

DORSET COUNCIL
FOSTERING SERVICE

Mockingbird Hub Home 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 Hub Home Carer Agreement is to describe and define the working partnership between foster carers and the Local Authority.

The Mockingbird hub home carer is a new role within the fostering community, based on the licenced Mockingbird Family Model of Fostering, supported by Fostering Network. The Mockingbird project is situated within the Dorset Council Fostering Service and is supported by the Trusted Relationships grant.

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 hub home carers agreement is dated _____ and is made between:

1) Dorset Council

And

2) _____ (Joint foster carer)

And

3) _____ (Joint foster carer)

(Together known as “the hub home carers”)

The hub home carers were initially approved as foster carers 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.

The hub home carers will continue to promote the welfare of children and young people in their care.

The hub home carer will be part of and work towards the Placement Plan and Care Plan of each child living within a Mockingbird satellite home.

The children and young people within the Mockingbird Project will be supported by their full-time foster carer and hub home carer to maintain their existing contact arrangements with their birth families, no matter who they are in the care of.

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

The hub home carers wanting to raise any complaints in the first instance should raise this with their Supervising Social Worker or Team leader. Should the complaint not be resolved written representation should be made to Dorset Council Complaints manager.

Supervision and Support Structure

The hub home carers will be supported and supervised by the Mockingbird Liaison Officer who will have the role of Supervising Social Worker. The liaison officer maintains regular contact with the hub home foster carers, providing them with guidance and support and helping them to review the satellite home foster carers' attendance and participation in planned Mockingbird activities, respite care, monthly constellation meetings and training.

When the liaison worker is not available, the hub home foster carers will be able to access support from Supervising Social Workers who support the satellite carers and from the Mockingbird and Fostering Service Manager.

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.

Protecting the 'two spare beds'

The hub home carers will have two spare beds available that will be used for planned and emergency sleep overs for children and young people within the Mockingbird constellation.

These beds are only available for children and young people within the Mockingbird constellation.

The hub home carers will be supported by the liaison worker and Dorset Council Fostering Service to protect these beds.

Planned sleepovers

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 officer 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 may last up to 3 nights.

A planned sleepover for any longer than 3 nights, 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.

A satellite carer, hub home carer, child or young person can initiate a sleepover.

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 they are available.

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 hub home carers will ask for support to manage this as or when required.

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

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 may last up to 3 nights with the hub home carers permission.

An emergency sleepover can be extended beyond 3 nights, any request beyond this would be an exceptional circumstance, requiring further discussion with the liaison worker.

Constellation Meetings

The hub home carers will work with the constellation to arrange, host and organise monthly gatherings and social events. At a minimum, this will be a whole constellation meeting, including the children and young people with their foster carers.

The hub home carers will make a note of who attended and who did not and inform the Mockingbird liaison officer for data recording.

The hub home carers will also work with the liaison officer to arrange foster carer meetings, training events and other social events throughout the year including sourcing activities available within the local area and sharing this information with the constellation.

Communication

The hub home carers will communicate with the satellite carers about monthly constellation meetings, social activities, training events and other useful pieces of information.

The hub home carers will be part of the team around each child or young person within the constellation and where suitable will attend their Child Looked After Reviews and

Personalised Education Plan meetings. There may also be other events the children or young person may want them to attend.

Emergency Support for the constellation

The hub home carers will provide emotional and practical support to the satellite carers within the constellation in both a planned and emergency way.

The hub home carers will use a three-tiered checking in approach to highlight the carer's most needing support at any one time. This approach is level 1 (green), Level 2 (Amber) and Level 3 (red). Any escalation between levels should be communicated to the Liaison worker and daily feedback to the Liaison worker for any level 3 (red) families.

Emergency support will be available 24 hours a day during the hub carer's availability and working hours to safeguard the children and young people. This may include emergency sleepovers, brief periods of additional care for the child or young person and visiting the satellite home or seeing them within the community.

The hub home carers will make the constellation aware of the days or times they are not available so that the constellation know who else they can contact for support in an emergent situation.

Working hours, holidays and wellbeing

Planned support will be available to the constellation between 8am and 7pm, in accordance with the hub carer's availability.

However, the hub home carers will be available for emergency situations 24 hours a day. The hub carers will have one weekend off a month and one day per week and will inform the constellation of the times they are not available.

The hub home carers will also inform the liaison worker of when they are not available so alternative arrangements can be made.

The hub home carers will receive 2 weeks break per calendar year. This is in addition to the one day per week and one weekend per month. They will let the constellation and liaison worker know the dates in advance so alternative support can be arranged for the constellation during this time.

This leave is specifically built into Mockingbird for the hub home family due to the additional responsibilities they hold. This two week is agreed by the service manager, Gerard Connell as part of the Mockingbird Hub Home carer support package.

If the hub carers need to take additional leave, this would be without pay and would have to be discussed with the liaison worker and fostering manager in advance.

The hub home carers will receive support from the liaison worker who will also be their supervising social worker.

What happens if the hub home carer is unable to fulfil the role?

The hub home carers will notify their liaison officer as soon as possible of any arising concerns.

The hub carers will be supported by the liaison officer to best inform the constellation and provide them with alternative support options during that time.

Additional expectations of the hub home carers

The hub home carers need to be committed to the underpinning principles of Mockingbird

The hub home carers will be involved in the local and national evaluation activities

The hub home carers will provide weekly and monthly reports to the Mockingbird liaison worker.

The hub home carers will support the Fostering Service recruitment events and foster carer training where possible.

The hub home carers will take part in the development and implementation of any future constellations where possible.

Confidentiality

It is agreed that any confidential information on the child/young person will only be disclosed to a third party with authorisation by Social Care and only when it is necessary for the welfare of the child/young person. This includes any child/young person, which has left placement.

Information about the hub home carers and their families will be kept confidential by the Local Authority (unless the law requires otherwise).

The hub home carers will have access to contact information about the satellite carers and children and young people within the Mockingbird Project and this information will be kept confidential.

Remuneration

***details to be released shortly.**

Serious Occurrence

The hub home carers will notify Dorset Council Fostering Service immediately of any serious illness, or occurrence affecting the child/young person. This could include accidents, safeguarding concerns, significant issues relating to schooling or in connection with the child's/young person's family.

Changes

It is agreed that the hub home carers will inform the Fostering Service of any changes within their circumstances, such as changes in the household, changes in employment, separation of partner, criminal convictions, and health issues.

If the hub home carers become aware of any changes within one of the satellite families, the hub home carer will inform the Fostering Service to make sure they are aware.

Signatures

NAME (printed)	SIGNATURE
..... (foster carer) Date
..... (foster carer) Date
..... <u>(On behalf of Dorset Council)</u> Date
.....

