



# Statement of Purpose



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positive partners ~ fostering resilience

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.

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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 the standards of care and other legal documentation.

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 two levels of access; Key Stage 1&2, and Key Stage 3 &4.

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 enabling carers to develop resilience in Children and Young People (C&YP) inspired by the Secure Base model is a key aim for our fostering. We do this by supporting carers with tailored training, positive partnerships, buddy mentors, rigorous attention to quality and 24hr helpline staffed by professionals who have fostered.

### 2.2. Mission statement for 5Fostering

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

- ...develop a highly **efficient and effective** fostering service . . .
- ...for Children and Young People that **they would wish for** . . .
- ...that builds on carers' **personal experience** and . . .
- ...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 . . .
- ...with other **professionals** that will . . .
- ...provide a fun, **secure, stimulating, nurturing** and **engaging** environment for those in our care,
- ...to raise Children and Young People's achievement and **resilience** to enable them to **excel** now and later, in a life with **their own family**.

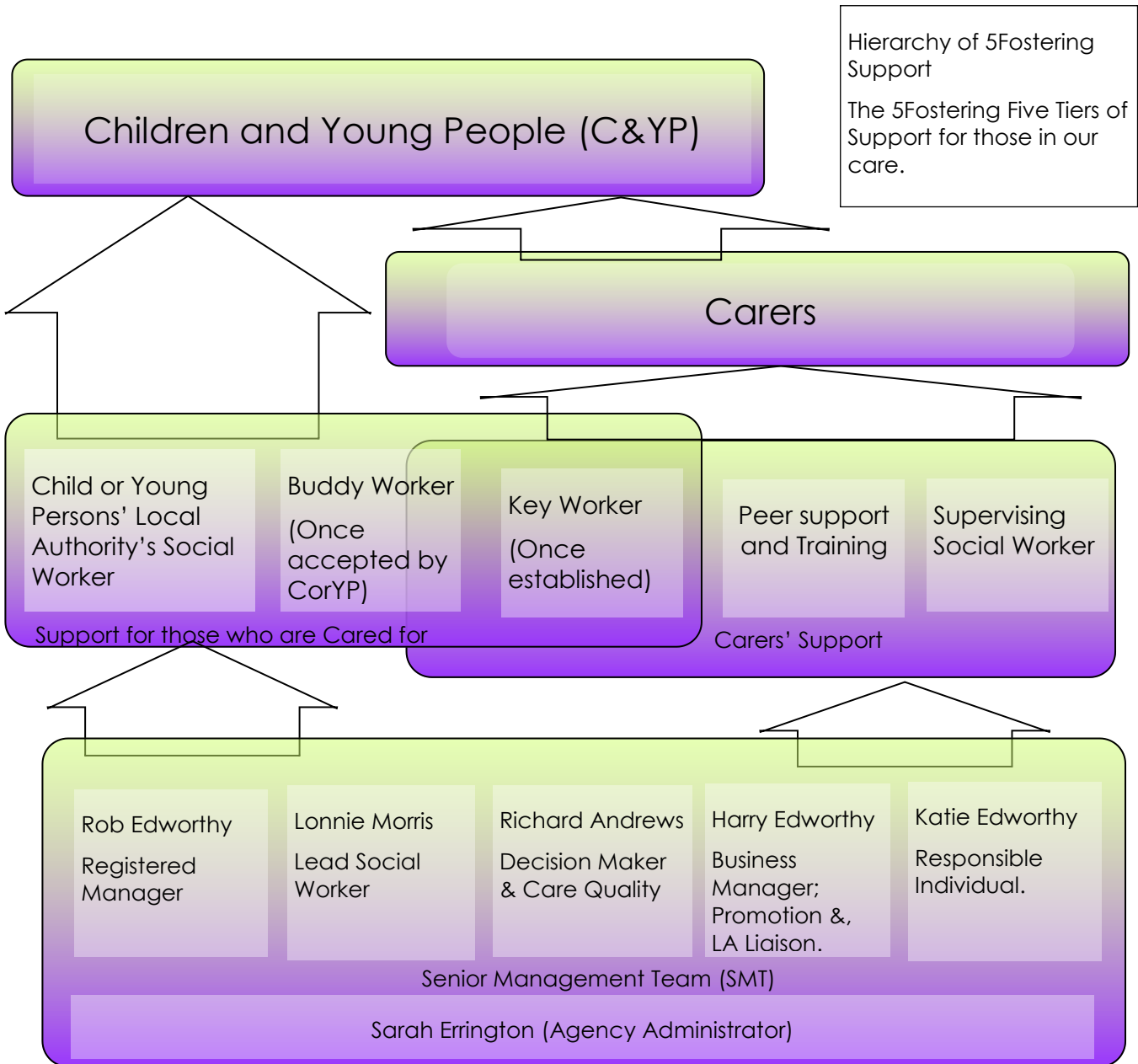
### 2.3. Our Values in Fostering

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

1. To demonstrate the Child or Young Person in our care is the paramount focus in everything that we do.
2. To develop an enduring, supportive, positive and reflective partnership that complements and enhances our personal skills and those of the team.
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 the greatest possible 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, and endure, persevere, and be versatile and 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

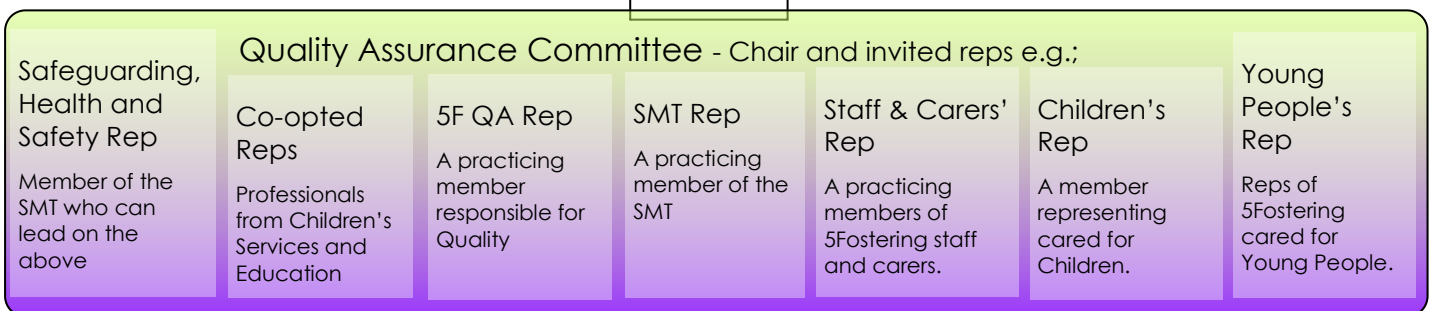
#### 3.1. Organisational Management Structure and Staff



Hierarchy of 5Fostering Support  
The 5Fostering Five Tiers of Support for those in our care.

#### 3.2. Key People -

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#### Our Team

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 since 1998 to present.

Qualifications; First Aid, CWDC Foster Care, B.Ed(hons), and MA.SW.

Currently Studying 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 present, numerous training courses in issues relating to fostering including; attachment theory, children protection, safer caring, resilience, physical intervention and one of the first carers in the area to achieve CWDC (Children's Workforce Development Council) fostering qualification.

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

#### Job Roles:

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

#### **Richard Andrews** – Agency Decision Maker

With and MA in Social Work Studies, Richard has a vast experience working within Duty and Assessment settings as a Senior Practitioner to the same role within youth support team and across children's services.

#### Job Roles:

- Decision Maker – He makes the final decision in the light of the fostering panel's recommendation.
- Assessment and Approval Quality – Working with the independent panel chairs his role is to oversee the Assessing Social Workers and their Supervisors' quality of assessments that are presented to the panel, and the quality of the panel and their skills of scrutiny.

Qualifications: MA, DipSW, HDip, Practice Teacher's Award

#### **Lonnie Morris** - Lead Social Worker (Supervision and Placements)

Having worked in a variety of Children's Services, latterly as an independent social worker, she has specialised in Fostering Services and has gained a considerable expertise in this area.

Qualifications; Cert SW

#### Job Roles:



- Supervision and Key support contact for foster carers – organising and liaising with social workers and carers and maintaining regular contact with all our carers, supporting them and dealing with any queries they have.
- Assessment and Supervision – supervising assessing social workers and developing our initial assessment process to become foster carers. Also supporting and developing our annual reviews process, assessments of friends and family members' of foster carers and additional assessments for, and of, parent and child arrangements
- Assisting in Promotion strategies – leading liaison strategies with local authorities.

#### **Harry Edworthy** – Business Manager (Promotion and Local Authority Liaison)

Having been a key part in a fostering family for 16 years and worked in an independent fostering agency as an office assistant, research into developing new IFA's, Harry understands how the service works and the importance of the fostering agency in creating stable, long-term placements that ensure the Child or Young Person can maximise their opportunities in the future.

Qualifications; BA(hons) Business Management.

Job Roles:

- Liaising with Local Authorities in regards to child placements.
- Advertising and Marketing- leading agency advertising and raising awareness of fostering and 5Fostering.
- Recruitment – supporting home visits to discuss fostering with carers prior to applications to 5Fostering carer.

#### **Sarah Errington** – Administrator

Sarah has been a trustee of playgroup and a community centre as well, being treasurer and undertaking administrative work.

Qualifications include;

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

Job Roles:

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

Others engaged with our agency are:

**Lisa Day-Smith** is our Assessing Social Worker who undertakes our extensively extended BAAF Form F foster care assessments.

**Bianca Robinson** is our Independent Reviewing Officer who will considers annual reviews of foster carers and make recommendations to our Agency Decision Maker.

**Chrystell Silas-Bashorun** is our independent Panel Chair who represents Childrens Social Services and Children Looked After

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

### 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

Additional assessment available for

- Parent & Child arrangements
  - Children with life-limiting conditions
  - Permanence
- Long term placements
  - Individual
  - Sibling groups
  - From birth to 'moving on' plan
- Short & Medium term (planned)
  - Respite
  - 'Short Breaks' for children outside the agency
  - Pre-adoption placement
  - Parent and Child Arrangements
- Short-term (unplanned)
  - Emergency placements
  - 24/72hr placements
- Training for Foster Carers
  - Training Services regarding a wide variety of Foster Care issues including:
    - Skills to Foster
    - Behaviour management
    - Autism / Asperger's Syndrome/condition
    - Supporting Education
- Outreach Services
 

We offer services to families and children before they are in local authority care, and may be 'in need' or 'in need of protection'. This includes general support and support of families who may be included in a child protection plan. This is all under the guidance of the local authority lead social worker.

  - Positive Parenting
  - Intensive Family Interventions
  - Any intervention or 'Key Worker' work arranged under the guidance of the Local Authority Social Worker

Children and Young People with disabilities are very welcome. Although carers have considerable experience in working with Children and Young People who have a disability, we do not have carers with qualifications yet other than Makaton and Sign language or 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 therapy for children and young people in our care. We provide 6 months therapy for children and young people once agreed by their local authority which can be expanded by the placing authority.
- **Organise contact with the birth family and significant people through their placement** – we facilitate and can help arrange contact for foster children with relevant people when necessary from 'letter box' to supervised arrangements. Although supervising supervision 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 are checked for safety and good practices and any concerns are addressed. 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.
- **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.
- **Placement decided through careful matching process** – 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.
- **Promote healthy living** – We require our carers to promote a healthy diet and lifestyle for all the C&YP we look after.
- **Life story work** – We encourage our carers to work with C&YP to create a document to keep track of their life; to give back some of their past, celebrate their present and give identity for their future. 5Fostering will facilitate this process with expert support if needed. We also have access to support by 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 feedback, Children and Young People are represented on our QAC and the Fostering Panel that recommends carers.
- **Fun** – last but by no means least we are about having fun – fun because we have achieved, fun because we're well supported, and fun just because we can!

**Coming up -** We currently developing a Buddy/Befriending system to support the C&YP in our care. This aims to help them through troubled times by being an outlet outside of the family group with an unofficial confidante who can support and recognise achievements. This is often identified in research as being core in the development of resilience.

### *Services we provide for Carers.*

- **24 hour on-call service** – Qualified and experienced advice on call 24/7 supporting carers.
- **Up-to-date, relevant training** – We provide frequent relevant training tailored to carers needs supporting carers to provide the best outcomes for the C&YP. 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.
- **Support groups** – we facilitate mutually supportive groups for carers to resolve concerns and share their expertise and good parenting.
- **Mentoring for new carers** – We have experienced carers who offer support and advice to new carers.
- **Placement through careful matching** – we carefully match our placements to create the greatest opportunity for the placement to be compatible and successful for the carer and

the Child or Young Person. Where possible, history, interests, ethnicity, religion and character are all considered when placing children.

- **Recruitment and support through the process** – we are always here to help and give advice for potential carers in the recruitment process.
- **Respite breaks** – respite is important for the benefit of those we care for, to enhance the care we provide and to reflect common family life. 5Fostering Carers are offered seven nights' respite for four months' continuous care to refresh their relationships, resilience and rigour.
- **A Professional Framework** – We have a framework of roles with relevant training and remuneration that develops from a volunteer 'Buddy' 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.

### *Outreach Training and 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 with us 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 services which include;

Independent Social Work

Panel Advice

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

We also offer outreach support to **families in need** and families which **children in need of protection**. This is a tailored service dependent upon the needs of the lead Local Authority Social Worker.

### **3.4. 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 – as 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 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) and their supervisor (SSW) 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, 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 ailments recorded.

We will also be contacting the six referees supplied by applicant families. 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 may follow this up with an interview.

### ***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 evidences 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. If it is decision is made to continue or not, 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.

### ***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 evidences, 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 suggest 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'. 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 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 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)

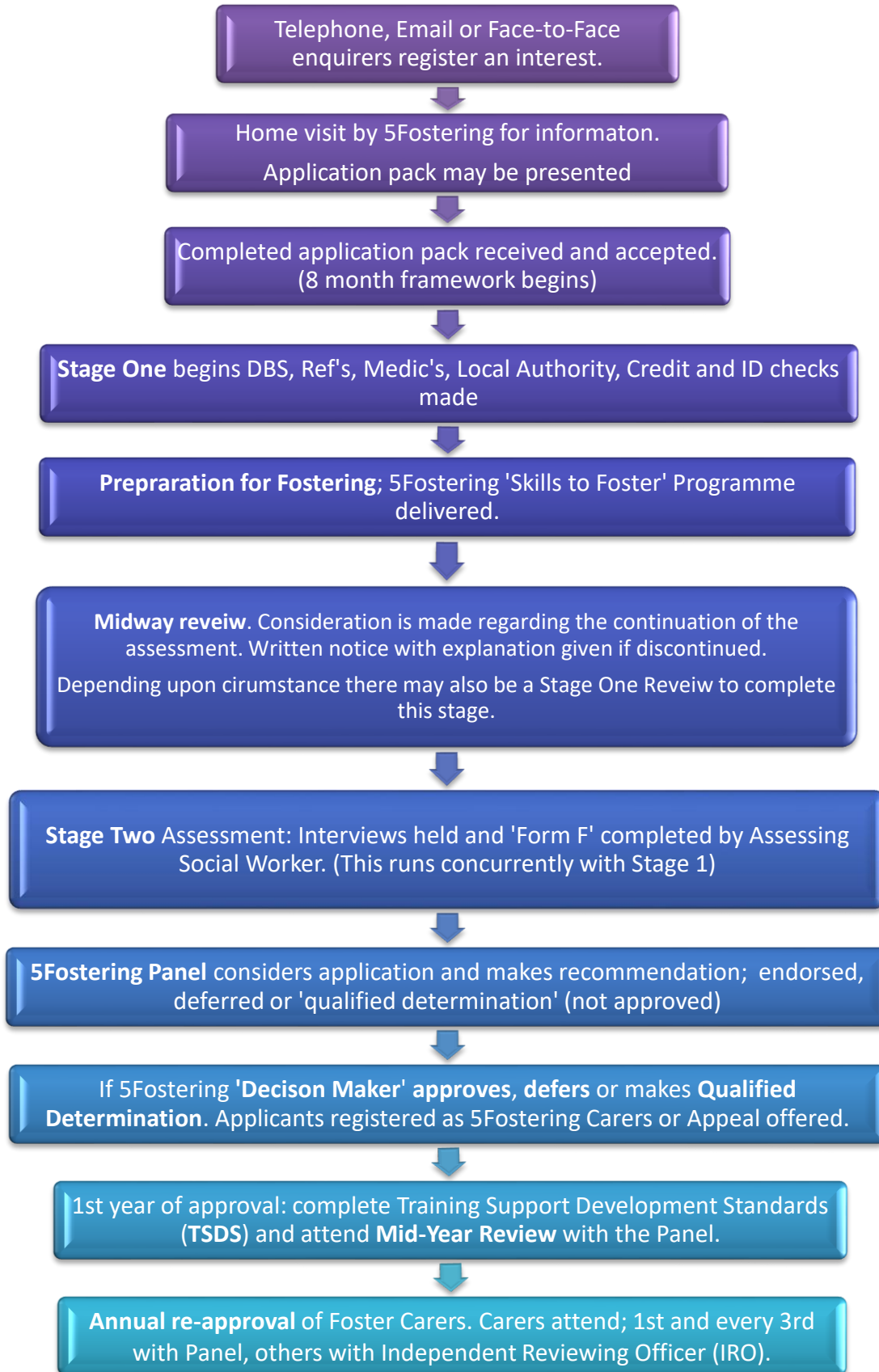
**Diagram of 5Fostering approval pathway**

Figure 1- Flow diagram of Carer Approval



### **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 to have any likelihood to be unsuccessful or to be beyond the expertise and experience of the carers. We may offer the placing authority an anonymised profile of the prospective carers at this point.

##### ***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, fax on 01424 234 676, by **email** to [feedback@5fostering.co.uk](mailto:feedback@5fostering.co.uk) or 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 Child or Young Persons' **Social Worker**, or their **own Independent Social Worker**, or the **Children's Rights Director** on 0800 528 0731 or by post at

Ofsted,  
Aviation House,  
125 Kingsway,  
London,  
WC2B 6SE.

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 includes carers and C&YP who have been looked after and has authority over the SMT)
- 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 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 and all other Principles Policies and Procedures (PPP's) are available from the 5Fostering Office.

### **3.9. Fire safety**

Fire safety is included in our 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.

We do this by formally hearing opinions through such systems as our QAC who have the authority to request the chair of SMT resign, and mentors eliciting opinions of C&YP through the Buddy or mentoring system. C&YP have representation through their representative on the QAC.

We also aim to have representatives of 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, 5F Support Plans**

Care and Placement plans are an essential and legally required tool to help children and carers understand and make plans for the future. Social services will have composed the Care Plan, which will have been agreed in court regarding each Child and Young Person (C&YP).

Each Placement Plan will apply the Care Plan to the provision expected of the carers. This will be devised by the Local Authority and be agreed with 5Fostering.

In addition, 5fosteing apply an internal document called the Support Plan. This records essential information for the carer; assesses risk, attachment and resilience; composes a development plan that celebrates the effectiveness of carers.

### 3.12. Equality and Diversity

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

We believe in equality and diversity and feel it is essential to create 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.

## 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. 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 as with the Secure Base Model and the positive relationships needed to be successful and fulfilled adults;

positive partnerships fostering resilience.