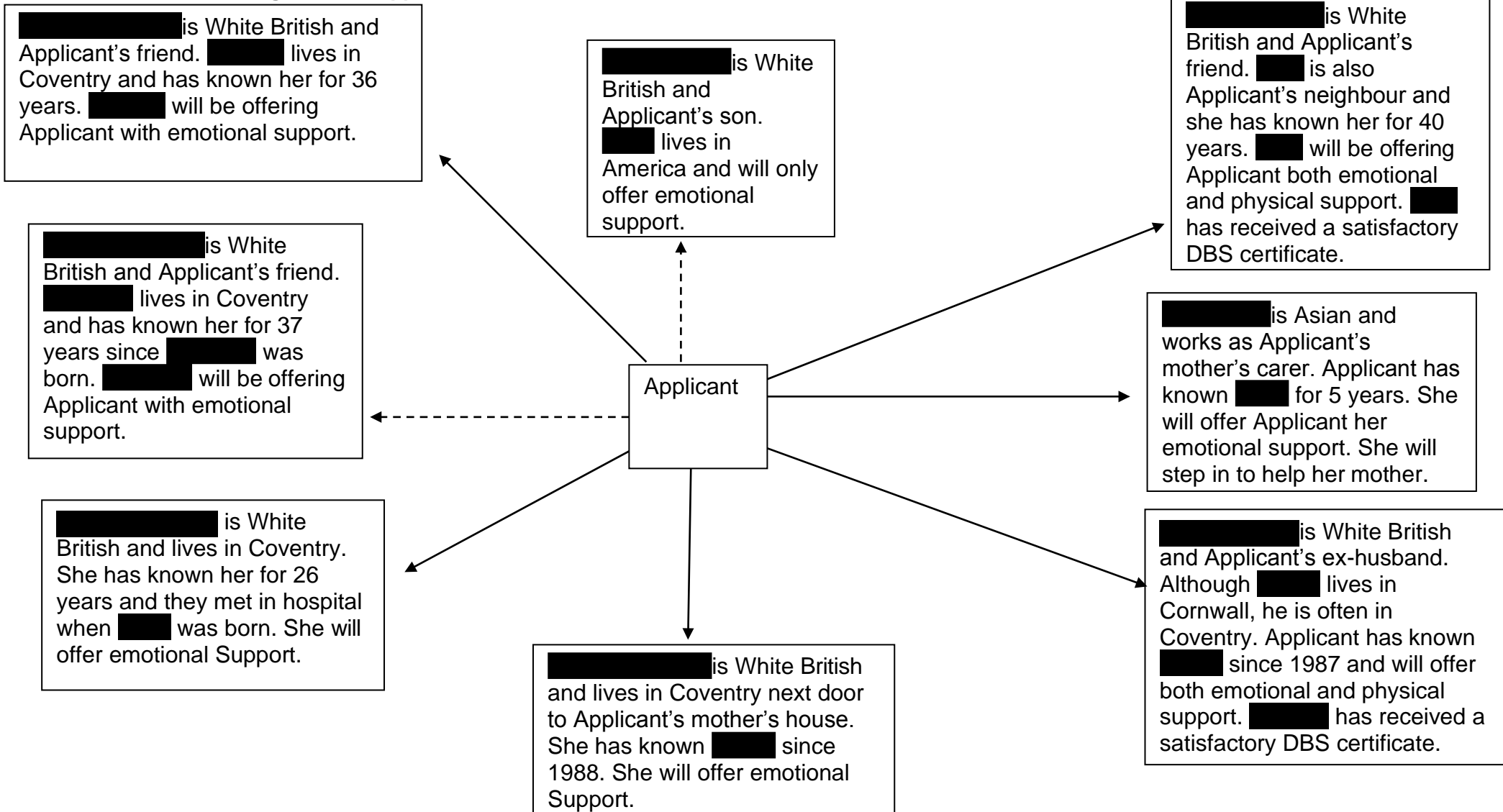
OTHER MATERIAL

Item	Attached	Notes or comments
Family tree ⁽¹⁾	YES	Within the assessment
Ecomap ⁽²⁾	YES	Within the assessment
Chronology ⁽³⁾	YES	Within the assessment
Home safety checklist	YES	Protocol
Financial statement/assessment form	NO	Protocol
Dog/pet checklist	NO	Protocol
Safer caring plan	NO	Protocol
Preparation training record ⁽⁴⁾	YES	Within the assessment and uploaded on protocol
Second opinion visit ⁽⁵⁾	N/A	N/A

Prospective Foster Carer Report (Form F) England

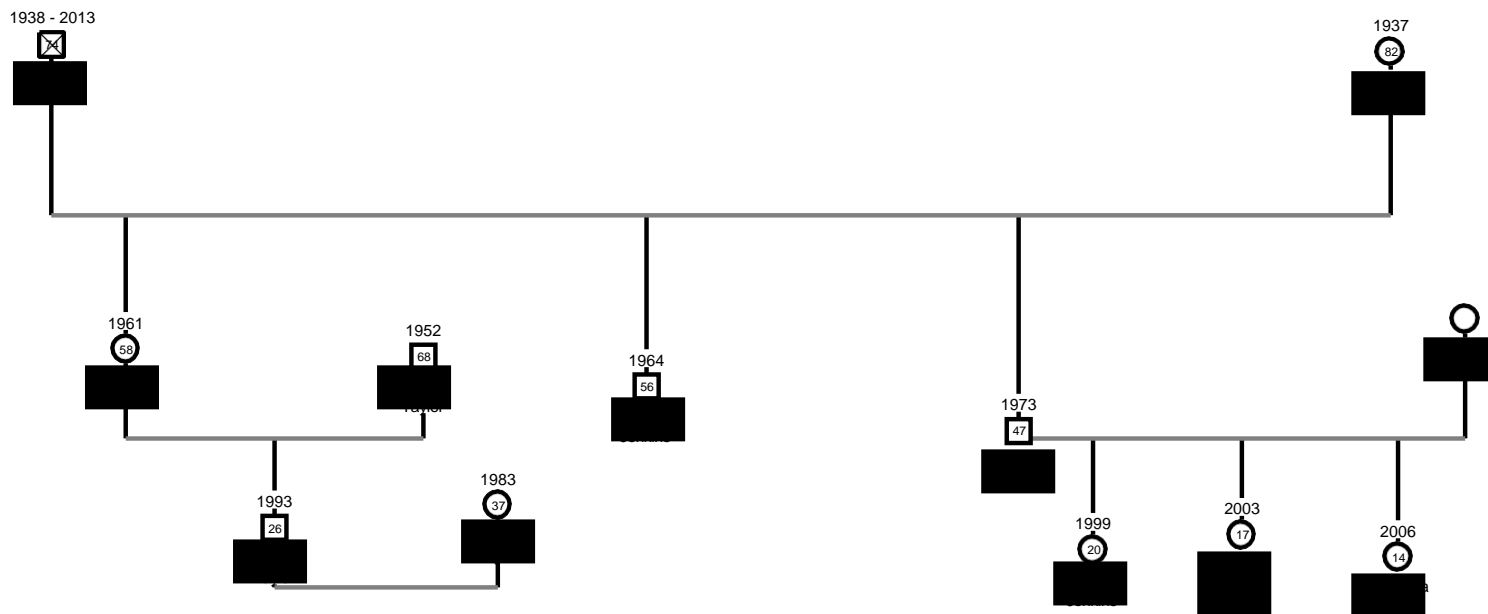
KEY: ———> Significant Support
 - - - -> Less Significant Support

ECOMAP



Prospective Foster Carer Report (Form F) England

Family Tree



Chronology from birth to present

Complete a separate chronology for each applicant

Name of applicant	of Applicant
--------------------------	---------------------

Addresses including periods living abroad apart from holidays

Date started month/year	Date finished month/year	Address or location	Details (include reasons for changes if appropriate and comments, if verified by whom and how)
1966	1967	[REDACTED]	Moved to Coventry
1967	1981	[REDACTED]	House move
April 1981	Aug 1981	[REDACTED]	House move
1981	2007	[REDACTED]	Own home
2007	2014	[REDACTED]	House move
Aug 2014	July 2019	[REDACTED]	House move
July 2019	Present	[REDACTED]	Purchased own property

Education and employment

Date started	Date finished	Event	Address or location	Details
1966 Christmas	1967 July	[REDACTED] school	Primary school	Education
1967	1978	[REDACTED]	Infant school Junior school Secondary school	Education
1979	1979	Youth opportunity programme		
1980	1981	[REDACTED], intershop, Warwick Road	Store toys and games	
1982	1983	[REDACTED] Dry Cleaners	Dry cleaning	

Prospective Foster Carer Report (Form F) England

Date started	Date finished	Event	Address location	or	Details
1988	1995	Host family - International students.	██████████ School	English studies centre	Youngest from 10 years old – 18 years old
1990	1991	██████████ Wine Shop	Did this while waiting to start the access course	Sold spirits, wines and cigarettes	
1990	1991	██████████ College – Access course			
1991	1993	Diploma in nursing studies	Coventry		Only completed 20 months of this course
1993	2008	Carer for son			
2008	2013	Carer for father			
2014	Present	Carer for mother			

Significant changes in individual or family circumstances (separation/divorce of parents, death of family members, start of a new relationship, major health events, infertility)

Date started	Date finished	Event	Address location	or	Details
1987		Got married			
1993		Birth of Son			
2001		Death of grandmother			
2013		Death of father			
2017		Divorced			
2019		Owned own property			

SECTION D

Specialist reports

Parent and child report	YES
Permanent fostering report	NO
Other reports	NO
<i>Parent and Child assessment completed separately.</i>	

SECTION E

Summary and recommendation

TIMESCALES ⁽¹⁾

Date of application	Registration of Interest received on the 1st September 2020
Date assessment completed	6 th November 2020
Any comments about duration of assessment	

SUMMARY ⁽²⁾

Summary of key factors leading to the recommendation (to include strengths, vulnerabilities and concerns)

Summary of key factors leading to the recommendation (to include strengths, vulnerabilities and concerns)

Strengths

- Applicant presented as enthusiastic and keen to learn and know more about children in care.
- Applicant comes across as reflective and able to take criticisms and be challenged.
- Son is supportive of her becoming a foster carer.
- Applicant comes across as resilient as she has been able to overcome setbacks in her life such as the deaths of her grandmother and father, as well as divorcing from her ex-husband Ex-Husband after being with him for so many years. Despite these difficulties, Applicant has been able to rebuild herself and recently purchased her own property.
- From speaking to Applicant and the referees Applicant advocated for Son to ensure that even though he was told that he would not walk and do certain things, she sought her help and support for him to be able to reach his full potential and beats all odds by achieving all the things the doctors had told him he would not be able to achieve.
- Applicant has a lot of caring experience including caring for her son Son and caring for both her parents.
- Applicant is a talkative and bubbly woman.
- I have found Applicant to be friendly during the assessment process.

National Minimum Standards

- I am of the view that Applicant understands the importance of considering the wishes and feelings of children as stated in Standard 1. Applicant was attuned

Summary of key factors leading to the recommendation (to include strengths, vulnerabilities and concerns)

with Son's individual needs and did support and care for him in a way that met his needs. Applicant was also able to seek the help for Son's specific needs to ensure that he achieved his full potential.

- I am of the view that Applicant will be able to positively promote children's identity, potential and would be able to value diversity through individualised care as stated in Standard 2. Having explored this topic within the assessment, Applicant was reflective and evidenced awareness in regard to challenges children face with being bullied and discriminated against.
- Applicant has evidenced that she is able to promote positive behaviour and relationships. She has evidenced this by maintaining a positive relationship with her ex-husband Ex-Husband and her son Son who lives in America.
- Applicant was able to keep Son safe from birth into adulthood. Applicant has explained within the assessment that having a child with a disability, she had to take extra precautions to ensure that he was safe, but at the same time she did not infringe on his independence due to disability. Although Applicant might need support in regard to dealing with Child exploitation and children impacted by gang affiliation, she has shown the ability to be reflective and curious in regard to issues relating to fostering. Therefore, I am of the that Applicant will be able to keep children safe, as stated in Standard 4, Safeguarding Children.
- Applicant was given the Missing policy and therefore I am of the opinion that she will be able to adhere to the obligations set out on Standard 5, Children Missing from Care as she has read through this and knows that she would need to report a child missing to the police, Child's social worker, supervising social worker and Emergency Duty Team.
- Applicant leads a healthy and active lifestyle by taking the dog for walks daily, going swimming and going to the gym. Therefore, it is anticipated that she will

Summary of key factors leading to the recommendation (to include strengths, vulnerabilities and concerns)

be able to promote good health and wellbeing as stated in Standard 6, for any child/ren placed in her care.

- During my interview with Son, he confirmed that he always engaged in positive, fun activities growing up. As stated above, even though Son was disabled, he still went on holidays abroad and Applicant always encouraged him to take part in a range of activities and would speak to the facilitators beforehand to ensure that these activities were adapted to suit Son's needs. Therefore, I am confident that Applicant will be able to encourage Leisure activities as stated in Standard 7.
- Applicant paid for Son to go private school at [REDACTED] in Kenilworth, which later became known as [REDACTED], where he thrived. She consistently advocated for Son to be treated the same as his peers and Applicant successfully went to court to fight for educational support for Son and to protect his rights, as she felt that the education system was discriminating against Son because of his cerebral palsy. Furthermore, I am confident that Applicant will not have unrealistic expectations and understands that some children may not be able to achieve academically due to their backgrounds. I am therefore confident that Applicant will meet and support the children where they are and not place any unrealistic expectations on them.
- Applicant demonstrated a very good understanding of the importance of promoting family time for children in her care. Applicant even gave an example of her friend's son some years ago who she supported to have contact with his father. Therefore, I am of the view that Applicant will be able to meet the obligations outlined in Standard 9, Promoting and supporting contact.
- Applicant keeps a clean and presentable home which is appropriate to offer a safe environment for a children in care as stated in Standard 10, providing a suitable physical environment for the foster child.

Summary of key factors leading to the recommendation (to include strengths, vulnerabilities and concerns)

- With support from her supervising social worker (to prepare for a placement), I am confident that Applicant will be able to fulfil the requirements set out in Standards 11, Preparation for a placement.
- Despite his disability and difficulties with his health during his early life experiences, Son leads a successful and independent life in America and has stated that he is who he is because of Applicant's support. Therefore equally, I am confident that Applicant will be able to promote independence for children in her care and support them to move to adulthood and leaving care as stated in Standard 12.

Vulnerabilities and concerns

- Applicant demonstrated a good understanding of challenging behaviours and how to manage them by providing the challenges she has faced when caring for her mother. She also understands that children come from traumatic backgrounds and that they in turn may display challenging behaviours as a way to cope with the difficult emotions they may be going through. However, I am still of the opinion that as a single carer, Applicant will need support with managing these challenging behaviours. Careful consideration needs to be taken when matching a child with Applicant and I have also recommended Applicant to attend "Understanding Trauma and challenging behaviour training".



RECOMMENDATION ⁽³⁾

This recommendation should include details of the terms of approval (type of fostering and the number and age range of children to be placed)


I recommend for Applicant to be approved as a foster carer with Coventry City Council, for 1 child or a sibling group of 2 between the ages of 0-18 years, of any ethnic background and either gender. Applicant has an age preference for children between the ages of 5-18 years old. However, I am of the view that careful consideration needs to be given when placing children in the older category as Applicant is a single applicant and may be left vulnerable especially with older teenagers who may be physically challenging. As Applicant gains experience with time, she may be better equipped to managing even the very challenging older teenagers in her care.

Applicant would like to be considered for short term fostering, with the view of being considered for long-term fostering once a permanent plan has been identified for the child/ren. The spare bedroom proposed for fostering can accommodate one child currently as there is a single bed. However, the bedroom big enough to accommodate a sibling group as it can fit 2 beds or a bunk bed or a single bed and a baby cot.

I also recommend Applicant to be approved as a Parent and Child Foster carer (0-18) with Coventry City council and the reasons for this have been summarised in the separate Parent and Child assessment.

Name of social worker completing the report	Social Worker
Signature of social worker completing the report	
Date	4 th November 2020
Name of team manager responsible for the report	Team Manager
Signature of team manager responsible for the report	
Date	04/11/2020

The applicant(s) observations on the report

Name of applicant(s)	Applicant
I/We have received the report on the following date:	7 th November 2020
<p>I/We have read the report prepared on my/our suitability to foster (understanding that any confidential third party information in section C may have been withheld). I/We certify that, to the best of our/my knowledge and belief, the factual information contained in this report is accurate and I/we have indicated in the box below any factual corrections that need to be made. I/We understand that if any of this information is found to be false or misleading, this may result in the fostering service rejecting my/our application. I/We understand that it is important not to withhold any information about factors that may influence our/my capacity to care for a child.</p>	
I/We have the following factual corrections/observations/additional comments on the report:	
<p><i>I am very happy with the assessment. I think it is accurate and fair.</i></p>	
<p>The fostering service has given me/us their privacy notice that explains how my/our personal data will be kept and shared. I/We understand that any information supplied will form part of the fostering service's case record in respect of my/our application. I/We understand that this form is the property of the fostering service to which I/we have applied. I/We agree not to copy this document (other than for my/our own personal records) or disclose its contents in full or in part, to any other person, fostering service or authority without the fostering service's permission.</p>	
Signature	
Date	17/11/2020