

# Tree House Care



## FOSTERING SERVICE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Last updated: 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Review due: January 2022



# TREE HOUSE CARE INTEGRATED MODEL OF PRACTICE



Our integrated model of practice represents a philosophy we aim to apply to all areas of our work.

## Contents

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Introduction .....	4
Values.....	5
Outcomes For Children .....	6
Service Outcomes .....	8
Aims & Objectives .....	10
Services Provided .....	12
Support To Foster Carers.....	14
Allegations.....	16
Participation .....	17
Structure & Staffing .....	17
Recruitment And Approval Of Foster Carers.....	19
Training For Foster Carers .....	22
Service Monitoring, Quality Management And Supervision Of Staff .....	24
Development Plan .....	25
Foster Panel Reports .....	26
Board Of Directors' Meetings .....	26
Complaints .....	27
Compliments & Complaints Information .....	28
Status And Constitution.....	29

### **CORONAVIRUS - UPDATED 25/03/2020**

Due to the current Covid-19 virus pandemic some of our normal practices described in this document are having to be changed temporarily. These are changing frequently based on the latest Government advice and instruction and it is not possible to keep this document completely up to date all the time.

Our overall Aims and Objectives remain the same.

We have a Business Continuity Plan and a Coronavirus Action Plan in place and implemented.

# TREE HOUSE CARE FOSTERING

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

### INTRODUCTION

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This Statement of Purpose is written in accordance with Standard 16 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and regulation 3 & 4 of the Fostering Regulations 2011.

A copy of the Statement of Purpose is made available, to:

- OFSTED
- Any person working for Tree House Care
- Any child placed with or under consideration for placement with us
- All Tree House Care foster carers and prospective foster carers
- Local authorities or Children's Trusts who have placed, or are considering placing with us
- Any parent of a child placed with us, or under consideration for placement with us
- Anyone via our website

This document will be reviewed and updated in the following circumstances:

- At least annually
- If there are any significant changes to the status and constitution of the agency
- If there are any changes to the Registered Manager or Responsible Individual
- If the purpose of the agency changes
- If there are changes to the services offered
- If there are changes to relevant legislation, regulations, or guidelines

The amended document will be signed off and agreed by the Board of Directors.

## VALUES

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The strapline on our logo is “*doing the right thing for our children*”. This is important to us.

The values statements contained in the National Minimum Standards for Fostering explain the important principles that are our foundation.

- *The child’s welfare, safety and needs are at the centre of their care.*
- *Children should have an enjoyable childhood, benefiting from excellent parenting and education, enjoying a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills leading to a successful adult life.*
- *Children are entitled to grow up in a loving environment that can meet their developmental needs.*
- *Every child should have his or her wishes and feelings listened to and taken into account.*
- *Each child should be valued as an individual and given personalised support in line with their individual needs and background in order to develop their identity, self-confidence and self-worth.*
- *The particular needs of disabled children and children with complex needs will be fully recognised and taken into account*
- *The significance of contact for looked after children, and of maintaining relationships with birth parents and the wider family, including siblings, half-siblings and grandparents, is recognised, as is the foster carer’s role in this.*
- *Children in foster care deserve to be treated as a good parent would treat their own children and to have the opportunity for as full an experience of family life and childhood as possible, without unnecessary restrictions.*
- *The central importance of the child’s relationship with their foster carer should be acknowledged and foster carers should be recognised as core members of the team working with the child.*
- *Foster carers have a right to full information about the child.*
- *It is essential that foster carers receive relevant support services and development opportunities in order to provide the best care for children.*
- *Partnership between all those involved in fostering children is essential to deliver the best outcomes for children; this includes, local authorities, other statutory agencies, fostering service providers and foster carers.*

## OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN

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We work towards the following outcomes for children, which are:

- Being Healthy
- Staying Safe
- Enjoying & Achieving
- Making a Positive Contribution
- Achieving Economic Well Being

More specifically we work towards the outcomes for the child focussed National Minimum Standards for Fostering (NMS 1-12) which are:

- *Children know that their views, wishes and feelings are taken into account in all aspects of their care; are helped to understand why it may not be possible to act upon their wishes in all cases; and know how to obtain support and make a complaint.*
- *The views of others with an important relationship to the child are gathered and taken into account.*
- *Children have a positive self-view, emotional resilience and knowledge and understanding of their background.*
- *Children enjoy sound relationships with their foster family, interact positively with others and behave appropriately.*
- *Children feel safe and are safe. Children understand how to protect themselves and are protected from significant harm, including neglect, abuse, and accident.*
- *Children rarely go missing and if they do, they return quickly.*
- *Children who do go missing are protected as far as possible and responded to positively on their return.*
- *Children live in a healthy environment where their physical, emotional and psychological health is promoted and where they are able to access the services to meet their health needs.*
- *Children are able to enjoy their interests, develop confidence in their skills and are supported and encouraged to engage in leisure activities.*
- *Children are able to make a positive contribution to the foster home and their wider community.*

- *The education and achievement of children are actively promoted as valuable in themselves and as part of their preparation for adulthood. Children are supported to achieve their educational potential.*
- *Children have, where appropriate, constructive contact with their parents, grandparents, siblings, half-siblings, wider family, friends and other people who play a significant role in their lives.*
- *Children live in foster homes which provide adequate space, to a suitable standard. The child enjoys access to a range of activities which promote his or her development.*
- *Children are welcomed into the foster home and leave the foster home in a planned and sensitive manner which makes them feel loved and valued.*
- *Children feel part of the family. They are not treated differently to the foster carer's own children living in the household. The child's needs are met, and they benefit from a stable placement.*
- *Children are prepared for, and supported into, adulthood so that they can reach their potential and achieve economic wellbeing.*

## SERVICE OUTCOMES

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The Service Outcomes we work towards achieving are those set out in the National Minimum Standards for Fostering (NMS 13-31) which are;

- *The fostering service recruits, assesses and supports a range of foster carers to meet the needs of children they provide care for and is proactive in assessing current and future needs of children.*
- *The fostering panel and decision maker make timely, quality and appropriate recommendations/decisions in line with the overriding objective to promote the welfare of children in foster care.*
- *The responsible authority has information and support from the fostering service which it needs to facilitate an appropriate match between the carer and child, capable of meeting the child's needs and consistent with the wishes and feelings of the child, so maximising the likelihood of a stable placement.*
- *Children, their parents, foster carers, staff and the responsible authority/ placing authority are clear about the aims and objectives of the fostering service and what services and facilities it provides.*
- *The fostering service's operation meets the aims and objectives in the Statement of Purpose.*
- *The fostering service is provided and managed by those who are suitable to work with children and have the appropriate skills, experience and qualifications to deliver an efficient and effective service.*
- *The fostering service is financially sound.*
- *Where a service is to close or substantially change, there is proper planning, to make the transition for children, foster carers and staff as smooth as possible.*
- *There is careful selection of staff, fostering households, volunteers and the central list of persons considered suitable to be members of a fostering panel, and there is monitoring of such people to help prevent unsuitable people from having the opportunity to harm children.*
- *Foster carers receive the training and development they need to carry out their role effectively.*
- *A clear framework of training and development is in place and this is used as the basis for assessing foster carers' performance and identifying their training and development needs.*
- *Foster carers receive the support and supervision they need in order to care properly for children placed with them.*



- *Allegations and suspicions of harm are handled in a way that provides effective protection and support for children and the person making the allegation, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.*
- *Children and foster carers receive a service from staff, volunteers, panel members and decision makers who have the competence to meet their needs.*
- *Staff and volunteers are supported and guided to fulfil their roles, and provide a high-quality service to children.*
- *The fostering service is managed ethically, effectively and efficiently, delivering a service which meets the needs of its users.*
- *Records are clear, up to date, stored securely, and contribute to an understanding of the child's life.*
- *The premises and administrative systems are suitable to enable the service to meet the objectives of its Statement of Purpose.*
- *Payments to foster carers are fair and paid in a timely way.*
- *Foster carers are clear about the fostering service's payment structures and the payments due to them.*
- *All significant events relating to the health and protection of children fostered by the service are notified by the registered person to the appropriate authorities.*
- *Family and friends foster carers receive the support they require to meet the needs of children placed with them.*
- *Children are cared for in line with their Placement Plan/Short Break Care Plan.*
- *The fostering service takes action to chase up outstanding reviews or visits from the responsible authority, contributes to those reviews and assists the child to contribute to their reviews.*

The registered manager's monthly report includes outcome related information, and we use the outcome trackers on CHARMS.

## AIMS & OBJECTIVES

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Our purpose is to provide fostering services to meet the needs of each child placed with our foster carers and to fulfil the objectives set out in their care plans.

To achieve this:

- We will recruit foster carers to the highest and safest standards in assessment.
- We will ensure children are seen regularly by our staff.
- We will make available foster carers who are able to provide a safe, stable, non-stigmatising, caring home.
- We will safeguard and promote each child's physical, mental, emotional welfare and development in partnership with local authorities
- We will balance the child's individual needs with our responsibilities to other children living at the foster carer's home.
- We will facilitate and provide support as appropriate to ensure that children of school age placed with foster carers have access to education appropriate to their age, ability and level of attainment.
- We will ensure that young people over school age are offered an appropriate programme of vocational preparation, training or work experience.
- We will ensure that foster carers adopt a proactive approach to each child's health care needs.
- No child under the age of 5 will be placed with foster carers where any member of the household smokes or uses e-cigarettes.
- We will ensure that the foster carers provide each child with the opportunity to participate in a range of social, recreational and leisure interests.
- We will ensure that foster carers provide appropriate opportunities for each child to acquire daily living skills.
- We will ensure that foster carers promote contact with each child's family and others in accordance with their Care Plan.
- We will ensure that each child is treated as an individual through participation in review meetings, and, where a child or young person is of sufficient age and understanding participates in the decision-making process.
- We will allow each child to exercise their right to representation and to make complaints.

- We will ensure the foster carers are attentive to each child's individual needs and rights in relation to age, race, language, sexuality, disability, gender, and meet their specific cultural and religious needs.
- Each fostering household will have a Home Safety Checklist, which will be reviewed and updated at least annually (usually during an unannounced visit to the fostering household).
- We will continue to develop and build on our therapeutic model.

## SERVICES PROVIDED

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We provide safe and nurturing foster placements by matching children's needs with foster carer households.

If we get the matching right, we will reduce the chances of placement breakdown and provide greater stability for children.

We provide a range of services to placing local authorities.

- Assessment placements
- Emergency and respite
- Short term (including shared care regular short breaks)
- Medium term
- Long term
- Sibling groups
- Therapeutic fostering placements
- Supervision of contact
- Escort and transport for professional appointments.

We do not at present make parent and child placements or family and friends placements.



The “jigsaw house” is a visual representation of our approach to therapeutic fostering which we have developed based on Dan Hughes’ attachment theory. Our integrated model of practice is a thread that we try to ensure runs through everything we do.

Our approach includes:

- All our carers are expected to attend our six-session Attachment Level One training.
- All our carers will have the opportunity to attend our six-session Attachment Level Two training.
- Consultations with a qualified therapist are available for all our foster carers.
- Children can receive therapeutic interventions ranging from theraplay® to attachment and trauma therapy sessions.
- Children can be placed under our bespoke therapeutic placement services with intensive therapeutic support. These are our Trauma Intervention Care and Therapy and Stabilisation placements (known as TIC and TAS respectively).

Training and Consultations for foster carers are provided by John Anderson, a qualified therapist.

Direct therapeutic support to children can be provided by Chrysalis Associates, a team of professionals drawn from the fields of social work, clinical, and educational psychology. They specialise in the assessment and treatment of developmental trauma and attachment difficulties.

## SUPPORT TO FOSTER CARERS

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All carers sign a comprehensive Foster Carer Agreement with the agency.

Health and Safety and Whistleblowing Policies are in place for staff and carers.

All carers are required to draw up a Family Safe Care Plan, which is updated as required, as well as an Individual Safe Care Plan for each child.

All carers have our foster carer handbook containing relevant information and guidance.

All children are given an age-appropriate Children/Young People's Handbook.

All carers are allocated a supervising link worker, who will lead them through an induction programme when newly approved. The supervising link worker will be responsible for undertaking regular supervisory visits (minimum of monthly when a child is in placement), minimum weekly telephone contact, ongoing support and advice, regular support groups, out of hours support, training and development. Most of our foster carers are within two hours travel time of their supervising link worker's base.

All placements are matched taking account of things such as preferred geographical location, appropriate skills, experience, and training to meet a looked after child's needs. This is recorded on our matching form.

Foster carers are paid on time. Carers receive both birthday and Christmas allowance for each child placed with them. Holiday allowance is paid as part of the weekly allowance.

A caravan at Skegness is available for foster carers and children to use at minimal cost.

All approved foster carers receive our own regular newsletter with useful information.

Local foster carer support groups, facilitated by staff, are held monthly.

The processes for recruiting, approving, training, supporting and reviewing foster carers are evolving all the time. They are described in more detail in our policies and procedures and are available on request.

We facilitate regular events for foster carers, their families, and their foster children to attend. This includes a Christmas (or New Year) party, fun days, health events, and other ad hoc events. Consultation events are held throughout the year for both foster carers and the children they look after.

The consultations provided by John Anderson, therapist, are highly valued and an important source of support. John also provides our Attachment Level One and Level Two courses.

As at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 we have 64 foster carer households offering a range of placements.

As at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 we have 77 children in placement.

At the time of writing approximately 60% of our children placed are deemed to be long term. This is above the national average. We believe this to be evidence of our good matching, support, and integrated model of practice.

We have our own fostering panel which is subject to specific procedures as outlined by Part 5 of the Fostering Regulations 2011 and Standard 14 of the NMS 2011.

All foster carers have their membership fees for the Fostering Network paid and are able to access their support and advice when necessary.

## ALLEGATIONS

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Where foster carers are the subject of allegations of abuse or neglect the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures will be followed in all cases, consulting with the Designated Officer for the Local Authority (usually known as the LADO).

The foster carers will be informed of the substance of an allegation as soon as possible and following advice from the strategy meeting.

Where agreed, the foster carer's supervising link worker, in liaison with the local authority social worker representative from the strategy meeting, will inform the carer about the investigation. This would usually include:

- The substance of the allegation
- Who will be involved in investigating the allegation
- The planned process and time-scales
- The right of the foster carer(s) to access independent advice and support.

When an allegation is made, we strongly recommend that carers access support and advice from the Fostering Network.

We will help carers to understand the process, ensuring that they are given all appropriate information, and assisting them in their communication with other agencies. Consideration will be given to providing support for the foster carer's sons and daughters.

In some circumstances a decision may be made in the strategy meeting or by the police that the carers cannot be informed as it may compromise the investigation.

When the outcome is known a Specific Event Review will be held, and reported back to our Foster Carer Review Forum who may refer the matter to our Foster Panel.

The foster carer will be invited to attend if the matter is referred to panel.

Independent support will continue to be available throughout any review of a foster carer's approval until consideration of the case by the Agency Decision Maker.

The supervising link worker will have continuing responsibility for supporting and being the link between the fostering service and the foster carer, even when the carer has independent support.

Where a serious allegation against a foster carer is substantiated, we are legally obliged to consider whether the foster carer(s) should be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.



## PARTICIPATION

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There are a range of ways children can participate. We encourage every child to take part in their LAC reviews. The Children's Handbook gives a range of ways in which children can make representations and complaints.

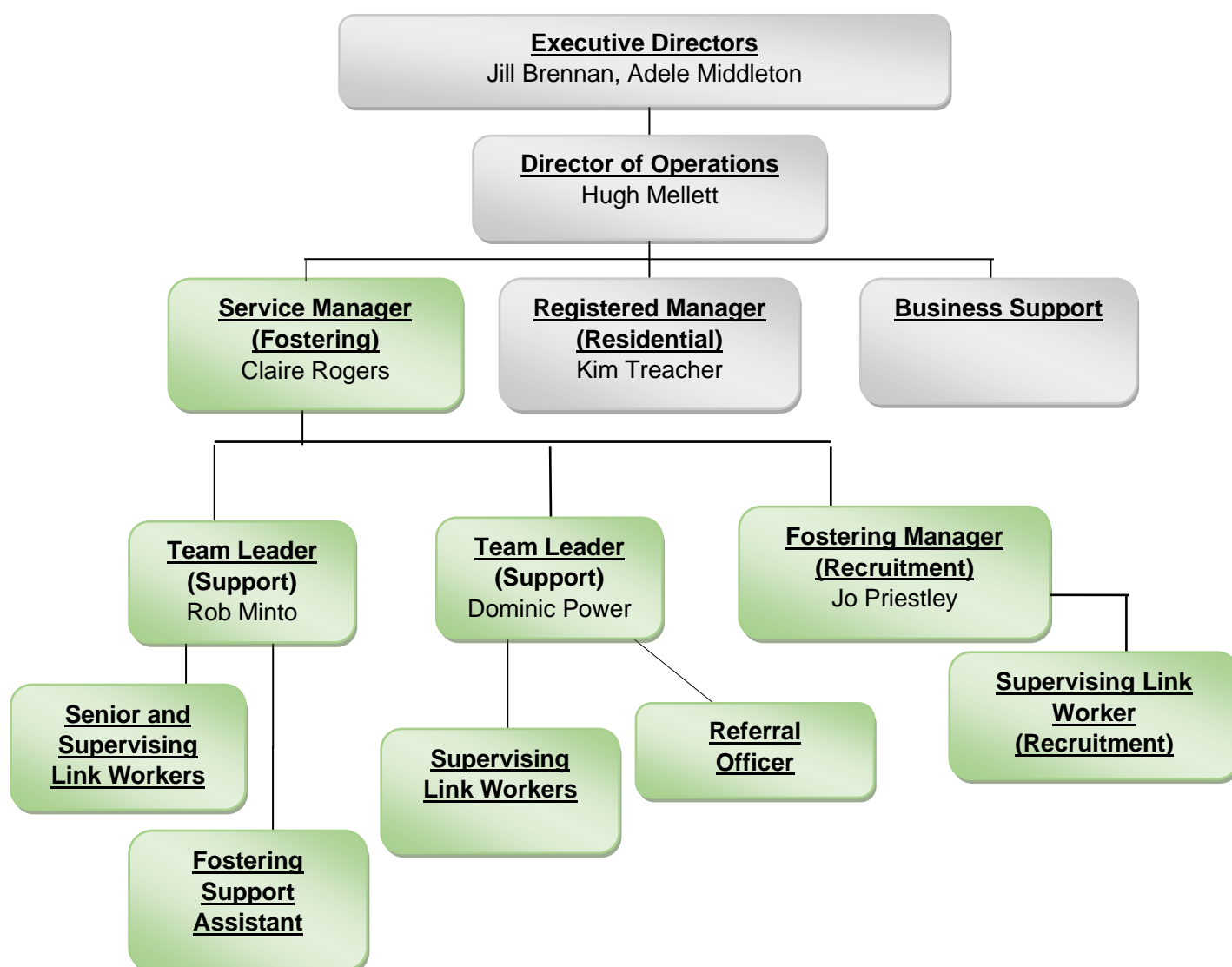
We periodically undertake children's surveys and occasional events where children can make their views known.

We have a dedicated email address [havingmysay@treehousecare.org](mailto:havingmysay@treehousecare.org) for children and foster carers to use and a direct line to the Directors [thedirectors@treehousecare.org](mailto:thedirectors@treehousecare.org).

Each supervising link worker sees any child/young person placed with the foster carers they supervise and support regularly as part of their supervisory visits.

## STRUCTURE & STAFFING

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All our operational staff have previous experience of working in different local authority children's services.

Staff experience is summarised below:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Year of Qualification</b>	<b>Year of joining Tree House Care Fostering</b>
Claire Rogers (Service Manager)	2005	2012
Jo Priestley (Fostering Manager)	1984	2004
Robert Minto (Team Leader)	2004	2016
Dominic Power (Team Leader)	2007	2020
Amy Storey (Senior Supervising Social Worker)	2011	2014
Damian Kerrigan (Senior Development and Support Worker)	1990	2020
Rachel Riley (Supervising Link Worker)	2005	2017
Rachelle Mortimer (Supervising Link Worker)	2010	2017
Sarah Axe (Supervising Link Worker)	2009	2016
Angela Sweeney (Supervising Link Worker)	2006	2019
Anna Kirman (Supervising Link Worker)	2015	2020
Kim Garmston (Supervising Link Worker)	2005	2021

All Social Work staff are registered with Social Work England.

Staff are based either in our Grimsby or Doncaster offices, or work from home. The Grimsby office acts as HQ, where all admin and central functions are located.

Claire Rogers is our Registered Manager, being approved by OFSTED in June 2017.

Our current OFSTED rating is Outstanding.

Jo Priestley acts as deputy manager in Claire's absence.

Our foster carers and children are further supported by our Fostering Support Assistant, Becky Nuttall.

The agency has procedures in place to provide a structured approach to suitable and safe staff selection which also encompasses our Equal Opportunities Policy.

OFSTED have consistently described our safer recruitment practices as "robust".

## RECRUITMENT AND APPROVAL OF FOSTER CARERS

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We have an ongoing programme of recruitment activity, using the internet, newspaper advertising and events. During the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 we received 268 enquiries to become foster carers, 18 applications, and we approved 6 households.

In 2018 we restructured the Fostering Service to allow Jo Priestley, Fostering Manager, to focus predominantly on foster carer recruitment and assessment. This area of activity has been further strengthened by Adele Middleton, Director, taking on supervisory and management responsibility for this area of work. Adele works closely with the Registered Manager.

We keep aggregated information about referrals to help us plan services and recruitment drives. We keep similar information about foster carer enquiries, and the relative success or otherwise of various recruitment campaigns.

Enquiries and applications to become a foster carer are welcomed from people regardless of gender, marital status, sexuality, race, disability, religion, culture or employment status. The timescale between the application form and approval will usually be within eight months.

We take into account geography for new applicants based on specific postcodes, determined by our ability to support Foster Carers and the likelihood of us being able to place children.

All prospective foster carers must have at least one spare bedroom.

There is immediate exclusion of any applicant who has been convicted of an offence against a child, or any serious offences against an adult.

All prospective foster carers who have offences against their name will have a conviction risk assessment undertaken.

It is a minimum requirement that all prospective foster carers must have at least one spare bedroom.

Regular recruitment meetings are held to ensure we keep on top of enquiries, applications and initial visits. This meeting decides which enquiries and applications are suitable for further consideration.

If appropriate a home visit will be arranged. An initial visit is a two-way discussion about what fostering is about and whether fostering is right for the enquirer. One of our experienced foster carers often contacts the enquirer after the initial visit and feeds back to the recruitment officer. If appropriate, the enquirer is asked to complete an application form, if they haven't already done so.

Once we receive an application a qualified social worker is allocated to undertake an assessment. They produce a report which covers: individual profiles of applicants;

relationships and partnerships; applicants' support network, children in the household and other adult members of the household, childlessness/limitation of family size, description of family life, valuing diversity, parenting capacity, and more importantly an analysis of their potential strengths and weaknesses as a foster carer. We currently use the CORAM/BAAF Form F. During 2020 we trialled our own format which will be reviewed during the course of 2021.

The assessment is based on a two-stage process, which usually runs concurrently. Stage 1 considers the statutory checks and personal references, as discussed below. Stage 2 is the home study, when the assessing social worker will need to visit the home, usually a minimum of eight visits or sixteen hours (approximately), to spend time working with the applicants on their assessment. The assessment is a joint project and needs full participation from applicants and their family.

During the assessment we will undertake a variety of statutory checks (Stage 1), which include:

- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- Local authority checks
- Employer and/or current fostering organisation references
- School
- Medical Reports
- At least two personal references.

A Home Safety check will also be carried out alongside a risk assessment on any pets in the home.

If any of the Stage 1 checks are returned indicating that the applicant is unsuitable to foster, the Agency Decision Maker will make the decision whether to continue or terminate the assessment. Explanation will be given to the applicant about this decision.

If during the Stage 2 home study, concerns are raised about the applicant's suitability to foster, and we decide to terminate the assessment, a brief report will be completed and presented to foster panel with a recommendation regarding continuing or ending the assessment. The Agency Decision Maker will make the final decision about terminating the assessment based on the brief report and recommendation from panel.

During the assessment or as soon as possible after the assessment, the applicants will usually be required to attend an introductory training course.

Once the assessment is completed, the applicants will have the chance to read and discuss possible amendments. This report will be presented to the Foster Panel which prospective foster carers are expected to attend. All carers newly approved in the last year have attended and participated. The Fostering Panel is made up of a variety of professionals and independent members, including educationalists and professionals with experience of the looked after children system.

The Fostering Panel has an Independent Chair, David Palmer. David has been a qualified social worker since 1982 and his roles have included Case Conference Chair, Independent Reviewing Officer and acting as LADO.

The panel members will make their recommendations, but the final decision is made by the Agency Decision Maker. Hugh Mellett is ADM for Tree House Care.

Upon approval as a foster carer, we advise them in writing and allocate a supervising link worker. They will receive an induction that outlines expectations, policies, procedures and remuneration.

Foster carers are reviewed annually, with the first annual review being presented to Foster Panel.

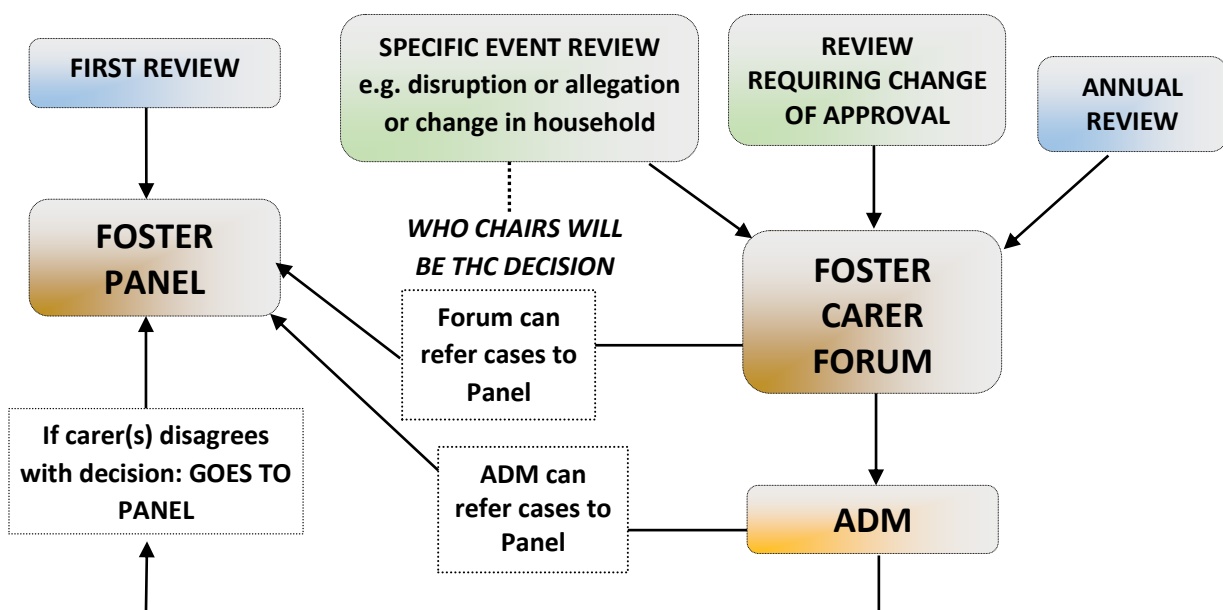
All other reviews will be presented to our Foster Carer Review Forum. Forum will decide which other reviews will go to panel. For further information on our Foster Carer Review Forum and Foster Panel please see their respective Terms of Reference.

During January-April 2021 we will be trialling an amended process whereby the Forum Chair, Adele Middleton, acts as ADM for those cases not referred to panel.

Jill Brennan acts as back up ADM should either Hugh or Adele be unavailable.

Statutory checks are renewed periodically, as and when required.

**WHICH FOSTER CARER REVIEWS GO TO PANEL  
AND WHICH GO TO FORUM?**



## TRAINING FOR FOSTER CARERS

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All prospective foster carers are required to attend the Prepare to Foster training usually prior to their approval. The sessions for this preparatory training are held on a regular basis throughout the year. It includes accredited training in First Aid, Safeguarding, and De-escalation (Team Teach).

Other basic subjects covered in these sessions are:

- Promoting sense of identity
- Managing difficult behaviour
- Working in partnership with birth parents and other professionals
- Legislative framework
- Child development
- Attachment and loss
- Safe caring
- Why children come into care
- Awareness of child abuse and child protection issues
- Diversity – challenging discrimination
- Moving on
- How children are placed
- LAC Documentation – Record Keeping
- Safeguarding children/child protection
- Placement meetings

Each prospective carer will have a Personal Development Plan which will outline their training and development needs for the forthcoming year. This will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis and presented at each annual review.

The Training, Support & Development Standards for Foster Care require that within the first twelve months, foster carers have demonstrated competency in the following areas:

- Attachment
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Caring
- Promoting Healthy Living
- Culture, Religion, and Diversity
- De-escalation
- First Aid
- Education
- Contact

- E-Safety
- Enhanced Record Keeping

As at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021, 81% of our carers, approved for more than a year, have achieved their TSDS. This is above the National Average.

Post-approval training is held at various locations, usually during term-time, within school hours, and occasionally weekends. We also have online training which many carers access.

There is an expectation that all carers are committed to ongoing training.

We have a “Pay to Train” initiative in place.

It is a requirement that all foster carers attend “Team Teach” training in the use of de-escalation skills.

Training relating to children requiring specific skills will also be provided.

## SERVICE MONITORING, QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION OF STAFF

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All staff have a named supervisor and line manager. The required standard for supervision is monthly for all staff. Management guidance, advice and support is always available on an ad hoc basis.

All staff are required to have an annual appraisal.

Managers produce monthly reports (NMS 25) for the Directors covering a wide variety of information, including supervision, referrals, foster carer enquiries, notifications, incidents, vacancies, new placements, key documentation, information about placements deemed to be fragile, and most importantly, outcomes for children.

Audits are regularly undertaken by the Managers to look at the quality of recordings and to ensure that supervisory visits are held within timescales and matters raised dealt with promptly.

Regulation 35 reports are produced on a 6-monthly basis.

Human Resources complete monthly reports outlining staffing issues including sickness absence and appraisals.



## DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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This is refreshed at least annually and is revised and updated on a regular basis.

Achievements in the past 12 months include:

- Fully implemented our progression criteria for Supervising Link Workers and other benefits to improve staff retention
- Continuing to integrate our Theoretical Model of Practice gradually into all areas of activity
- Our Management Reporting systems are continually evolving to include more detailed information on outcomes for children
- Our Children's Survey told us that 83% of our children say life is getting **much** better, which is way above the national average
- Our Foster Carer Survey told us that 90% of our carers felt we had lived up to their expectations
- Implemented our Pay to Train initiative to encourage foster carer training
- 100% success in tenders applied for
- Consulted with children to devise questions to ask prospective foster carers and staff
- Implemented a COVID Action Plan. This has included introducing virtual visits when appropriate, virtual panels, working from home and other new safer ways of working.
- We have continued to support foster carers and children during the pandemic and achieved a high level of placement stability

Since 2017 we have been working with John Anderson, Independent Therapist to draw on his and our experience into a single theoretical model that is influencing practice at all levels.

Tree House Care have been successful in the following tenders for foster placements:

- White Rose Consortium
- North West Consortium
- Rotherham
- Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire
- Leicester City and Leicestershire
- Northamptonshire

The terms of these agreements can be found in the relevant contracts.

## FOSTER PANEL REPORTS

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An annual report on foster panel will be produced during 2021 by the Service Manager and Panel Chair.

Feedback on quality issues is recorded on every case presented at panel, summarised by the Chair. These are incorporated into a regular report and discussed at the Service Manager's regular meeting with the Chair.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETINGS

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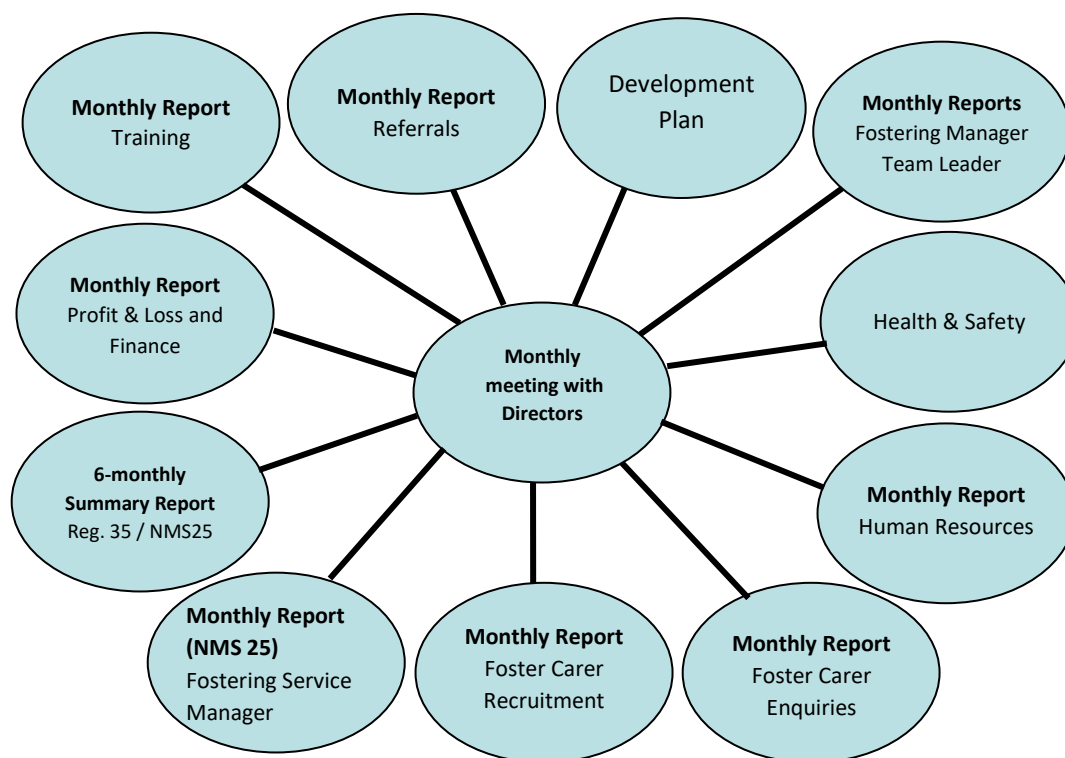
The Directors meet on a monthly basis and consider:

- Human Resources and the Human Resource Manager's Report
- Management Information Reports covering referrals, children in placement, foster carer enquiries and assessments, and foster carer recruitment
- Detailed financial and business performance information
- Monthly reports from the Service Manager, Fostering Manager and Team Leaders, these cover – children's outcome information, placement information including fragile placements, recruitment and retention of foster carers, safeguarding matters, notifications to Ofsted and updates on development issues
- Training Report (staff and foster carers)
- Health and Safety

These meetings help to ensure that quality of the service to children and foster carers remains high.

The meetings regularly review and update the Development Plan.

The governance arrangements are summarised by the diagram below:



## COMPLAINTS

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A Complaints Procedure is in place, along with a management monitoring system. We tend to try and resolve difficulties and conflicts through discussion and negotiation whenever possible.

During 2020 we received one formal complaint. This was from a foster carer and concerned a lack of support following an allegation which occurred in the early days of lockdown. The complaint was upheld, and the complainant was satisfied with the outcome.

We continue to use our refreshed version of the children's complaints form, which is more user-friendly. This includes a version using Widget software for children with communication difficulties.

Information on making complaints can be made available in a variety of formats including other languages, Makaton etc.

## COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS INFORMATION

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### Contact details:

**Tree House Care Fostering**

The Old Vicarage  
17 Heneage Road  
Grimsby  
DN32 9DZ

Tel: 01472 598334

Email: [havingmysay@treehousecare.org](mailto:havingmysay@treehousecare.org)

Website: [www.treehousecare.org](http://www.treehousecare.org)

**OFSTED**

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

Tel: 0161 6188524

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Children's Commissioner for England**

Sanctuary Buildings  
20 Great Smith Street  
125 Kingsway  
London  
SW1P 3BT

**General Enquiries**

Tel: 020 778 38330

Email: [info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [www.childrenscommssioner.gov.uk](http://www.childrenscommssioner.gov.uk)

**Advice and help for children in care or living away from home**

Freephone: 0800 528 0731

Email: [help.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:help.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand/](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand/)

## STATUS AND CONSTITUTION

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Tree House Care Fostering is an independent fostering agency that seeks to provide the highest quality fostering placements and fostering services to looked after children.

Tree House Care Fostering Solutions Ltd is a private limited company registered under the Companies Act 1985 (Company No. 4456329). We are fully registered with OFSTED (Registration No. SC033189).

The company began providing fostering services in May 2000. The business is owned by Directors Jill Brennan and Adele Middleton.

Both Jill and Adele are professionally qualified social workers and have many years child care experience between them both in the public and voluntary sector. They have both specialised in fostering services and are fully conversant with all aspects of the role and requirements of providing fostering services. Jill holds the Diploma in Management and is a member of the Chartered Management Institute.

The Directors are ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance with all aspects of quality assurance in relation to the delivery of services and the financial viability to do so.

The Responsible Person is Hugh Mellett, Director of Operations. Hugh qualified as a Social Worker in 1984 and has many years in Senior Management positions.

Hugh joined Tree House Care in 2005 and can be contacted at:

Tree House Care  
Headquarters  
The Old Vicarage  
17 Heneage Road  
Grimsby  
North East Lincolnshire DN32 9DZ

Hugh's telephone number is 01472 598334 and his email address is [hugh.mellett@treehousecare.org](mailto:hugh.mellett@treehousecare.org)

The Registered Manager and Service Manager is Claire Rogers.

Claire can be contacted at:

Tree House Care  
Headquarters  
The Old Vicarage  
17 Heneage Road  
Grimsby  
North East Lincolnshire DN32 9DZ

Claire's telephone number is 01472 598334 and her email address is [claire.rogers@treehousecare.org](mailto:claire.rogers@treehousecare.org)

SIGNED

*A. Middleton*

Adele Middleton  
DIRECTOR

SIGNED

*Jill Brennan*

Jill Brennan  
DIRECTOR

SIGNED

*Hugh Mellett*



Hugh Mellett  
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

SIGNED

*Claire Rogers*

Claire Rogers  
FOSTERING MANAGER

<b>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	Date completed	Initials
Send to OFSTED with covering letter	21/01/2021	KLS
Add to website (Align Studio)	21/01/2021	KLS
Add hyperlink details to next Newsletter	TBC	
Print hard copy for staff noticeboard	21/01/2021	KLS
Email hyperlink to all staff	21/01/2021	KLS
Print hard copy for HQ file	21/01/2021	KLS

What types of data is involved in this process?	Names, job titles and work telephone numbers
Any Special category Data? If so specify	Yes, names, job titles and work telephone numbers
What is the legal basis for processing?	Requirement under Care Standards Act
Does it comply with subject rights?	Yes
Security issues?	No
Is any contract in place adequate?	N/A
Will staff be trained in new system?	N/A
How will a breach be dealt with?	N/A
What are the overall risks? What are the risks to individuals?	Minimal
What measures are to be taken to minimise those risks?	None necessary. Publication of details is a requirement of Care Standards Act.
<b>Signature - Author</b>	
<b>Date</b>	12/01/2021
<b>Signed off by Data Protection Officer</b>	
<b>Date</b>	13/01/2021