

## Fostering Business Plan 2016 First Review and update: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016

*(To be reviewed quarterly to ensure continuous development Incorporating the Fostering Improvement Plan March 2016 and Management Action Plan from the In-House Foster Care internal audit report dated June 2015)*

**Kent Fostering Service Vision: To achieve an outstanding fostering service by March 2017 that ensures consistent support to foster carers with positive outcomes and improved placement stability for children and young people in our care.**

<b>Target 1: Ensure that children and young people communicate their views on all aspects of their care and support. (NMS 1.3)</b>				
	<b>What do we want to achieve?</b>	<b>Who will do it and by when?</b>	<b>What have we achieved and what is our target?</b>	<b>How will we measure the outcome</b>
1.1	Child in Care and Fostering Teams to promote the voice of the children and young people in their districts as a priority.	Service Managers Head of Fostering  Completed	Participation Strategy signed off by the Divisional Managers Team (Assistant Directors and the Director of Specialist Children's Services) in May 2015, and presented to the Children in Care (District) Service Managers in June 2015.  Joint participation workshops in place for 2016/17 for foster carers, social workers and young people.	To be measured through attendance of foster carers and social workers at participation training.  Participation workshop to be part of staff Personal Development Plan and new staff induction.  To achieve 70% of 864 foster carers attending
1.2	To increase feedback available for foster carers' annual reviews from children and young people.	Fostering Team Managers, Fostering Review Team Manager (to be appointed) <b>By August 2016</b>	Fostering Review Team to be implemented to achieve independent reviews of foster carer's approvals.  Children and young people's feedback form will be redesigned through work with the participation worker.  Feedback forms will be uploaded onto Liberi to give clear evidence of children's views.  There will be a competition to design the new feedback form, facilitated by the Participation worker.	Review Team to be in place by August 2016.  To achieve all children (age appropriate) contributing to foster carers annual reviews.  To make this part of the reporting for Deep Dives.  <b>Review July 2016</b> – There is evidence of a change in culture that Fostering social workers now view it as their responsibility to obtain feedback from
1.3				

			Fostering Reviewing Team will set up monitoring system to ensure feedback forms are returned and part of the annual review.	children in placement. This is done through their supervision visits to carers and as part of the annual review. All area support teams to complete summary of children's feedback 6 monthly.
To ensure children's views from child in care reviews feed into foster carer supervision and annual reviews, and are acted upon.	IROs, CIC social workers and Fostering Team Managers	Child in Care social workers to complete review feedback forms for foster carer's annual reviews and to support children to complete feedback. Fostering Reviewing Team will set up monitoring system to ensure feedback forms from children's social workers are returned and part of the annual review process. The review team will create independent challenge and support practice development increasing quality assurance.	There will be an audit of 20 cases per month by the centralised fostering teams from across the county, which will include quality of annual reviews. This will give a total of 240 cases audited between May 2016-May 2017 plus an additional 100 completed for the fostering review.  Any graded as inadequate will be rectified within 5 days. Measure will be zero graded as inadequate by end of year, aim of all to be at good standard (or above). Any safeguarding concern to be addressed immediately.  <b>Updated June 2016: Fostering Support Teams will complete 10 audits per month for their own team and these will be completed alongside social workers. Included within this will be direct feedback from foster carers. Team Managers will return one completed template to Assistant Director and Head of Fostering per month.</b>	

**Target 2: Ensure all foster carers have a clear training and personal development plan including training on safe care, CSE and understanding of behavior and child development to include positive control and de-escalation. (NMS 3.8, 4.6 and 5.1)**

What do we	Who will do it	What have we achieved and what is our target?	How will we measure
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	want to achieve?	and by when?		the outcome?
2.1	<p>Undertake comprehensive needs and gap analysis of foster carer training, with reference to supporting carers to take more challenging placements and missing children / CSE.</p> <p>Update the training strategy from 2013.</p>	<p>Fostering Training Manager</p> <p>MIU support with Liberi reporting</p> <p><b>To be completed by September 2016</b></p>	<p>Fostering teams ensure all foster carers understand the strategy for dealing with missing children and ensure risk assessments are updated. Managers to take missing / CSE themes and guidance to Foster Carer Forums</p> <p>All foster carer training now has a clear pathway related to career experience. Additional training now includes Missing from Care, Unaccompanied Asylum Young People and CSE as part of the ongoing training portfolio.</p> <p>All foster carers to have a Personal Development Plan initially as part of the Form F assessment, then updated at each Annual Review. Target: Training must be addressed as part of Supervision of Foster Carers and non-attendance addressed through annual review process and panel. Liberi reporting needs to improve to be able to give information on percentage of carers who have completed core training within first/second year of approval. Child Missing from Care report to be used as indicator of whether numbers of children missing from care has reduced.</p>	<p>CSE training is now incorporated into the training pathway for all foster carers of children 11+. Workshops achieved in conjunction with KFCA which has brought together staff and foster carers</p> <p>Foster carer training to become part of Liberi reporting on a monthly basis.</p> <p>Audit tool to include evidence of PDP.</p> <p>To achieve all foster carers for children age 11 plus to have completed mandatory training by May 2017.</p> <p>To develop expert and skilled foster carers for those children at risk from CSE/missing. <b>Updated June 2016: Training Manager to set up training across the county to improve placement stability. 5k additional funding to be made available for CBT/solution focused practice. To contact independent providers and liaise with CAMHS to coordinate their offer of support for foster carer training.</b></p>
<p><b>Target 3: Maintain an effective strategy to ensure sufficient foster carers are responsive to current and predicted future demands on the service. This recommendations is made within the context of recruiting a sufficient number of foster carers who can accommodate sibling groups, so as to reduce the need for exemptions (NMS 13.1)</b></p>				
	What do we want to achieve?	Who will do it and by when?	What have we achieved and what is our target?	How will we measure the outcome
	Ensure better use of current	Fostering Team Managers and	All inactive foster carers have been reviewed and a number of carers deregistered, to ensure	All teams completed actions on inactive

3.1	vacancies, review and deregister where carers are unavailable	Service Managers	maximum use of in house vacancies.	carers. In house placements achieved at 96%, this has reduced recently to 89%.
3.2	<p>Update recruitment strategy to reflect use of social media and on line advertising.</p> <p>Plan for the use of the recruitment budget to include short term outcomes (Fostering Fortnight) and a longer term yearly plan.</p>	<p>Head of Fostering with Chris Clark, Recruitment Coordinator and Communications Team.</p> <p><b>By July 2016</b></p>	<p>Website updated with new images and clear branding for “Kent Fostering Service” and added to frequently to keep current. Recruitment activity focused on targeted areas: siblings, adolescents, disabled children and unaccompanied asylum young people. There will be increased use of use of Facebook, Twitter and Google to promote the service and increase applications. Evening on line Q&amp;A web chat sessions held quarterly, target is to expand to use of a webinar.</p> <p>Target for foster carers: To recruit 150 new fostering households, to retain and achieve 900 registered foster carers.</p> <p>Retention: Every applicant to be allocated a local mentor at point of assessment (research from Fostering Network Project 2015). Support Social worker to be allocated prior to panel and to jointly attend the panel with assessing social worker.</p>	<p>Communication Team to provide reporting on number of hits to website, analysis on where people have seen information about recruitment events and overall increase in applications following Fostering Fortnight.</p> <p>Retention of foster carers to be evaluated every 6 months, using information from exit interviews. (These are to be continued to be undertaken for all carers that leave the service)</p> <p>Post approval interviews to be completed 6 months after approval, to learn from and review the recruitment process and initially support provided.</p> <p>Review of current exemptions to be undertaken by County Manager. <b>(August 2016)</b></p>
3.3	<p>Introduce a “mascot” for Kent Fostering.</p>	<p>Communications team to research the use of a mascot.</p> <p><b>By July 2016</b></p>	<p>Mascot could be used to give as a toy to younger children in care and be used in advertising and promotions. To approach a local Kent company to gain some sponsorship/support with production. To explore the use of animation on the website with the aim of making it more interactive. This to be linked to creating a “target of carers” using an image such as a lighthouse, to show the increasing numbers of carers over the year.</p>	<p>This will be measured through use of feedback from applicants, current foster carers and children, to survey whether they have seen the mascot. Its success will be measured through an increase in applications for year 2016/2017.</p> <p><b>Review:</b> Meeting planned for July 2016 with Communications team to progress banners, mascot and new branding.</p>

**Target 4: Ensure that the County Manager regularly monitors all records kept by the service to ensure compliance with the service's policies and to identify specific incidents and areas of concern, patterns and trends. This recommendation is made within the context of addressing the variable quality of foster carer Annual Reviews. (NMS 25.2)**

	<b>What do we want to achieve?</b>	<b>Who will do it and by when?</b>	<b>What have we achieved and what is our target?</b>	<b>How will we measure the outcome</b>
4.1	Foster carer files to be audited regularly. Themes from audit to be fed back and used to improve quality of recording at CIC meeting and extended managers meeting. .	Service Managers and Head of Fostering Team Managers  <b>By end of June 2016</b>	Head of Fostering has audited a number of cases from each area and highlighted immediate areas of concern within a number of Annual Reviews. All areas to be supported by Sue Gardner, MIU training and support to clear back log of incomplete Annual Reviews.  <b>Fostering Review Team to be set up by August 2016.</b>  <b>Review: Learning culture created, through audits e.g evaluation from the review of allegations identified need for staff training. Allegations workshops to be delivered to Team Managers by Head of Fostering.</b>	New audit tool to be added to on line Liberi system. Auditing has taken place (new carers), there will now be regular audits every month. Future audit cycle to be part of regular Quality Assurance. Team Managers in support Teams to audit 10 cases per month (audit to be completed with social workers)  Outcome of audits to be reported at extended managers meetings (monthly) and Child in Care.  <b>Fostering Review completed by Head of Service and Manager form tri borough June 2016.</b>

**Target 5: Handling allegations and suspicions of harm (NMS 22)**

	<b>What do we want to achieve?</b>	<b>Who will do it and by when?</b>	<b>What have we achieved and what is our target?</b>	<b>How will we measure the outcome</b>
5.1	<p>To have a central system for recording complaints and allegations.</p> <p><b>Clear leadership in management of allegations, with use of performance management where appropriate.</b></p>	Service Managers	<p>The information available is distributed across paper and electronic files It does appear that discussions may have been had with the LADO in two out of the three cases audited but there needs to be improved recording.</p> <p>Target: All allegations are recorded on the carer's record on Liberi and presented to the fostering panel. Peer Support Training to be provided yearly to ensure carers are supported and understand the process.</p>	<p>The procedures for what to do when an allegation is made against a carer has been updated and is available in Kent's Policy pages, and the LADO team have attended all fostering team meetings to reinforce the requirements of the police which is in line with national minimum standards to refer all allegations made against foster carers to a LADO.</p> <p>All Fostering Teams to follow the flowchart for allegations, as provided by the LADO service.</p> <p>Allegations to be added to the Fostering Dashboard/Scorecard for recording.</p> <p><b>Update June 2016: Head of Fostering to deliver 2 seminars on allegations for Team Managers, who will then deliver to all fostering social workers. To include LADO role, notification form and flowchart. To be held between July-September 2016.</b></p> <p><b>Notification form to be used on all allegations, sent to LADO, Head of fostering and AD.</b></p>

<b>Target 6: Payment to carers (NMS 28)</b>				
	<b>What do we want to achieve?</b>	<b>Who will do it and by when?</b>	<b>What have we achieved and what is our target?</b>	<b>How will we measure the outcome</b>
6.1	A review of the disability enhancement payments.	Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting, Head of Fostering <b>By end of May 2016</b>	The current payments system has some inaccuracy across the county and needs a clear policy. Allowances to be reviewed in consultation with foster carers. Letter to be sent to all disability carers by end of April 2016, to advise of payments review. (NMS 28.3) Target: To achieve a clear and transparent payment structure for carers of children with a disability. (NMS 28.5)	All carers know what payments they will receive for caring for a child with a disability.  All carers will be on the correct level of payment dependent on the child's assessed level of need. This will be agreed at funding panel and reviewed yearly.  <b>Review: Policy agreed 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016.</b>
6.2	A review of the day care payments	Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting, Head of Fostering <b>By end of Jan 2017</b>	Carers are currently being paid below the recommend hourly Living Wage when providing day care to children. The use of day care to support placement stability to be reviewed.	To review the day care payments in line with the recommend Living Wage.  Initial review May 2016 to keep payments the same, further work needed on analysis of use of day care and cost implications of changing day care rate.
6.3	A review of the payments for Skills Level 2 and Level 3 payments.	Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting, Head of Fostering, Training Manager <b>By end of March 2017</b>	Review the function and format of the Payment for Skills Panel.  Review the Competency Assessment Framework (2008) and update. Create panel checklist for presenting carers at Level 2 / 3.  This would involve some additional training for panel members and staff on the process and reports required.	Carers and staff need a clear process to provide evidence for the consideration of Level 2 and 3 payments. This will be measured in achieving consistent practice across the county.  Training to be delivered in line with updated competency framework. <b>New training manager to review by March 2017.</b>
6.4	Carers transferring from IFA's.	Completed	All carers transferring from an IFA will transfer across to Kent Fostering Service on the Kent County Council payment structure. This will be made clear at point of	The County Manager will review every 6 months what the local IFA's are paying foster carers to ensure Kent remains competitive in his payments

			application and recorded within protocol meetings.	and support package.
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<b>Target 7: Foster Carers receive the support and supervision they need in order to care properly for children placed with them. Supervision and support of foster carers (NMS 21)</b>				
	<b>What do we want to achieve?</b>	<b>Who will do it and by when?</b>	<b>What have we achieved and what is our target?</b>	<b>How will we measure the outcome</b>
7.1	A consistent template for supervision that is used for all foster carers. A signed record of supervision is sent to carers and uploaded onto their Liberi file.	Team Managers, Service Managers Head of Fostering  <b>By end of May 2016</b>	We have learnt from the KFCA survey of Foster Carers (February 2016) that 41% of carers are dissatisfied with the level of support provided and a number commented they do not receive copies of their supervision notes. Managers and staff are not consistent in what template is being used for supervision.  Target: Team Managers to put together a template that will be agreed by Assistant Director.	Audits will show that one template is being used across the county. Carers will all have a supervision agreement and regularly receive the notes of their supervision (every 4-6 weeks.) There will be signed copies of supervision uploaded onto Liberi.  <b>Review: Template agreed by Assistant Director, to be built as form on Liberi.</b>
7.2	There is an effective Out of Hours Service for foster carers.	Fostering Team Managers	Each area currently runs an Out of Hours Service for their local carers between 5pm-12 Mon-Fri and over weekends and bank holidays. This is supported by the County Out of Hours team who can be accessed at outside of these times (after midnight)	Carer's report that this works well and they have access to advice and support. (NMS 21.3)  <b>Review again March 2017.</b>




Target 8: Preparation for Placement (NMS 11)				
	What do we want to achieve?	Who will do it and by when?	What have we achieved and what is our target?	How will we measure the outcome
8.1	Children are carefully matched to a foster placement and wherever possible given information about the foster carers before arrival. (NMS 11.3)	Service Managers Team Managers, Head of Fostering  <b>End of June 2016</b>	Every foster carer has an up to date profile with photographs that can be printed off and given to children before the start of the placement. Even in an emergency, the profile can be emailed to the placing social worker, to be shown to a child using current technology. Audit of referrals for each area showed inadequate information in matching section of referral form.  Target: Referrals to be detailed with reasons for matching and support package for carers. <b>Review: Update referral, placement and matching form on Liberi. Form completed, request changes through ops group.</b>	Quality Assurance form to be used for all referrals to ensure appropriate information and matching recorded (oversight by Team Manager).  Carers to ask children whether they received carers profiles prior to placement. This to be recorded in carers supervision.  To cascade though child in care meetings and extended managers meeting.
8.2	Carers are given full information about the child.	Fostering Team Managers Fostering Social Workers  <b>End of June 2016</b>	Audit of referrals for each area showed inadequate information at point of referral.  Target: Referrals to be quality assured at point of referral and returned to children social workers if not of good quality.	Quality Assurance form to be used for all referrals to ensure appropriate information and matching recorded. (oversight by Team Manager)  Report to Child in Care meeting on outcome of audits and areas requiring improvement. <b>(May 2016)</b>
8.3	Delegated Authority recorded for all children and young people.	Fostering Social Workers and Children's Social Workers. <b>End of June</b>	There is inconsistent use of Delegated Authority and it being recorded and signed. Target: One Delegated Authority Form to be designed and used that covers all areas e.g. medical, education, social, religious and cultural needs.	Form to be updated on Liberi. <b>(July 2016)</b>  Delegated Authority to be recorded on all placement plan arrangements and signed copy to be given to foster carer.

		2016	<b>Review: Form being updated for Liberi – target for implementation September 2016.</b>	Delegated authority to be part of every audit. Any audit missing delegated authority will be rated inadequate and delegated authority to be in place within 5 days from audit.
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<b>Target 9: Staff support and supervision (NMS 24)</b>				
	<b>What do we want to achieve?</b>	<b>Who will do it and by when?</b>	<b>What have we achieved and what is our target?</b>	<b>How will we measure the outcome</b>
9.1	A signed written record is kept by the fostering service of each staff member's supervision.	Team Managers, Head of Fostering <b>By end of May 2016</b>	Staff supervision on casework is currently being recorded inconsistently on Liberi under case notes. Improvement required in analysis, signs of safety approach and any directed action regarding performance.  Target: Template agreed by Assistant Director.	Each area to set up electronic folder to store staff supervision that can be accessed by the County Manager and Assistant Director. Supervision template to be consistent across the county.  <b>Update June 2016: ACHIEVED</b> <b>Supervision folders now set up for all Fostering staff, including Fostering Social workers and Team Managers. Supervision for Team Managers by Assistant Directors to be saved electronically into shared area, for access by Assistant Director for corporate parenting and Head of Fostering.</b>  <b>Each staff folder to contain:</b> <b>Supervision agreement/contract</b> <b>PDP's/Action plans</b> <b>Supervision notes on agreed template</b> <b>Record to confirm completion of mandatory training on Data Protection, Information Governance and PREVENT.</b>  <b>Case supervision to be recorded on Liberi on</b>

				<b>foster carers file. Assistant Director and Head of Fostering to audit 2 staff supervision folders per area in August 2016.</b>
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<b>Target 10 Statement of Purpose (NMS 16)</b>				
	<b>What do we want to achieve?</b>	<b>Who will do it and by when?</b>	<b>What have we achieved and what is our target?</b>	<b>How will we measure the outcome</b>
10.1	We want an ambitious fostering service that has a learning culture and builds on the strengths of our existing services for our children in care.	Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting, Service Managers Head of Fostering	<p>Kent Fostering Service has some excellent foster carers and specific schemes for children in care.</p> <p>Target: To review the current TRP scheme format, to ensure it provides best value for the funding required. To build on the Disability Fostering Service by increasing the number of carers for short breaks. To use Serious Case Reviews to inform our practice and learn across the service how to make improvements.</p>	<p>Review the Kent Statement of purpose (NMS 16.1) to ensure its aims and objectives are child focused and evidence how the service will achieve outcomes for children.</p> <p>Team Managers to use Serious Case Reviews in Team Meetings.</p> <p><b>Review: Innovation Bid report completed by Assistant Director June 2016.</b></p> <p> Innovation Bid Proposal June 2016 (.</p>
10.2	To develop a learning culture through joint training.	Fostering Team Managers, Fostering Social Workers, Panel Members and Head of Fostering. <b>October 2016</b>	<p>Training has been provided for panel members, fostering social workers, team Managers and Panel advisors but these have not been done jointly.</p> <p>Target: To have a joint training day/conference for all Fostering Staff and Panel members.</p> <p>Paperless panels to be introduced with training for all panel members.</p>	<p>To be organised for October 2016 and learning to be measured through evaluation</p> <p>Pilot for paperless panels to be in place by <b>August 2016.</b></p> <p><b>Review: Panel process for Permanency and Connected Persons assessments to be streamlined and paperwork reduced. (October 2016)</b></p>

				Head of Fostering to deliver 2 half day seminars on Fostering Regulations to Team Managers between July and September 2016. To develop an on line training on the fostering regulations with the training department, this will be mandatory for all fostering staff.
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<b>Target 11: Promoting Independence and moves to adulthood and leaving care (NMS 12.1)</b>				
	<b>What do we want to achieve?</b>	<b>Who will do it and by when?</b>	<b>What have we achieved and what is our target?</b>	<b>How will we measure the outcome</b>
11.1	Kent Fostering Service to have comprehensive arrangements for preparing and supporting young people to make the transition to independence. (NMS 12.3)	County Fostering Manager  County Manager 18plus Care Leavers service.  September 2016	There is a clear policy for leaving care including Staying Put arrangements. This is detailed on Tri X and within the Fostering handbook.  There will be a planned review of the Staying Put policy to ensure there is an up to date leaflet and guidance for young people and foster carers.  To review Fostering Handbook guidance for leaving care and staying put.	Updated policy and leaflets by <b>September 2016</b> .  To include policy for children that remain in secondary education after age 18, to enable foster carers to continue to be paid at fostering rate for period between 18 <sup>th</sup> birthday and end of school year after this.