Recording Guidance for Members of Coventry Fostering Services

INTRODUCTION

This guidance will help us to ensure a level of consistency in the teams and ensure our recording fully reflects the good work which is undertaken with children, families and carers.

As the service continues to develop and improve and new ideas come in to play, we will need to ensure we keep this updated.

Development continues in us all and should anyone have new ideas or tools which makes this area more effective then please share these and we can reflect it within this document.

This is about *Continuous Development* and with this comes *Continuous Change*

This recording guidance, and the standards contained within it, will help to ensure consistency of recording across the Fostering Service in Coventry, and that the recording on the LCS system fully reflects the work which is undertaken with fostering applicants, foster carers and special guardians and children in their care.

This guidance should also enable practitioners to deliver and evidence "good" support to Children in the care of Coventry City Council as described in the ILACS framework:

Effective recruitment, assessment, training and support of carers (including,as appropriate, foster carers, adopters, special guardians and residential staff) ensure that children and young people receive high-quality, safe and stable care that meets their diverse needs.

This guidance has been aligned to other Coventry City Council policies and Coventry Safeguarding Partnership Policies.

Key documentation

Framework, evaluations criteria and guidance for the inspection of local authority children's services

Coventry Procedures Manual

Documents Library

Working Together 2018

Fostering September 2020

Recording Policy
Practice Standards
Fostering National Minimum Standards 2011
Coventry Foster Carers Handbook
Coventry Foster Carer Charter and Support Strategy

Contents

1. Expectations of Timeliness of Response to Enquiry / Referral and associated recording –

- Standard 1: All enquiries to foster will be responded to on the first working day
- Standard 2: All referrals for connected persons assessment will be responded to within 5 working days.
- Standard 3: Management oversight of allocation of all assessments (Connected Persons / Special Guardianship/mainstream) is recorded on LCS within 24 hours, setting out what needs to be done and by when
- Standard 4: on completion of the initial visit and sign off of decision to progress, mainstream assessments will be allocated within 5 working days with management oversight added.
- Standard 5: where relevant, all assessments will be booked into Fostering Panel by the Team Manager on allocation at a date no more than 18 weeks from the date of allocation (or sooner if court directed).
- Standard 6: All temporarily approved foster carers will have a named supervising social worker within 5 working days
- Standard 7: All fully approved foster carers will have a named supervising social worker prior to attendance at Fostering Panel.
- Standard 8: All visits and contacts with or related to fostering applicants and carers need to be recorded on LCS within 5 working days.
- Standard 9: All approved foster carers should receive a supervisory visit : at least fortnightly within first 6 months of approval, at least 6 weekly thereafter (unless there is a management oversight extended the period between visits where all children in the household are long term matched).
- Standard 10: All approved foster cares should have a Foster Carer Review on file which is updated at least every 12 months.

For all cases open to the Fostering Service

All cases as a minimum must have:
- Personal Information about each foster carer (including cultural background)
- Details of relationships which includes all household members
- Case summary (up to date)
- Management oversight at least every 8 weeks
- Allocation case note
- Closure summary at the point of closure

All approved carers (including temporarily) must have:-
- Details of terms of approval
- All documents associated with a presentation to Foster Panel
- Date next Foster Carer review due
- Details of progress of completion of TSD

- Details of all checks completed
- DBS for all household members (and any child care supporters) over 18 within 3 years
- Medical for all foster carers within 2 years
- Details of any allegations / concerns / complaints
- Chronology
- Details of children placed
- Placement agreement for all children in placement
- Foster Carer Agreement – updated within 12 months
- Supervision agreement – updated within 12 months (or with new SSW)
- Health and Safety check – updated within 12 months
- Unannounced visit – successfully undertaken and written up within 12 months of last
- Pet questionnaire updated within 12 months (where applicable)
- Safer Caring Plan updated within 12 months (or following latest placement if that is more recent)
- Consultation with children
- Consultation with carers
- Details of any communication with children's social worker or others involved with fostered children.

All Mainstream Foster Carers must have:

- A Foster Carer profile updated within 12 months
- Long term matching documentation (where a long term match has been agreed)
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Case Summaries should include

- Current terms of approval
- Members of the household to include number of birth children and ages
- Pets
- F/C level i.e. 2,3, specialist
- If the child/YP is long term linked (official approval via panel)
- Any other restrictions or important information

This should be updated when a new child is placed, and reviewed at least every 3 months

Case Summaries (recruitment and assessment) should include:
- Members of the household to include birth children and ages
- Pets
- Date IV was completed
- When the Registration of Interest was send to / received from the applicant(s)
- If DBS / medicals have been initiated / arranged
- If the applicant(s) have been invited to Skills to Foster and the date of the training
- What is working well / What are we worried about during the assessment process
- Panel date

Case summaries to be reviewed at least every 4 – 6 weeks.

Chronologies should include the whole career of the foster carers and cover

- Changes within the household
- Complaint/Concern/allegation/ Standards of care issue
- Placement breakdown
- Change of approval
- Incident of restraint
- Compliments given to FC

 All records should include reference to who was present including any observations made about the fostered children or the household.

This is not an exhaustive list of expectations when it comes to recording; this is just a reminder of some of the things that we do expect as a minimum.

All to be read in conjunction with the practice standards, which can be found here –Record Keeping Practice Guidance

2. MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT
Standard 11: All Cases open in the Fostering Service should have regular Management Oversight.

Management oversight clearly indicates the status of the case (in assessment / temporarily approved / approved); highlights evidence of the outcomes being achieved in the household, any areas of concern, any actions needed to comply with Fostering NMS or Regulations and any

actions needed to promote placement stability or permanence. Management oversight is recorded using the signs of safety framework. It should include some description, analysis, decisions and actions. There should also be clear up to date management direction on each case file at least every 8 weeks which is focused on the experience and wellbeing of fostered children.

Cases must have regular management oversight and must cover as a minimum:
- **Purpose for Children's Services involvement:**
- **Discussion:**
- **What we are worried about**
- **What is working well**
- **What needs to change**
- **Outcome:**
- **SMART Actions:**
- **Scaling:**

Managers record management oversight in the following circumstances:
- A key decision in a fostering household is made (change of approval, new placement, change in household composition). –
- A case is allocated or re-allocated to a worker setting out what needs to be done and by when. –
- Any issues in relation to placement instability including disruptions
- Any issues in relation to standards of care including agreed actions to resolve
- Progress with learning from escalations following audit activity.
- Significant decision or significant event, e.g. strategy discussion, disruption meeting, change of approval, outcome of assessments.
- Any other occasion where a manager believes this to be appropriate in showing decision making.

How
- Robust oversight of casework leads to clear recording, written in plain language that the foster carer will understand.
- Provide clear case direction with, explicit reference to foster carers and child's voice.
- Opportunity to monitor and evaluate the practitioner's work is purposeful and making the difference that is needed, and if not considers what the barriers/complicating factors are
- Opportunity to monitor and evaluate compliance (i.e case summaries, chronology, assessment, timeliness)

Must include and detail:

Purpose:

Reflection and voice of the carer – what are the views of the carer about the work they are doing, how do they describe the children, what are their reflections on any standards of care that are not being met, what is their view about their terms of approval, what supports do they highlight being in need of, how well are they engaged with training and development?

Reflection and voice of fostered child - What is life like for the child(ren)? And how do we know this? Reflect on observations of the child and triangulated information from other sources (e.g. child's sw)

Discussion:

- **What we are worried about**

- **What is working well**

- **What needs to change**
- **Scaling:** How worried are we about the child's safety and well being? *(Scale 0=no safety to 10=proposing to cease involvement or reduce level of direct intervention)*

Outcome: Summarise and provide a rationale (why) for any decisions made and what should happen next

Actions:

What needs to happen next and how will we know these actions are making a difference for the fostered child(ren)? *(Actions, desired outcomes & measures, who will be responsible, SMART with dates)*

Do not –

Use acronyms

Use "mum" dad" but use people's names

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Put on "staff performance" or lack of it – this is a carer's file

3. CASE NOTES

Standard 8: All visits and communication between SSWs and Foster Carers / applicants should be recorded as a case note. Case notes should also reflect discussions with other agencies e.g. children's sws. If the case note refers to a visit which is recorded on a form or document this should be uploaded at the same time as the case note.

Assessment Visits: should include who was present, any observations of the household, topics discussed and any agreed actions for either the applicants or the sw

Supervision Visits: should follow the supervision visit template. Details must be shared with the FC for their signature and comment. The agreed pattern of supervision is 1 x 2 weeks in first 6 months of approval; 1 x 6 weeks thereafter; 1 x 3 months as minimum if all children are long term matched and this is subject to management oversight. N.b. these patterns are a minimum and increased visits should be offered where required.

Unannounced Visits: case note should delineate that the visit was unannounced. Unannounced visit template should be used. N.b. unsuccessful unannounced visits do not meet the regulatory requirement that one unannounced visit is undertaken each 12 months.

Analysis of information:
- **What's working well**?
- **What are we worried about**?
- **What needs to happen next**?

Actions: *Must be SMART – Who? What? When? Be specific?*

4. TRANSFERS

Transfers between social workers should be planned and subject to the completion of the transfer checklist

5. CLOSURES

Closure – Approved fostering households can only be closed through either resignation or de-registration. In either case, a summary of the reasons for closure needs to be presented to the fostering panel.

Prior to closure on LCS the TM should confirm that both the case summary and the chronology is up to dat

6. HEADINGS FOR SUPERVISION

(All recorded and signed by both parties and saved as an accurate reflection)

Personal Supervision (ALL): See Template (Appendix 1)

- Wellbeing
- Workload /Pressures / Team update & Staffing Issues
- Performance
- Appraisal review / training/development
- Feedback (ie complaints and compliments)
- Reflections
- Leave/TOIL
- H&S issues
- Cases – Recorded on Carers File
- AOB:
- Dip Sample 3 cases during supervision
    - Practice standards
    - Chronology
    - Case Summary
    - Recording

Cases Supervision (Fostering) See Template Appendix 2

- Overview – What is life like for the fostered children
- SOS
- Scaling
- Reflection and Direction
- What needs to happen

Appendix 1: Record of Supervision and Agreed Action

Between: Supervisor………………….and Supervisee…………………………
Date:…………………………………………………………………………..

No	Agenda items for discussion	Record of discussion	Agreed actions (including timescale and responsibility)
1	Wellbeing / Temperature Take		
2	Workload/Pressures/what's working well		
3	AL/TOIL		
4	Feedback (complaints/compliments)		
5	Reflections (work well and any worries)		
6	Appraisal/Training/Development		
7	Performance/Dip-Sampling • Practice Standards • Chronologies • Case Summary • Recording		
8	H&S		
9	Cases	See CF15's – Case supervision as recorded directly on carer's file	

10	AOB		-

THIS IS AGREED AS AN ACCURATE RECORD

Name of Supervisor		Signature		Date	
Name of Supervisee		Signature		Date	

Date of next supervision:…………………………………………..

Meeting Agenda and Notes

Date	Time	Venue

Chaired by:	
Meeting Minutes Taken By:	

<u>Attendees:</u>

Name	Role	Name	Role

<u>Apologies</u>

Name	Role	Name	Role

<u>Visitors:</u>

Name	Organisation	Role

<u>MEETING AGENDA ITEMS</u>

1. Temperature Take/Wellbeing / successes and achievements

ADD	
Agreed Outcome:	**Action By:**

2.   Staffing issues /Starters/Leavers/Recruitment

Add	
Agreed Outcome:	**Action By:**

3.   Feedback from any Meetings

Add	
Agreed Outcome:	**Action By:**

4.   Budget

Add	
Agreed Outcome:	**Action By:**

5.   Performance –Dashboard/Dip Sampling/Sharing Good Practice

Add	
Agreed Outcome:	**Action By:**

6.   Compliments and Complaints

Add	
Agreed Outcome:	**Action By:**

7.   Health and Safety

Add	
Agreed Outcome:	**Action By:**

8.   Any Other Business/Agenda Items

Add

Agreed Outcome:		Action By:	

<u>*Meeting Closed*</u>

Meeting Agenda and Notes

Date	Time	Venue

Chaired by:	
Meeting Minutes Taken By:	

Attendees:

Name	Role	Name	Role

Apologies

Name	Role	Name	Role

Visitors:

Name	Organisation	Role

MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

1. Welcome and Introductions
ADD
Agreed Outcome: **Action By:**

2. Temperature Take/Wellbeing / Successes and Achievements
Add
Agreed Outcome: **Action By:**

3. Staffing/Starters/Leavers/Recruitment
Add
Agreed Outcome: **Action By:**

4. Feedback from any Meetings
Add
Agreed Outcome: **Action By:**

5. Allocations/Duty Rota and Cover Arrangements
Add
Agreed Outcome: **Action By:**

6. Performance – Dashboard/Dip Sampling/Sharing Good Practice
Add
Agreed Outcome: **Action By:**

7. Compliments and Complaints
Add

Agreed Outcome:		Action By:	

8. Team Events and celebrating Festivals			
Add			
Agreed Outcome:		Action By:	

9. Health and Safety			
Add			
Agreed Outcome:		Action By:	

10. Good News Stories			
Add			
Agreed Outcome:		Action By:	

11. Any Other Business/Agenda Items			
Add			
Agreed Outcome:		Action By:	

***Meeting Closed*