

DORSET COUNCIL
FOSTERING SERVICE

Mockingbird Satellite Carer Agreement



Introduction

The welfare of the children/young people placed is paramount of both foster carers and the Local Authority. The purpose of the Mockingbird Satellite Carer Agreement is to describe and define the working partnership between foster carers and the Local Authority.

The Dorset Council Mockingbird Constellation is a new initiative within the fostering team, based on the licenced Mockingbird Family Model of Fostering, supported by Fostering Network. The Mockingbird project within Dorset Council is situated within the Dorset Council Fostering Service.

This agreement is in addition to the existing Dorset Council Foster Carer Agreement already signed by Dorset Council and the foster carers and does not replace the terms set out within that agreement, as required by the Fostering Regulations (England) 2011.

Agreement

The constellation carers agreement is dated _____ and is made between:

1) Dorset Council

And

2) _____ (foster carer)

And

3) _____ (foster carer)

(Known as “the satellite carer (s)”)

The satellite carer(s) were initially approved as foster carer(s) on: _____

Definition and Terms

The Mockingbird Family Model is an extended family model with the purpose of improving stability of fostering placements and strengthen the relationships between the carers, children, and young people, fostering service and birth families.

Key roles include the hub carers, satellite carers and liaison officer. *Please see the Operations Protocol for full descriptions.*

The satellite carers work with the hub home carers towards the Placement Plan and Care Plan of each child living within a Mockingbird satellite home.

The satellite carers will ensure that each young person and child within their household, including birth and adopted children, are aware of them joining the Mockingbird constellation and what this means.

The satellite carers will be required to continue to adhere to policies and procedures relating to Children Looked After and placements set out by Dorset Council.

Supervision and Support Structure

The satellite carers will be supported and supervised by their existing supervising social worker. This supervision structure may change over time to meet the needs of the constellation and the service.

The satellite carers will be able to access support from the hub home carers in a planned and emergency way and the hub home will be the first point of contact for satellite families. If the hub carer is not available, the satellite carers will be notified of who will be their point of contact during that time. It may be the liaison worker or another household within the constellation.

Delegated authority

The hub home carers will have the same delegated authority granted to the child's foster carer whilst the child is in the care of the hub home carers. The shared delegated authority will be recorded on the Dorset Council Delegated Authority Form as well as within the Placement Information Record and Case Summary on Dorset Council's recording system known as MOSAIC.

Constellation Meetings

The Mockingbird Project will consist of monthly constellation meetings where all carers, children and young people will be invited. In addition to this, there will also be foster carer only events and training throughout the year.

There is an expectation that satellite foster carers will attend all the monthly constellation meetings and encourage the children and young people they look after to also attend.

We understand that there may be occasions when foster carers are not able to attend due to unexpected life events. If a satellite household is not able to attend, they will let the hub home carer and liaison worker know as soon as possible.

The satellite carers will support their children and young people to share ideas about what activities they would like at the constellation meetings and support them to attend.

Communication

The satellite carers give permission for their name and contact details to be shared amongst all members of the constellation.

The satellite carer will share information about each child or young person within the constellation, including dates of meetings, for example, CIC reviews, TAC's and PEP's.

Planned and Emergency Support for the constellation

General support will be available from the hub home carer 8am and 7pm. Emergency support will be available 24 hours a day from the hub home carers. If the hub carers are not available, the constellation will be made aware of who is able to offer them support.

Planned Sleepovers

Sleepovers can be initiated by hub home carer, satellite carers and children and young people.

Shared delegated authority and information shared with the child's social worker, foster carer and birth families will be aware that planned sleep overs will be able to take place.

The hub home carer will not need to seek permission for this to take place or to inform OUT OF HOURS (OOH) Service. When a planned sleep over is due to take place, the hub home carer will notify the Mockingbird liaison worker and the satellite carer will inform the social worker for the child.

The hub home carers will provide planned sleepovers for each child or young person within the constellation in line with their availability, capacity and the wishes and feelings of the children and young people. In preparation for a planned sleep over, the children will have met and have an existing relationship with the hub home carers prior to arriving.

A planned sleepover should be 1 to 3 nights and can be arranged and agreed directly with hub home carer. Any request beyond this would be an exceptional circumstance, requiring further discussion with the liaison worker.

If more than 2 young people or children require a sleepover at the same time, the hub home carers will liaise with the constellation to see if they can help support the child or young person.

The hub home carer will record relevant information about the sleepover in the child or young person's records that remain with the satellite carer.

The hub home carer will liaise with the satellite carer to arrange details relating to availability, aims of the sleepover, times, transport and duration.

If birth or adopted children within the constellation want to have a planned sleepover, this will be by private arrangement between their parent and the hub carer however, planned or emergency sleepovers with children and young people who are looked after will take priority.

Emergency Sleepovers

The hub home carers will be available for emergency sleepovers if required and in line with their availability. Satellite families may call the hub home in any emergency situation for support.

If an unplanned or emergency sleepover takes place, the hub home carer will inform the liaison worker as soon as possible. If this happens outside of working hours, the hub home carer will need to inform OUT OF HOURS (OOH) Service this has taken place.

Emergency sleepovers will take priority over the planned sleepovers if needed.

The emergency sleepover can be initiated by a satellite carer, hub home carer, child or young person, supervising social worker or Mockingbird Liaison worker.

During an emergency sleepover, the hub home carers will liaise with the relevant satellite carer and support the reintegration of the child or young person back to their home.

An emergency sleepover should be 1 to 3 nights and can be arranged and agreed directly with hub home carer. Any request beyond this would be an exceptional circumstance, requiring further discussion with the liaison worker.

Remuneration

The satellite carer will continue to receive their foster carer allowance and fee in line with the fostering service’s current process.

A sleepover that lasts over 3 days but in agreement with the service, up to 7 days, would see no reduction in the satellite families' fees and allowances.

A sleepover that lasts longer than 7 days, the payment of the foster carer allowance will need to be reviewed by the fostering service and may result in a reduction in fees and allowances.

Confidentiality

Relevant information about the children and young people’s needs can be shared within the constellation and between the hub home carers and the satellite carers, whilst ensuring the confidentiality of the information is maintained within the constellation.

Signatures

NAME (printed)	SIGNATURE
..... (foster carer) Date
..... (foster carer) Date
..... (On behalf of Dorset Council)

Date	
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