



CARING
HEARTS
FOSTERING



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

2019

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Introduction

This Statement of Purpose has been created in line with appropriate legislation and guidance for fostering services including the Care Standards Act 2000, the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011 and the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011.

The statement provides key information about how Caring Hearts Fostering operates, the provision of services and the support structure that is available from the agency for all those involved with it.

The statement of purpose is submitted to Ofsted and is available to the public on the agency's website. The statement of purpose is also provided to:

-  Individuals working for or on behalf of the agency
-  Foster carers or potential foster carers
-  Children or young people placed by the agency
-  Parents or guardians of children placed by the agency
-  Local authorities looking to place children or young people with the agency
-  Members of the general public

Children and young people are automatically provided with information about our Statement of Purpose at the start of any placement in the form of a Children's Guide.

The statement of purpose is annually reviewed and updated as required by the management team of Caring Hearts Fostering.

VISION

“To give every child fostered with the agency the best possible chance for happiness and a successful outcome.”

VALUES

“RESPECT: Treating children and all others involved in the fostering process with the utmost respect and consideration. This will help promote a positive environment and experience for all concerned.”

EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

We are committed to an uncompromising desire to deliver an unrivaled service that puts children and young people’s wellbeing first. The agency will exceed expectations in all measures and requirements.

RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL GIVING BACK

We will ensure that each child is treated as an individual with unique abilities and talents. We will give children a choice and allow them to be involved in their personal care.

GIVING BACK

At Caring Hearts Fostering we believe in giving back to children all over the globe. We have made it our policy for each foster carer working with us, we will sponsor an orphan in a third world country in their name.

PRINCIPLES OF CARE

Caring Hearts Fostering will ensure that we:

-  Put the child's needs at the forefront of our decision-making processes.
-  Promote and improve outcomes for looked after children by providing opportunities for them to benefit from foster care.
-  Safeguard children from all forms of abuse, maltreatment and exploitation. We will ensure that foster carers understand the principles of safely caring for children.
-  Protect the rights of all children by working in line with the Convention on the Rights of the child.
-  Include foster carers by giving them delegated authority, consistently promoting the spirit of working in partnership.
-  Support staff by providing supervision and training, helping them to further develop their skills and knowledge.
-  Prepare young people for leaving the looked after system so that they can live fulfilled lives and contribute to society post leaving care.
-  Support meaningful contact between children and their families, working towards maintaining links and connections with those who are significant to them
-  Work in partnership with local authorities to provide stable placements and an environment that is conducive to children's healthy development.
-  Empower children in care by participation workshops, giving them a voice in agency decisions.

OPEN COMMUNICATION

We will ensure that we:

-  Keep children, foster carers, staff, and other professionals are kept fully informed of all information that might be relevant to them. Likewise, the agency will encourage all those involved to speak freely and without hesitation.
-  Listen to what children tell us and whenever possible base the placements we offer them on their feelings and wishes.
-  Will provide services that will enable children to cope with traumatic experiences.
-  Will keep records safe and secure by creating a database and systems for safe storage of information.
-  Will not disclose sensitive information by bearing the Data Protection Act in mind.

ANTI-OPPRESSIVE PRACTICE

We firmly believe that it is wrong to discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, ethnic origin, gender, culture, religion, sexual orientation or any other less obvious grounds or ways of defining and excluding people. We will ensure that:

-  We deliver services that are fair and equitable by following the Equalities legislation.
-  We will not tolerate any forms of verbal abuse or aggressive acts. Each child, foster carer and members of staff will be protected under our Equal Opportunities Policy.
-  We will deliver our services on the basis of need.



Aims & Objectives

Caring Hearts Fostering aims to provide children and young people with a safe, nurturing and caring home environment that allows them to be happy and fulfill their potential. We will consult and work together with all parties concerned in the fostering process to ensure we can deliver a service that meets children's individual needs.

OBJECTIVES:

-  Provide a high quality training and development programme that ensures all staff and carers are fully equipped to deliver the best standards of care possible. This will be delivered through initial training and ongoing training that promotes further professional development.
-  Recruit a diverse range of carers that can accommodate children from various backgrounds no matter what their race, culture, religion or linguistic heritage may be.
-  Provide a knowledgeable and experienced 24-hour support team that can assist with all manner of enquiries from carers or children and young people.
-  Recognise every child's individual needs and look out for their best interests
-  Fully comply with statutory and regulatory requirements whilst exceeding the expected minimum standards.
-  Provide local authorities with an adaptable and responsive provision that delivers consistently high standards.

Organisational & Management Structure

Caring Hearts Fostering is an independent fostering agency that operates under a limited company (company number 10681238). The Responsible Individual and Registered Manager are responsible for the overall quality of the service provision, meeting regulatory requirements, financial management and the agency strategy.

The Registered Manager looks after the day to day management of the agency and is a qualified social worker with previous experience of social work with children and families.

RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL / DIRECTOR

Omar Kadir

Omar has been managing various businesses for the past 10 years with international experience in different sectors.



REGISTERED MANAGER

Paul Owen

Paul has been a social worker for over 38 years and has a wealth of experience. He has worked within local authority as a Head of service for Fostering, adoption and commissioning. As well as working within the independent fostering sector as an area manager.





Services

We promote a close working relationship with local authorities to find the best possible match of foster carer for each child. This is achieved by having a range of foster carers with varied backgrounds and experience and a training and support structure that provides guidance whenever needed. Placement services include:

 **EMERGENCY PLACEMENTS** - a 24 hour a day service where a child can be placed without prior notice. These placements are typically for a number of days only.

 **SHORT TERM PLACEMENTS** - placement with an appropriately matched foster carer for a few days, weeks or months whilst plans are made for the young person's long term care.

 **LONG TERM (PERMANENT) PLACEMENTS** - where adoption is not a possibility, a child or young person can remain with a foster carer up to and in to adulthood.

 **BRIDGING PLACEMENTS** - available in situations where children are to ultimately be reunited with their families or are preparing to move to an adoptive family.

 **SIBLING PLACEMENTS** - siblings can be placed together or if placed separately, arrangements are made for contact between them.

 **RESPIRE PLACEMENTS** - these provide a break for parents or offer additional support where a support network is required. Respite is also available for our own foster carers.

 **PARENT AND CHILD PLACEMENTS** - Where parents and their children come to stay with you to provide them extra support and guidance on how to take care of their children.



Recruitment, Assessment & Approval of Foster Carers

Caring Hearts Fostering is committed to the recruitment of carers who share the agency's goal of delivering exceptional standards of care for children and young people.

PROCESS:

 Following an enquiry from a potential foster carer, an agency recruitment officer will make contact and explain more about fostering and the recruitment process and gather basic information that will allow the agency to decide whether it is appropriate to progress the enquiry. Where an enquiry is taken forward, a detailed information pack will be sent out.

 Following receipt of the information pack, if the prospective carer decides to continue the process, an initial home visit will be arranged where a qualified social worker will conduct a basic assessment of the suitability of the home (including health and safety aspects) and the prospective carer. This will also provide an opportunity for the potential carer to ask any questions they may have and discuss the process of being assessed.

 Where the initial home visit is successful, the potential foster carer will be asked to complete a detailed application form that includes information about themselves and their family. They will be requested to grant Caring Hearts consent for the necessary checks and enquiries to be completed to verify their identity and suitability to foster. Statutory checks include a criminal record check, medical check, local authority checks and references from three personal referees, adult children, ex-partners, employers, and schools where birth children are under the age of 18 years old.



Recruitment, Assessment & Approval of Foster Carers

The assessment process will be carried out in two stages and will typically take 3-4 months, and possibly up to six months depending on the applicants' circumstances. In addition to home assessments, applicants will also be required to attend a 3-day preparation-training course. The following steps will be adhered to:

-  An initial assessment will commence with part 1 which is the general collection of data and carrying out the necessary checks which will include applying for work and personal references.
-  A designated social worker will visit the applicant within their home several times during the process to gather information about the applicant's members of the household and the applicant's experience and skills appropriate to fostering. The information gathered during the home assessments will be used to populate the BAAF Form F Assessment Report .
-  The content of the report will be shared with applicant(s) and they will be able to make their comments before all necessary paperwork and evidence are presented to the Fostering Panel .

- ♥ The report will be sent to panel members ten days in advance of the panel meeting.
- ♥ Applicants will be invited to attend the fostering panel, with the full process explained to them in advance. The fostering panel will make a recommendation, based on the information provided in their assessment and a thorough discussion by panel members.
- ♥ The fostering panel's recommendation will be presented to the Caring Hearts Fostering Agency Decision Maker who will make a decision based on all the information available.
- ♥ Approval will then be communicated to the applicant(s) in writing along with a foster carer agreement, fostering handbook and any specific terms of approval.
- ♥ Where an application is declined, the applicant(s) will be advised of the reasons for the decision and their right to appeal through the Independent Review Mechanism.

PROCESS STAGES

1 Make an Inquiry

2 Initial Home Visit

3 Fostering Assessment

4 Preparation Training

5 Panel

6 Approved

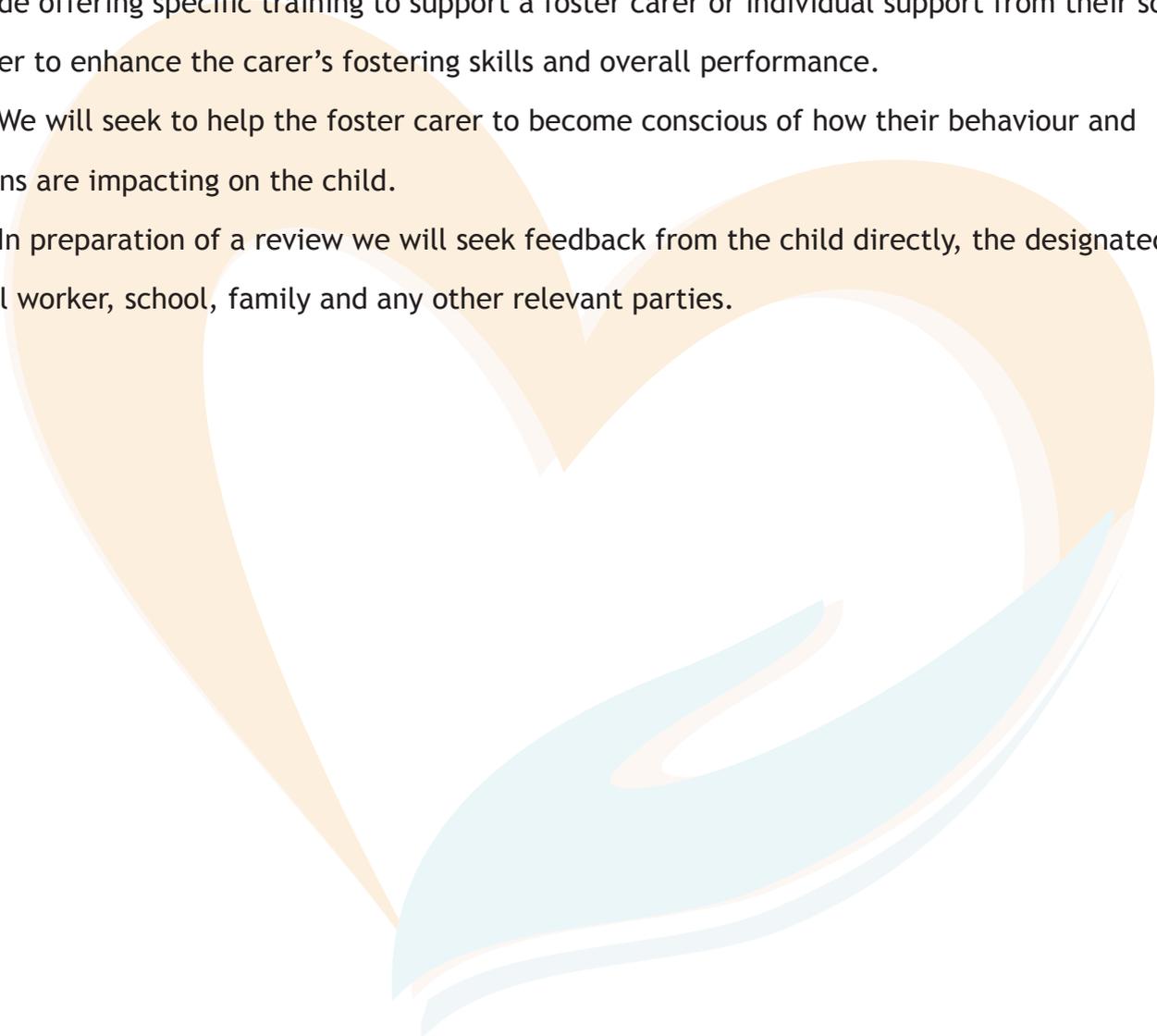


Service Performance & Reviews

Every foster carer will have an annual review after the first year of fostering and thereafter every three years, unless an allegation is made against them. In cases where an allegation is made against a foster carer it will be investigated with the involvement of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and any child protection procedures that are recommended will be actioned.

At the end of the review process the foster carer must return to the fostering panel. The fostering panel will make a recommendation, which will be passed to the Agency Decision Maker for their final decision. This will cover foster carer training and development needs for the coming year.





 We will act on any recommendations or changes that may result from this process. This may include offering specific training to support a foster carer or individual support from their social worker to enhance the carer's fostering skills and overall performance.

 We will seek to help the foster carer to become conscious of how their behaviour and actions are impacting on the child.

 In preparation of a review we will seek feedback from the child directly, the designated social worker, school, family and any other relevant parties.



Training & Development

In order to deliver the highest standards of care for children and young people, Caring Hearts Fostering recognises that full and proper training and development of foster carers and staff is absolutely crucial. Therefore:

-  Initial training will be followed by an on-going programme of development for all those involved with the agency. Training schedules are arranged annually and are fully responsive to any changes in guidance and legislation that need to be addressed.
-  Foster carers and staff will be encouraged to contribute and give their input as to how we might best enhance the training programme and address areas where a focus is needed. This is an approach that will be combined with our own observations of where to best use our training resources, as well as topics that are consistent with research and best practice development.
-  Carers will be able to attend regularly scheduled support groups that allow informal discussion with other carers and include special guest speakers.
-  All our foster carers are expected to attend training on a regular basis and take an active interest in advancing their fostering skills.
-  The agency will work with foster carers to complete the Training, Support and Development Standards Induction framework, within one year of their approval. This is a requirement that will provide a structured approach to their learning.
-  In addition, foster carers will be required to complete mandatory courses and any other courses that are identified as beneficial to assist with their learning and development in their first year and each subsequent year thereafter.

Caring Hearts Fostering fully appreciates that we live in a diverse society with people from many different backgrounds, experiences and personalities. For this reason, we recruit a diverse range of foster carers who can be suitably matched to an equally diverse range of children and young people. By providing equal opportunities for all and promoting a sense of value in every individual, we will ensure that children, foster carers and our staff feel welcomed, respected and at ease. This in turn will help provide the best environment for anyone involved with the agency to flourish.

Foster carers and staff will be fully trained to help them understand and appreciate diversity and to show tolerance and respect for others who are different to them. Placements will be matched carefully taking into account criteria such as language, race, culture, religion, gender, sexual preference, ability, those who are differently abled, disability and mental health/learning disabilities.

We will work towards equality by taking the following actions:

-  Making public our equality and diversity policy.
-  We include anti-discrimination in our recruitment of staff and interviewing processes.
-  Foster carers will have access to our policy in the foster carer's handbook.
-  Our approach to anti-discrimination practice will be included in the skills to foster training and will be embedded in all subsequent training.
-  External trainers must demonstrate their commitment to our equality and diversity policy.

A decorative graphic in the top left corner featuring a stylized heart shape. The top half of the heart is orange, and the bottom half is light blue. The heart is formed by two hands, one orange and one light blue, reaching towards each other. The background of the page is a gradient of blue and green.

Support & Management of Foster Carers

Each foster carer will be assigned their own qualified Supervising Social Worker (SSW). The SSW will manage and support the foster carer and together they will work to ensure the child or young person is safe and is receiving an appropriate standard of care.

The SSW will visit the foster carer at least once a month to check in on progress. Telephone calls will also be made on a weekly basis to maintain a constant line of communication. Visits by the SSW are an opportunity to discuss how the child is getting on and identify any further training needs. The SSW will also make at least two unscheduled visits each year to a fostering home.

The SSW will maintain records of all meetings and reviews and keep a detailed record of all fostering activities.

All foster carers will have support via access to a SSW on a 24-hour a day basis, 365 days a year.

Fitness of Premises

In setting up Caring Hearts Fostering we have made provision for premises from which the service will operate. The premises are located at: Unit N, Impact Business Park, 7 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, London, UB6 7JD.





Financial Requirements

Caring Hearts Fostering is financially viable and will be able to finance the agency. We are able to respond effectively to situations that might require extra financial outlay. In line with the Regulations we will declare our financial position by completing yearly tax returns to HMRC. We will be compliant by ensuring that the following financial safeguards are in place:

-  There are systems to control financial management.
-  A qualified accountant will be appointed to maintain our financial records and submit information to HMRC regarding PAYE, N.I. and VAT.
-  All external staff providing services to Caring Hearts will submit an invoice upon which payment will be made within 14-28 days.
-  Accounts will be audited.
-  Publish charges for our services.
-  Publish fostering allowance and give foster carers information regarding savings and pocket money for foster children in line with their ages.

Complaints & Outcomes

The Caring Hearts Fostering complaints procedure is designed to deal with complaints in a prompt and fair manner. All parties involved with the agency will be made aware of their right to make a complaint and the process for this. This will cover children and young people, families, foster carers, social workers and other professionals involved in the fostering process.

In the first instance, if a complaint can be resolved directly with the person involved on an informal basis then we would encourage this to be pursued.

 Informal complaints - these will be referred to the service manager. A meeting will then be arranged with the complainant in order to try to informally resolve the complaint. These types of complaint will be responded to with an outcome letter within 10 working days or, where agreed with the complainant, up to a maximum of 20 working days. Complainants will be made aware of their right to make a formal complaint should they not be satisfied with the informal complaint outcome

 Formal complaints - the complainant will be asked to put their complaint in writing to the Registered Manager. The Registered Manager will then acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within 7 days and arrange a meeting with the complainant. The subsequent investigation will typically be completed within 21 days, although this may be longer in exceptional cases (this will be advised to the complainant). The outcome of the investigation will then be sent in writing to all parties involved. The appeal process will also be advised in this letter

 Appeals - where complainants remain dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation, they must write a responding letter to the Registered Manager detailing the reasons for their dissatisfaction. An independent panel will then review the complaint within 28 days. Following a decision by the panel, the complainant will be advised of the outcome within 7 days



Contact Details

For instances where a complainant remains dissatisfied, they can refer to the regulatory authority:

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk







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