



# Statement of Purpose



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**Operational Office:** School House, Mill Bank Farm, Top Road,  
Hooe, East Sussex. TN33 9HA

**Registered Office:** Miramar, De La Warr Parade, Bexhill-On-Sea,  
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positive partnerships ~ fostering resilience  
through inspirational tailored training

We would be pleased to provide this document in alternative formats upon request e.g. electronically, alternative language, or spoken word in an audio file etc.

Our Registered Office remains our starting point at  
Miramar, but our working office is 15 minutes away at:  
5Fostering, Mill Bank Farm, Top Road, Hooe, East Sussex TN33 9HA



What3Words: **inherit.heartened.marsh**

The building is part of Mill Bank Farm that overlooks the beautiful Pevensy marches. It was originally built as a modern open plan classroom with carpeted and washable floor areas, kitchenette, toilets and it is fully alarmed. It is a versatile building and, although some staff may work from home from time to time for environmental or the pandemic reasons for example. However, it is also timetabled to be used for administration, training workshops, celebrations and social events for staff, members and carers, and occasionally to facilitate birth family contact.

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## 1. Introduction

This statement of purpose sets out to provide information to those that need it such as the Children and Young People we care for, staff, carers, parents, social workers and other relevant stakeholders. We pride ourselves on being reflective practitioners and would welcome any feedback on this document.

This document describes:

- our aims as an agency,
- how you can contact us,
- our philosophy and ethos,
- the services that we offer,
- our management structure and staff, and
- how we adhere to standards of care and other legal requirements.

This document is publicly available and provided to members of Ofsted, our Carers and those in our Care, Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), Staff, and stakeholders of our services. Alternative more accessible versions are provided to younger children placed in our care, entitled 'My5' which is aimed to provide for Key Stage 1&2 and Key Stage 3 &4 Children and Young People.

If you would like a version edited by Children and Young People (who have also been fostered) ask any staff member, text or call 07592 202 873 and ask for the 'My.5' booklet.

We review this Statement of Purpose at least every year, so if you have any suggestions how we can improve it please do not hesitate to contact us by phone, text or email.

## 2. Principles

### 2.1. Our ethos

We believe that we should enable carers to develop resilience in Children and Young People (C&YP) inspired by the Secure Base model. We do this with an 'extended family feel' and by supporting carers with tailored training, positive partnerships, rigorous attention to how we can improve and a 24hr helpline staffed by professionals who have fostered.

### 2.2. Mission statement for 5Fostering

Our mission is for equality of access for the benefit of every Child and Young Person in our care to

provide fun and  
develop a highly **efficient and effective** fostering service  
for Children and Young People that **they would wish for**,  
that builds on carers' **personal experience**,  
uses inspiring tailored training and an ethos of **striving for better practice** to  
develop a positive, supportive, yet reflective **parenting partnership**  
between **Children and Young People** and their **carers**,  
between **carers** in support of **each other**,  
with agency **staff**, and other **professionals** that will  
provide a **secure, stimulating, nurturing** and **engaging** environment for those in our care,  
so that we may raise Children and Young People's achievement and **resilience**  
to enable them to **excel** now, and later in a life as a positive parent of **their own family**.

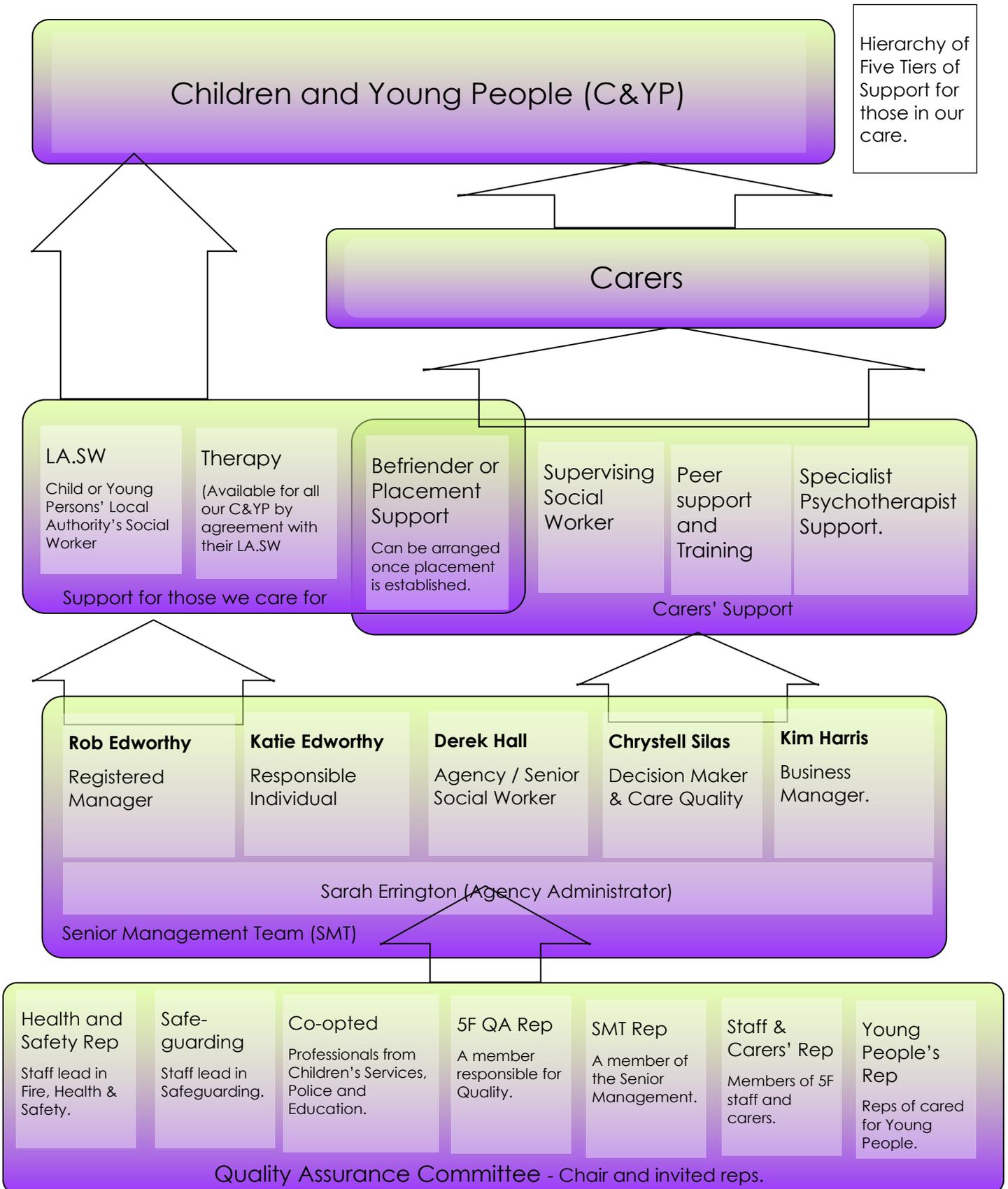
## 2.3. Our Values in Fostering

Within our overall aims for the agency we describe above we have more specific aims relating to the provision for Children and Young People in our care. These are as follows.

1. To demonstrate that the Child or Young Person in our care is the paramount focus in everything we do.
2. To develop an enduring, supportive, positive and reflective partnership that complements and enhances our personal skills and those of the team around the child or young person.
3. To use education and training combined with experience and reflection to enable us to provide increasingly attuned, emotionally skilful and erudite, positive parenting that develops and strengthens resilience in those in our care.
4. We will do this by giving C&YP opportunities to enjoy a supportive context that they have helped to compose, respect, and are willing to use to:
  - a. keep safe and exhibit protective behaviours, but have the confidence to relish managed risk;
  - b. stay physically and mentally healthy, but enjoy challenging personal achievements and emotional security;
  - c. to stay sexually healthy, respect themselves, others and the relationships between them;
  - d. enjoy a thirst for knowledge, skills and understanding, and be able to reflect and learn from a wide variety of experiences;
  - e. have interests, dreams and aspirations, endure, persevere, be versatile and be enterprising enough to strive for them;
  - f. be a valued member of the team, make a positive contribution to society and be of benefit to the global community.

### 3. Our Agency

#### 3.1. Organisational Management Structure



## 3.2. Key People –

Our team have a combined background in teaching, education, social work, business, management and fostering allowing us to understand all aspects of the agency and contribute effectively to it.

### **Rob Edworthy** – Registered Manager / Director

Experience as a Head teacher, Further Education College Director, leading staff teams from 10 to 600 staff on organisational improvement, Ofsted teaching quality, operational development, 'Every Child Matters' agenda, Child Protection, Nursery & Crèche, and programmes for Key and Functional Skills, Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.

Foster carer from 1998 to 2016.

Relevant Qualifications; First Aid, CWDC Foster Care, B.Ed(hons), and MA.SW, Level 5 Leadership in Social Care.

Job Roles:

- Registered Manager – Liaising with the rest of the team, carers, local authorities and social workers. Overall responsibility for the running of the agency
- Designated Safeguarding Officer – Responsible for Safeguarding and Child Protection.
- Information guardian - responsible for the collection, retention, disclosure, and destruction of information
- Bookkeeping – Keeping track of day-to-day expenditure

### **Katie Edworthy** – Responsible Individual / Director

Teacher, lead foster carer since 1998 to 2016, numerous training courses in issues relating to fostering including Attachment Theory, Child Protection, Safer Caring, Resilience, Physical Intervention and she was one of the first carers to achieve CWDC (Children's Workforce Development Council) Fostering Qualification.

Relevant Qualifications; CWDC Foster Carer, Level 2 Counselling, B.Ed (2:1),

Job Roles:

- Training Lead – responsible for training, foster care support and general consultancy.
- Mentor for new foster carers- Support and tutoring for new foster carers.
- Finances – Financial strategy.

### **Chrystell Silas** – Agency Decision Maker (ADM)

Having gained a BSc in Social Work Studies in 2012, Chrystell has been a Social Worker for over eight years and has experience as a child in care, as a parent of three children and as a member of an ethnic minority. Chrystell has worked with a local agency supporting families in crisis, Adult Social Care and young people's mental health.

Qualifications: BSc SW

Job Roles: • Decision Maker – She makes the final decision in the light of the fostering Panel's recommendation. • Assessment and Approval Quality – Working with the independent Panel Chairs and the Quality Assurance Committee, she oversees the Assessing Social Workers and their Supervisors' quality of assessments presented to the Panel, the quality of the Panel recommendations and their skills of scrutiny.

### **Kim Harris** – Business Manager (Business Support and Local Authority Liaison)

Kim has spent thirty years as a teacher in the UK and abroad, in addition to working for a high street bank. She has the special role of leading the 'Voice of the Child' using her skills of working with Children and Young People.

Qualifications; BA (Education).

Job Roles: • Leading the Business support Team in conjunction with the Responsible Individual • Placement Support: including gathering feedback from C&YP.

Voice of the child lead.

### **Sarah Errington** – Administrator

Sarah has been a trustee of a playgroup and a community centre as well as being treasurer and undertaking administrative work. She is currently an independent local government counsellor for a neighbouring area which we are proud to support.

Qualifications include;

- 2 x 'A' Levels in modern languages
- 10 x 'O' Levels and a GCSE

Job Roles:

- Placement Support: including gathering feedback from C&YP and arranging Buddies.
- Office Admin: minute taking, filing, auditing and data control.

**Derek Hall** (B.A., DipSW) –Agency and Senior Social Worker. He is also a highly qualified and widely experienced Social Worker in independent Fostering and Childrens Residential Homes. Derek is particularly known as a highly successful and supportive Supervising Social Worker who has a passion for supporting carers and those they care for.

Other independent persons engaged to help our agency are:

**Fran Johnson** is our independent Panel Chair who represents Children's Social Services and Children Looked After. She has spent many years in the sector as a social worker and a manager responsible for local and regional placement service teams and working on behalf of the agency liaising with local authority commissioning teams. Fran has also worked as hospital social worker in London and for a national charity supporting women and children affected by domestic violence

Fran also assists our SMT as a consultant.

**John Reid** is our independent Chair of our Quality Assurance Committee. This body comprises of representatives of education, children social services, children looked after, current carers and staff. They are the final appeal body, and scrutineers of our quarterly reports.

John is also our independent Data Protection Officer supporting the GDPR.

### 3.3. Services we provide

5Fostering will recruit, assess, approve and support foster families to provide high quality care for looked after C&YP.

5Fostering provide and support a variety of placements:

- Assessment and Recruitment of foster carers
- Long term placements
  - Permanent (long-term to 18yrs)
  - Individual
  - Sibling groups
  - From birth to a 'staying put' / 'staying close' plan
- Short & Medium term (planned)
  - StayOvers (Respite)
  - 'Short Breaks'/Respite for children outside the agency
  - Bridging Placements (up to 6 week)
- Short-term (unplanned)
  - Emergency placements (up to 4 days)
  - 24/72hr placements
- Parent and Child Arrangements
  - Addendum assessments for Carers to provide Parent and Child placements
  - Training for Carers to develop their Knowledge and Skills
  - P&C Activity banks and training materials to demonstrate parenting capacity
  - Daily Observation template, Weekly Parenting Skills check list and Weekly Reflections available on request.
  - (Please note we do not offer Parenting Assessments for Court Proceedings)
- Training for Foster Carers
  - Training Services cover a wide variety of foster care issues including:
    - Absent from Care (Unauthorised, Absconding, Missing or Lost)
    - Attachment
    - Autism / Asperger's Syndrome/Condition
    - Behaviour management
    - CHARMS and its use
    - Child Exploitation
    - County Lines
    - Emergency placements
    - Men Who Foster
    - Missing from care
    - NIPON – Not In Placement Over Night
    - PACE
    - Panel Training, e.g. Roles and Responsibilities, Good Practice
    - Preparing for Parent & Child Arrangements / Placements
    - Radicalisation
    - Roles and Responsibilities
    - Skills to Foster
    - Supporting Education

Children and Young People with disabilities are very welcome. Although some carers have considerable experience in working with Children and Young People who have a disability, we do not have carers with qualifications in supporting disability other than Makaton.

We also do not currently have any wheel-chair accessible homes.

## Services we provide or arrange for Children and Young People

- **Educational support** – We have a background in education and we understand how vital this is to young people's life chances. We can arrange support for children in mainstream provision, advise teaching staff and assist carers to find the best education available for the child in their care.
- **Therapy** – We provide for therapy for Children and Young People in our care through third parties. We fund six months' therapy (26 sessions) for Children and Young People once it has been agreed by their local authority. This can be extended by the placing Authority if they wish to provide it.
- **Organise contact with the birth family and significant people**– we facilitate and can help arrange contact for foster children with relevant people when necessary from 'letter box' to supervised arrangements. Although supervising contact is not part of the carer's agreement, arrangements can be made for the venue, transport and accompanying suitably trained sessional workers.
- **A secure and safe environment** – All foster carers and their homes have been checked for electrical safety, fire safety and safe practices. C&YP are encouraged to develop protective behaviours but to enjoy challenge and managed risk. We have a comprehensive information handling policy available on request and follow Caldecott and 'Golden Rule' principles.

**Please note that, in addition to gas and chimney safety checks which carers facilitate, we fund a 'Landlords Electrical Safety Check' for homes owned by applicants.** (We rely on the landlords statutory requirement to check their homes that are rented.)

- **We encourage 'can do' and 'have a go'** – When possible, we encourage and enable C&YP to enjoy social events, pursue hobbies and develop leisure and sporting interests. We are happy to part-fund school trips of over three nights to encourage children's attendance.
- **Careful matching of placements** – We carefully match our placements aiming for the best outcome through the most effective and compatible relationship between carer and foster Child or Young Person. We share all information we have regarding the placement during the matching process, and we personally know all of our carers like family members. We also get to know the children pretty well too!
- **Promote healthy living** – We require our carers to promote a healthy diet and lifestyle for all the C&YP we look after. Some are able to offer or introduce vegetarian diets although children are never persuaded or pressurised to change.
- **Life story work** – We encourage our carers to work with C&YP to create a document to keep track of their life and activities: to give back some of their past, celebrate their present and give identity for their future. 5Fostering will facilitate this process with specialist support if needed. We will also support access to specialists in Play Therapy and Children's Counselling.
- **'My5', 5Fostering is our agency too** – 5Fostering is committed to including C&YP in our care in the management, development and governance of our agency. In addition to canvassing their opinion and seeking feedback through our Voice of the Child champion, Children and Young People are represented on our QAC and the Fostering Panel that recommends carers uses questions they have drawn up.
- **Newsletter** – throughout the year we publish our internal newsletter to recognise and celebrate success in our carers and cared for. We run competitions, celebrate participation and herald winners as well as show off snaps of fun events and share good ideas – including those of fostering.
- **Fun** – last but by no means least we are about having fun – fun because we've been successful, fun because we're supported, and fun just because we can! We try to

provide activities during school holidays which we may use to draw out children and young people's views.

- **5F Family Fun Days and Activities**

Each school break and three times in the summer we provide 5F Days and Events that we can all go to and enjoy as one big family for free. In the past we have been to Knockhatch family adventure park, Bedgbury pinetum and forest, the Picnic and games on Bexhill Beach, Go Ape tree top adventure, Urban Jump indoor trampoline park, cinema with a fast food feast, and nearly every year (pandemic permitting) we have been to the Pantomime (oh yes we HAVE!).

### *Services we provide for Carers.*

- **24 hour on-call service** – Qualified and experienced advice on call 24/7 supporting carers. Just call the usual number **01424 211 122** and it will patch through' to one of us who is on duty. If you don't get a reply, try again in a few minutes as we may be dealing with another concern or driving.
- **Up-to-date, relevant training** – We provide frequent relevant training tailored to carers' needs supporting foster parents to provide the best outcomes for the C&YP we can. 5Fostering provides training which addresses emerging national and local agendas and all statutory requirements.
- **Prompt payment** – we provide prompt fortnightly payment direct to carer's bank accounts, and the agency provides savings on behalf of each child placed.
- **Support groups** – we facilitate mutually supportive groups for carers to resolve concerns and share their expertise and good parenting practice. Our carers often give each other mutual support and will meet outside the official support groups.
- **Mentoring for new carers** – We have experienced carers who we encourage to offer support and advice to new carers. New carers are usually 'teamed up' with a more experienced carer and they may make as much use of the support as they want.
- **Recruitment and support through the process** – we are always here to help and give advice for potential carers in the recruitment process. Our carers recognised the experience we have as carers ourselves and value the 'hands on' advice that we can give.
- **StayOver breaks** – We changed the title of respite following comments made in the sector by Children and Young People. Using the term 'respite' implied the respite was from something awful but looking after children is not awful and so it was changed to 'StayOver' to separate it from Sleepover (the difference being that a 'sleepover' has a child as the host, whereas a StayOver has a paid adult as the host)

We believe it is important for carers to take Stayovers for the benefit of those we care for, to enhance the care we provide for our young people, and to reflect common family life. 5Fostering carers are offered seven nights' respite for each six-month of continuous care to refresh their relationships, resilience, and rigour for the benefit of the Children and Young People we foster.

- **A Professional Framework** – We have a framework of roles with relevant training and remuneration that develops from a volunteer befriender, through to a highly experienced and effective carer.
- **Fun** – we will have frequent opportunities during training, community building and celebration events to relax and not take ourselves too seriously - to relieve some of the inevitable stress of our privileged roles.

## Training and Outreach Services

We provide high quality and relevant training tailored to the needs of carers. We are able to draw upon a broad knowledge of fostering and educational provision, having been foster carers, social workers and teachers ourselves. We understand the need for relevant, up to date training that motivates and inspired carers and equips them for the wide variety of placements and challenges we offer.

We deliver the 'Skills to Foster' programme as a starting point for our carers but are able use everyday examples to put this into context. We also feel it is essential for carers to be trained on attachment theory, secure base, the promoting resilience, safeguarding, physical intervention, first aid, the principles, policies and procedures of 5Fostering and many more. Carer training is ongoing throughout carers' careers and we encourage staff and carers to undertake non-accredited and accredited courses such as the Early Years and Positive Parenting, Diplomas in Social Care through to post graduate support.

We also offer outreach training services which include;

Independent Social Work

Training for carers and parents; such as 'Skills to Foster', Positive Parenting, Self Esteem, Resilience & Attachment, Behaviour Management, Parent & Child Fostering etc

### 3.4. this Approval process to become a 5Fostering carer

Becoming a foster carer can be a long and stressful process but the benefit of having the opportunity to make a difference in many people's lives is well worth it. We are on call to help at any stage of the process and give advice, support and guidance whenever needed.

#### Step 1: Enquiry

There are five ways that members of the public can express an interest and request an application form:

- Phone 01424 211 122,
- email [office@5fostering.co.uk](mailto:office@5fostering.co.uk), or
- text 07592 202 873
- post a letter to 'Miramar', De La Warr Parade, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex. TN40 1NR
- or in person – at an approach during one of our public events.

Further details are available via our website at [www.5fostering.co.uk](http://www.5fostering.co.uk). We are often talking to people about 5Fostering in the Bexhill, Hastings, Eastbourne and across the 1066 areas so members of the public are very welcome to discuss fostering or our specialist training programmes with our team there.

If the enquirer wishes we will arrange a home visit then or by phone when it is more convenient.

#### Step 2: Home visit & Application form

A 5Fostering member will visit the enquirer at home (or on MS Teams) and discuss their queries, concerns, possibilities, the fun of fostering and a 'warts and all' realistic view. They will make some simple observations and give advice on the property and potentials such as possible types of fostering and introduce the agency. They will not 'sell' the agency as we believe this important life change of the family must be led by the applicant. If the 5Fostering member thinks it appropriate, enquirers may be left with an application form and the application will not progress further until this is received.

### *Step 3: (Form F Part 1) Records and Identity checks.*

Approximate Week 1 to 12 (please note Step **three**, **four** and **six** may be at the same time)

Once the application form is received, an Assessing Social Worker (ASW) will be appointed, and the application will progress with deadlines set.

Data checks are made, and reports are requested from the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS), Local Authority, credit checks, Social Media checks, employer, birth children's school, and the applicants' GP. All disclosures are requested with the applicants' informed authority, and they should note that they are not automatically excluded if there are criminal incidents or medical history disclosed.

We will also be contacting the referees supplied by applicant, their workplace and their family members. These will cover an historical perspective of the applicants, their interaction with children and/or young people, their work ethic, social interaction and at least one will be of a professional occupation (e.g., teacher, solicitor, nurse, social worker, architect etc).

Applicant's referees will be contacted for their contribution and the Assessing Social Worker will follow this up with an interview.

There may also be

### *Step 4: Induction Training (including 'Skills to Foster')*

This will be held over a number of sessions and one 'catch up', during the period of assessment and includes 'My Family Fosters' which is delivered for the children of the applicants.

We are very keen on reflective practice and tailored training for all carers and staff. New carers will complete basic training such as the TSDS that must be completed in the first year, and safeguarding, health and safety, Paediatric First Aid, equality and diversity and any specialist foster training and accredited programmes.

### *Step 5: Midway review Stage 1 Review*

Approximate Week 8 to 12

The ASW and their Supervising Social Worker (SSW) will meet to formally review the assessment so far and consider if it is appropriate for the assessment to continue. The outcome of this meeting will be discussed with the applicant and the recommendation will be given to the Agency Registered Manager (ARM). This is not to decide if Stage 1 is completed but rather to view progress and the emerging evidence of appropriateness to foster as the collation of Stage 1 evidence may not be completed until the point of presentation to the Panel.

If Stage 1 is completed before Stage 2, a review of the assessment stage takes place and recommendation made to the ADM. Following a decision, the Applicants will be formally informed and the change in their rights are explained.

### *Step 6: (Form F part 2) Assessment and interviews/references*

Approximate Week 4 to 24

At this stage references will be followed up and referees interviewed by our specialist ASWs (Assessing Social Workers). Applicants and members of their household will also have in-depth 1:1 interviews that explore relationships and parenting skills. But, again, applicants should rest assured that this is a pragmatic exploration of their parenting, and how ready the applicants' house and household are for fostering.

Interviews and references may include second opinion visits and, if applicants are changing agencies the assessor will attend the previous agencies to read carer's files in preparation for the application to transfer.

## Stage 7: Decision of the Panel

Approximate Week 16 to 24 – Presentation of Application to Panel

Once the ASW has collected all information and made their assessment with the support of their SSW, a recommendation will be made to the 5Fostering Panel. This panel is made up of members who may have the following expertise.

- a highly qualified and independent chair of panel
- professionals who have extensive experience in children's services,
- education specialists,
- other specialists and experts in fields relating to children's care,
- C&YP representatives,
- colleague carer representatives
- 5Fostering staff members who have not been involved in the assessment

They will then consider the submitted evidence, and then meet with the applicant and their supporter if they would like one. They will then consider the recommendation and either agree with the recommendation or indicate where this is not yet achieved.

Their recommendation is then recorded as minutes of the Panel Session' deliberations and decision which, when completed, is presented to the 5Fostering 'Agency Decision Maker' (ADM). The ADM makes the final determination and will inform the applicants / foster carers verbally within two working days, and in writing within five working days.

## Stage 8: Approval

Weeks approximate 17 to 25 - Approval

Once the decision is made, the applicant is informed verbally within two working days and then in writing by the fifth day. If successful, the candidate carer will be formally welcomed into our agency and will be an approved registered 5Fostering Carer.

The carers' Assessing Social Worker will introduce them to their new Supervising Social Worker. At this meeting they may be presented with the following, but this will be dependent upon pragmatism:

- Foster Carers' Certificate of Approbation,
- Foster Care and GDPR Agreement,
- 'Standpoints' our Foster Care Handbook,
- CHARMS Log-in arrangements.

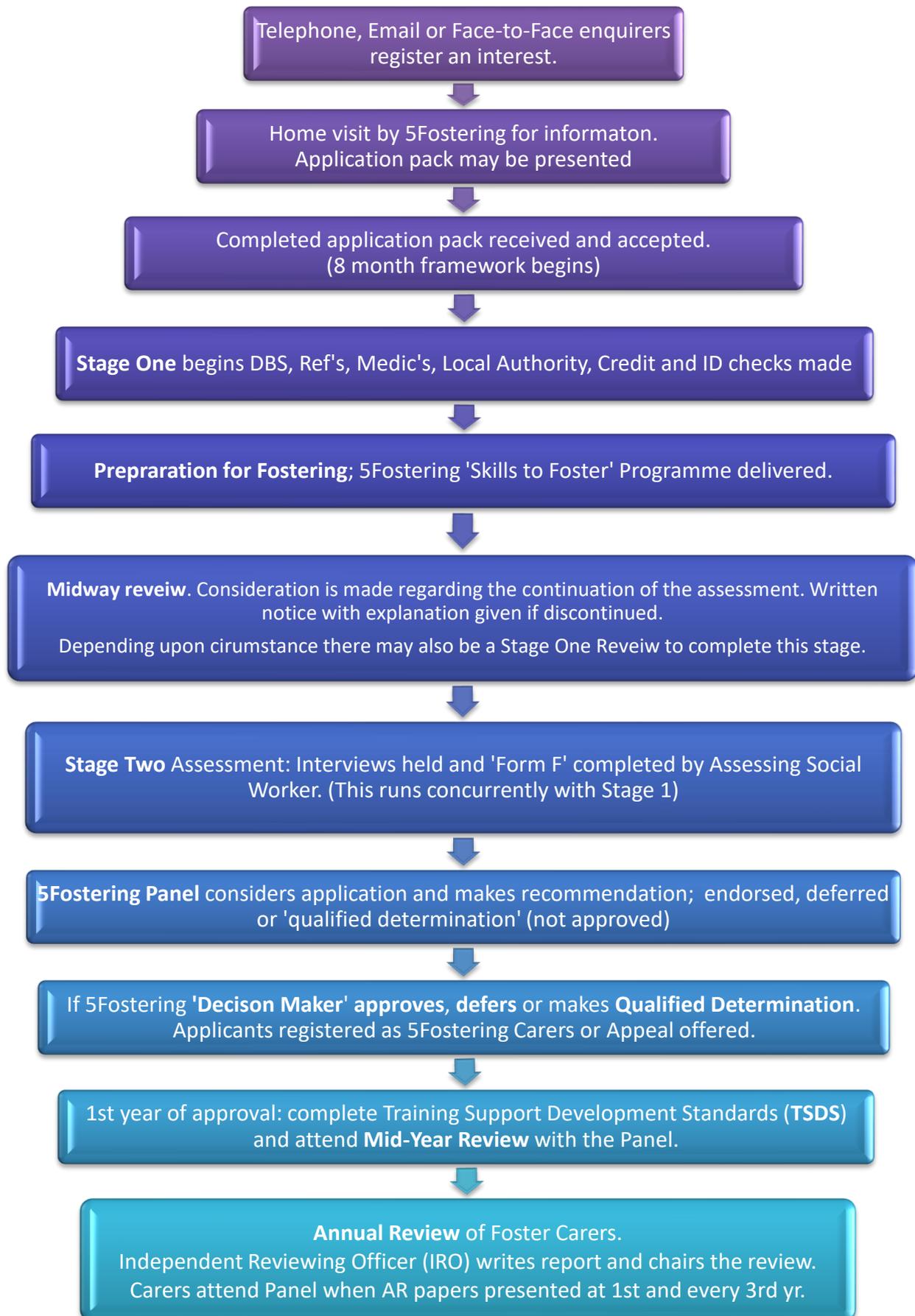
If the decision maker decides not to approve the application, they will inform the candidate of their reason for this 'qualifying determination' in writing and the candidate will have the right to appeal to the QAC committee of the agency or the Government's Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) within 28 days.

(<http://www.independentreviewmechanism.org.uk/fostering#top>).

Independent Review Mechanism (IRM),  
Unit 4, Pavilion Business Park,  
Royds Hall Road,  
Wortley,  
LEEDS.  
LS12 6AJ

Telephone: 0845 450 3956 Fax: 0845 450 3957  
Email: [irm@baaf.org.uk](mailto:irm@baaf.org.uk)

## Diagram of 5Fostering approval pathway



### 3.5. Referral process

The referrals are a key part of the fostering process. It is essential that we match the C&YP to suitable homes in order to utilise the carer skills with the child's needs.

#### *Unplanned Placements*

Carers will be prepared for emergency placements and will be put forward where appropriate once a decision based on the in-depth local knowledge of the family and their availability, having discussed briefly the child's needs with the officer placing. The arrival of the child may be managed sensitively as the first sight the child has of the carers may be at their front door.

#### *Planned Placements*

##### *Initial enquiry*

A placement is requested by a local authority's social services (a 'referral') via a telephone, fax or email. This is recorded on our system along with minimum key information regarding the request (e.g. initials, DoB, location, type of placement, special needs and any other specific requirements that may be included in their risk assessment).

##### *Matching*

We consider our carers' availability and their suitability for a match with the child or young adults' needs. We will not suggest a placement that we consider having any likelihood to be unsuccessful or to be beyond the expertise and experience of the carers. We may offer the placing authority an anonymised Foster Carer Profile of the prospective carers at this point.

When considering P&C placements for matching with one of our carers, a preplacement planning meeting is expected between the LA social worker their team manager with the 5Fostering SSW and possibly the Foster and birth parent. This meeting is to set up a contract, agree roles and responsibilities/expectations, agree what is required from the parent in relation to her child/children and most importantly to assess risk. This may be undertaken by video call.

5Fostering has also used an ISW/consultant to explore complex placement requests and has been able to draw on knowledge, experience and expertise

##### *Contacting carers*

Having established a potential match, we will contact the carer to inform them of the request and the needs of the Child or Young Person. When the carer feels competent and confident to address the needs of the Child or Young Person then, and only then, will the placement be offered to the placing agency. Local authorities will request carer's 'Form F' if they believe a Child or Young Person could be placed with them.

##### *Initial introductions*

The placing authority will be sent a picturesque Welcome Book which in a friendly and homely way presents the family and supporting information with many recent photographs of the home and family members (including pets).

Ideally, carers will go to meet the child prior to placement and introductions will be managed and at an appropriate pace for the Child or Young Person. Once both parties

feel comfortable, the placement will begin, and remuneration will follow on a Wednesday fortnight cycle after the first night's stay.

### 3.6. Compliments and Complaints

We welcome compliments and take concerns and complaints very seriously.

We are keen to receive any feedback about how you think we are doing, whether it is positive or negative.

There are many ways you can file a complaint or feedback to us, such as

by **telephone** on – 01424 211 122,

by **email** to [feedback@5fostering.co.uk](mailto:feedback@5fostering.co.uk)

by speaking to any member of staff **in person**.

**You will not get a negative reaction.**

Once we initially receive a complaint, we will react accordingly depending on the seriousness of the complaint and then the person or persons involved will be informed of the matter and the situation or occurrence will be investigated. If the complaint is upheld changes will be made so the issue does not occur again, and this will be fed back to the complainant. If it is not found to be as presented, this will also be fed back to the complainant with any actions that were taken.

If the problem persists then a formal enquiry into the incident will take place which will involve a subcommittee of at least two members of the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).

If the complainant is not satisfied with the result of their complaint, they should contact our QAC in confidence by written letter and the complaint will be handled by the chairman of the QAC.

If the complaint is not satisfied with the response, they can contact

their **own Social Worker**,

their Child or Young Persons' **Social Worker**, or

or the **Childrens Commissioner for England** 0800 528 0731

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

or by post at:

Sanctuary Buildings,  
20 Great South Street,  
London,  
SW1P 3BP

As a final resort in the complaints procedure, the complainant could contact **Ofsted** directly on 0300 123 1231 or [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

However, we would have hoped to have sorted the complaint out long before then.

### 3.7. Standards of care and National Minimum Standards

We will at least meet and endeavour to exceed the National Minimum Standards set out by the fostering services.

5Fostering will:

- Be guided and scrutinised by the QAC, an overseeing representative body This committee Conform and respond to all statutory and regulatory frameworks pertinent to Looked After Children and Fostering including all Regulations and Requirements.
- Meet and strive to exceed all the requirements as directed by Ofsted.
- Endeavour to demonstrate and be recognised for a quality of fostering that is exemplary in practice and to be a sector lead.

### 3.8. Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the essential focus of everything we do and the subject of a substantial document entitled 'Safeguarding: Principles, Policy and Procedures'. This supplementary PPPS (such as Radicalisation, Child Slavery, FGM etc) and all other Principles Policies and Procedures (PPP's) are available from the CHARMS Document Store/Downloads or by requesting them from your Supervising Social Worker of the 5Fostering Office.



Drawn by EJ (11yrs)

### 3.9. Fire safety

Fire safety is included in our Fire, Health and Safety Principles, Policy and Procedures. Having personal experience of domestic house fires, we aim to exceed all fire regulations.

During the home verification stage of the application process 5Fostering will check the fire safety of each property by ensuring that smoke and/or heat detectors and fire blankets are installed on each floor of the property particularly in the kitchen areas. We will also make sure that our carers develop an evacuation strategy with the children or young people of how to react in a fire situation and the most appropriate route. Fire prevention officers will be encouraged to attend properties.

### 3.10. Consultation with people using the agency

Those who use our services vary from large institutions to children in care. We need all of their voices to be heard. Our policy for children is included in the 'My5' document available on request, and they are invited to share their voice with our Voice of the Child Champion, and attend the QAC and, if appropriate, interviewing panels.

We also aim to have representatives of all local stakeholders on our QAC that steers the ethics of the agency, Such bodies as the local authority, health, education and social services who could present a view from their service and provide a current perspective on issues and concerns.

### 3.11. Care and Placement plans, and Outcomes Tracking

Care and Placement plans are an essential and legally required tool to help children and carers plan support and aim for outcomes. Social services will have composed the Care Plan or it equivalent which will have been decided in court regarding each Child and Young Person.

When children are placed with a fostering family, their Placement Plan will apply the Care Plan to the provision that the carers are expected to offer. This will be devised by the Local Authority and be agreed with 5Fostering – usually at a Placement Agreement Meeting held within a few days of the Child or Young Person first arriving.

In addition, 5Fostering sets and monitors outcomes. This notes progress towards a number of elements relating to the National Minimum Standards

We also periodically review a Risk Assessment of the child's needs with its Signs of Safety Risk Management plan and accompanying Individual Safer Caring Strategy. This may be reviewed every six months, three months or at each supervision/monthly update of the child or young person's progress.

### 3.12. Inclusion

5Fostering is proud to embrace all aspects of equality and diversity throughout our company regarding recruitment and general ethos.

We believe in providing equality of access, celebrating diversity and feel this is essential for the best outcomes for the children. We do not discriminate on any grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief or marital/civil partnership status and would welcome any observations of our practice whether they are positive or highlight challenges for us.

## 4. Closing comments

5Fostering is a small family-run independent fostering agency unique in the level of experience and expertise in the senior management team and ethos of reflective learning and extended family feel. The team is passionate in providing the most effective support and encouragement so that young people and children may develop the attachment, experience and resilience of the Secure Base Model, and the positive relationships needed to be successful and fulfilled adults;

*positive partnerships ~ fostering resilience  
through inspirational tailored training*

Rob & Katie Edworthy

Jan 2022

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 : **inherit.heartened.marsh**

01424 211 122

### **Registered Office:**

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