



## Statement of Purpose



### Registered Office:

Family Fostering Ltd, Office G9, Marlowe Innovation Centre, Marlowe Way  
Ramsgate, Kent. CT12 6FA

Registered Manager: Debra Atkin (DipSW)  
Responsible Individual: Teresa Morgan (DipSW)

Family Fostering Ltd Company No: 89000967  
Ofsted Registration: SC477723  
Ofsted: Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester. M1 2WD

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## Introduction

Family Fostering is an Independent Fostering Provider established in 2014 by Debi Atkin and Teresa Morgan, both professionally qualified, registered social workers, with 36 years

of collective experience in Fostering. Their shared vision and passion for empowering foster carers and improving outcomes for children and young people was their inspiration for setting up their own bespoke fostering service based in Kent. They are both actively involved in the day to day running of the service; Debi as the Registered Manager and Teresa as the Service Manager and Responsible Individual.

Family Fostering is a small, family orientated fostering service with a therapeutic ethos committed to staying small to ensure personalised, high quality, practical, emotional and therapeutic support is provided to all foster carers and the children in their care. Family Fostering recognises the complexities involved in fostering and fully acknowledges the invaluable role foster carers play in caring for children and young people.

## **Mission Statement**

To provide our fostering families with a secure base within which they are equipped and enabled to provide safe, nurturing and loving homes to young people unable to live with their birth families. Working holistically with a therapeutic ethos, we will ensure that each child/young person is fully supported through their psychological recovery and enabled to build their resilience and realise their unique potential.

## **National Legislative & Policy framework**

Family Fostering Ltd is managed in accordance with the principles outlined in the Children's Act 1989, Fostering Services Regulations 2011 and Amendments 2013, The National Minimum Standards 2011, The Care Standards Act 2000., Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010, The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review & Fostering Services (miscellaneous amendments) Regulations 2013, The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2015 Assessment and approval of foster carers, Amendments to the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations. Volume 4: Fostering Services July 2013.

Family Fostering Ltd is registered (URN: SC477723) with and inspected by Ofsted. Family Fostering Limited has organisational membership with Fostering Network. Individual membership with Foster Talk is provided for all approved foster carers.

## **Aims and Objectives**

- To provide a core team of qualified, experienced and committed staff who are able to holistically support foster carers in the fostering task.

- Provide therapeutic support, supervision, training and resources to assist foster carers in caring for children who have experienced trauma.
- To access external resources to support these children post trauma recovery and meet their developmental needs.
- To ensure our work is underpinned by the most recent research around trauma and developing resilience in young people.
- To focus on enabling each individual child to develop positive aspirations and begin to realise their unique potential at a pace tailored to them.
- To further develop the Service in collaboration with our foster families and our children to continually improve their outcomes.

### **Family Fostering seek to deliver on its aims by:**

- Continually developing the service to ensure foster carers deliver effective re-parenting to enable children to experience a positive and restorative family experience.
- Supporting children to engage in developing important life skills through education and socially constructive opportunities.
- Ensuring children and young people benefit from the support and encouragement they receive to achieve a more stable, secure and resilient developmental path to adulthood.
- Having a therapeutic approach underpinning the service.
- Striving to deliver long term stability and support through sustainable foster placements.
- Recruiting, assessing, training, supporting, reviewing and retaining individuals/families who wish to deliver therapeutic fostering and have a commitment to working in partnership with Family Fostering.
- Working with Local Authorities to achieve better outcomes for each child in relation to health and wellbeing, education and skills and preparedness for adulthood.
- Advocating for each child in relation to meeting their needs and supporting their aspirations. Equally, encouraging and empowering each child to engage in their own planning and decision-making process.
- Continually develop links with therapeutic practitioners to provide the highest quality foster care service responsive to the identified recovery needs of the child.
- Promoting safer caring through robust policies & procedures, quality training, partnership working with other professionals and the use of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).'

- Ensuring that foster carers have an easily accessible support structure that is professional and provides additional resources as necessary to support the foster placements.
- Respecting and promoting the rights of each individual irrespective of their race, culture, sexual orientation, gender, ability, religion and linguistic background and to challenge discriminatory practice.
- Commitment to the professional development of both staff and foster carers by providing statutory, mandatory and specialist training which equips foster carers and their families in their role.
- Continually maintaining, reviewing and updating policies and procedures to comply with legislative and statutory requirements and good practice.

## Caring For Children and Young People



Our vision is to strive for longevity and permanency in placements, recognising stability is fundamental to effectively supporting children and young people in their psychological recovery. This is achieved through stringent matching to ensure children are matched with a foster family capable of meeting their assessed needs. Our focus will be on securing long term and permanent placements wherever children are unable to return to their birth families, whilst recognising the significant difference foster carers can make to children and young people even during brief placements. Our commitment to working in partnership

with all agencies involved in children's care will ensure care planning is rigorous and each child is fully supported.

We accept the following placement types

- Emergency and respite
- Short term
- Long term
- Shared care
- Solo placements
- Sibling group placements
- Children/young people differently abled

We also provide the following services:

- Supervision of contact
- Escort and transport for professional appointments
- Psychological and therapeutic services
- Life Story Work
- Life Coach/ Outreach Worker
- Autism Specialist Support
- Health Promotion Specialist



## Safeguarding Children



Family Fostering Safeguarding Procedures lay down a clear format for the reporting of any child protection matter to the Registered Manager. The overriding aim is to ensure the protection of children/young people. The Registered Manager will seek to ascertain accurate details of any allegation and will liaise with the child's placing authority, the Local Authority Designated Officer and the area authority in which the foster carer(s) reside. A joint decision will be made about whether there is a need for further safeguarding action in respect to protecting the child or children.

As a preventative measure, stringent checks are completed prior to foster carer's approval and employment of all staff and updated within legislative timescales. For full details please request a copy of our Safeguarding Policy.

## Children Missing from Care

Family Fostering aims to ensure that all foster carers will support and nurture the children in their care so that they are kept safe and secure and therefore lessen the risk of going missing. However, in recognition that there are many reasons why young people go missing, we will ensure that Supervising Social Workers and our Foster Carers, follow our procedure according to the guidance in the Kent Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB)

procedures and protocols for 'Safeguarding Children Who Run Away and Go Missing. We have adopted the Missing From Care Policy produced by the Kent Forum in partnership with Fostering Network and Kent Police. This will be used alongside the relevant individual Local Authorities' missing policies and the relevant police force/s' missing protocols. As an independent provider we will always adhere to the above LA policies and police protocols in the first instance. We ensure that all of our foster carers have received and follow the child or young person's local authority policy. Our foster carers will be trained and guided in preventative measures as well as following procedures if their young person goes missing.

For full information please request a copy of our Missing Persons Policy.

## **Children's & Young People's Guide to Foster Care**

In recognition that children and young people are differently abled our children and young people's guides are not age specific. In cooperation with the child's/young person's social worker, we will determine which guide is most appropriate and how best to provide it to them.

## **Children and Young People's Participation in the Service**

We are committed to ensuring children and young people's voices are heard and that their views are taken into account when decisions are made about them. We are passionate about involving our young people in the development of our service and we seek to ascertain their views in the following ways:

- Initial Feedback Forms
- Foster Carers review of approval.
- Social activities and participation groups
- A dedicated email address, [speakup@familyfostering.org](mailto:speakup@familyfostering.org)
- Social Worker Visits
- Unannounced visits
- Reviews/ Personal Education Plan Meetings.

## **Compliments, Complaints and Allegations**

All comments, compliments and complaints provide vital information to inform the future policy, planning and development of the service as well as identifying the



areas of the service which are successful and valued. They help to identify any gaps in service provision and should lead to the development of better services. When something goes particularly well, or particularly badly, we need to know so that we can repeat successes and correct mistakes.

Family Fostering has a clear complaints procedure which has been made available to staff, foster carers, young people and all other stakeholders. All complaints and outcomes will be addressed thoroughly and recorded by the Registered Manager and/or the Responsible Individual. We have not received any complaints to date. For full information please request a copy of our Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure.

## **Allegations**

In all cases with allegations of abuse or neglect, the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures will be followed. The staff member or foster carer accused will be informed of the substance of an allegation as soon as possible and following advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). However, there are circumstances when information cannot be shared as it may compromise the investigation. Foster carers are strongly advised to access Fostering Network for support/advice in the event of an allegation. Details of the allegation must be entered onto the Complaints/Concerns log. When a foster carer has had an allegation, they will be referred back to the fostering panel for a review. The Registered Manager will confirm in writing to the foster carer the recommendation that will be made to the panel along with a copy of the report. The foster carer will be invited to attend the panel meeting.

Providing support for the foster carer's birth children will also be provided, regardless of whether the allegation has been made against them. Independent support should continue to be available until consideration of the case by the fostering panel has been completed. Support offered will include helping foster carers to understand the process, ensuring that they are given all appropriate information and assisting them in their communication with other agencies. Where a serious allegation is substantiated, due consideration will be given to whether this should be referred to Disclosure and Barring Service.

For full information please request a copy of our Allegation and Complaints against Foster carers and Staff Policy.

## Foster Carers

### Working in partnership



We recognise that foster carers have skills and expertise and make the biggest difference to the everyday lives of children and young people in care.

We will:

- Value foster carers' skills and expertise equally to those of other professionals
- Recognise that foster carers are the people who live with the children and young people every day and know them best.
- Wherever possible, include foster carers in all meetings that affect them and the children/young people that they care for.
- Treat foster carers without discrimination and respect them as colleagues.
- Respect confidentiality.

As a fostering provider, we recognise the Foster Carer's Charter and integrate it into everything we do to make a positive difference in the lives of the children who are placed within our service.

## Information

We know that information is vital for foster carers to provide care that meets the child's need. We will:

- Give foster carers all the information we are provided with so that they can fully and safely meet the child's needs.
- Provide this information in writing prior to placement (except in emergency placements).
- Ensure that there is a placement plan drawn up in discussion with foster carers and agreed with them in advance of placements (except in emergencies where this will be done as soon as possible).
- Provide foster carers with information on all financial matters including tax, allowances and additional entitlements.
- Provide foster carers with full details of all relevant departmental policies and procedures.

## Fair Treatment

We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship and recognise that foster carers have a right to be treated fairly, no matter what the circumstances.

We will:

- Consult with foster carers before changing terms and conditions and ensure openness in all of our discussions and communications.
- Ensure that foster carers are treated with respect, kept informed and provided with emotional support should they be subject to an allegation.
- Provide a framework for dealing with allegations and adhere to our agreed timescales which is in line with the Local Authority Designated Officer Procedures.
- Ensure that foster carers know the arrangements for the payment of fees and allowances in the event that they are not able to foster while the subject of an allegation.

## Recruitment

Our intention is to have an ongoing programme of recruitment, predominantly using word of mouth, the internet and local advertisement. Enquiries and applications to foster are welcomed from people regardless of gender, marital status, sexuality, race, disability, religion, and culture or employment status. We aim to recruit foster carers who share our therapeutic ethos and demonstrate the key skills needed to holistically meet the needs of looked after young people. Our assessment and approval process fully complies with the

## Application and Assessment

The assessment is based on a 2-stage process, which runs concurrently. Stage 1 considers the statutory checks and personal references. Stage 2 is the Form F Assessment. The assessing social worker will undertake a minimum of eight visits or sixteen hours to complete the assessment with the applicants and household members

Applicants are also required to attend the "Skills to Foster" training course, devised by The Fostering Network and adapted to include therapeutic parenting. A written report will be completed on completion and submitted as part of the assessment.

## Approval

All assessments are presented to the Fostering Panel which is made up of the following:

- Independent Chair
- A qualified social worker with at least three years' experience
- At least 3 other members, one of whom must be independent of the Fostering Service.

Applicants are encouraged to attend Panel and provided with a panel guide to help reassure and prepare them. The Panel makes their recommendations and minutes are taken and passed to the Agency Decision Maker who makes the final decision.. Applicants will be informed in writing of this decision. If they have been unsuccessful they will be advised that they may (within 28 days) request that the agency review this decision or seek a review of this determination by the Independent Reviewing Mechanism. Successful applicants will be informed in writing and allocated a supervising social worker. Once approved, foster carers will receive an induction that outlines expectations, policies & procedures and remuneration.

## Review of Approval

Family Fostering implements a foster carer review process. All foster carers are reviewed within a year of their approval. Thereafter a review will occur annually and all foster carers are required to take part in their reviews. All annual reviews of approval are presented to the fostering panel.

Additional reviews will be held in respect of the following:

- Placement disruptions within foster families
- Medical Concerns regarding foster carers
- Serious breach of foster carers' agreements
- Culminated concerns about foster carers' practice
- Allegations
- Resignations
- Significant changes in household composition
- All requests for changes in approval

## Support

While Fostering can greatly enrich the lives of fostering families, it is also recognised that it can at times be an isolating and challenging task. Family Fostering is dedicated to ensuring the most appropriate and timely support is provided at all times. For all our approved families we will:

- Provide a named, experienced and qualified Supervising Social Worker.
- Respond positively to requests for additional support.
- Provide foster carers with 3 weekly supervision and weekly phone contact as a minimum.
- Provide foster carers with therapeutic supervision from a highly skilled psychotherapist
- Give foster carers honest and open feedback.
- Provide foster carers with access to 24-hour support 365 days a year from a qualified/experienced Social Worker with fostering expertise.
- Provide a monthly forum for foster carers and their families within which they can find support and share experiences with other fostering families.
- Access to regular therapeutic workshops.
- Provide specialist training to develop therapeutic insight into caring for children and young people who have experienced childhood trauma.
- Provide high quality training in accordance with each foster carer's Personal Development Plan' and support to ensure they achieve the Training Support and Development Standards
- Representation at all child care reviews and conferences.
- Peer support.
- Access to our Attachment Worker who provides empathic support.
- Social events for foster carers, their families and their foster children/young people to attend.
- Provide a minimum of 2 weeks respite.

- Payments for up to 6 weeks when without a placement.
- Pay foster carers fees that reflect the fostering task in a timely manner.
- Exceptional needs payments.
- Provide membership to FosterTalk
- Provide a comprehensive set of policies and procedures and induction to ensure these are effectively understood.

## Learning and development

Family Fostering consider training and support as essential to equip foster carers with the knowledge and skills they need to offer effective and therapeutic foster care in order that they can help transform the lives of the children/young people that they foster.

We provide a statutory and mandatory training package for all foster carers as well as identifying individual and tailored training. All foster carers will be fully supported to complete their Training, Support and Development Standards portfolio within the legislated timescales.

## Training & Therapeutic Parenting Workshops

All Foster Carers will be identified and must complete Statutory Training. Where there are two foster carers in the household at least one must complete Mandatory courses/workshops, however both will be fully encouraged and supported to attend/complete ideally together. Foster Carers will be encouraged and fully supported to attend workshops to develop their therapeutic insight into caring for children and young people who have experienced childhood trauma. Professional development therapeutic parenting workshops will be provided on an ongoing basis. The main aim of these workshops is to equip foster carers with the tools to work therapeutically and to provide a safe and supportive environment to talk through the complexities of implementing them. Specialist and Identified training courses are also available and these will be identified by the supervising social worker and/or foster carer. We also have a large resource library of We aim to have a trained workforce in understanding attachment, trauma and loss and how to care for children to build their resilience and reach their potential. The fostering panel monitors all training completed at the annual reviews.

## Company Structure

**Teresa Morgan - Service Manager & Responsible Individual**



A qualified social worker with extensive experience of working with children and families since 1994. Experienced in setting up and managing services for parents and children. She pioneered a mediation/support service for children and families which was rolled out across Kent as a primary service to prevent young people coming into the care system. She managed five services across Kent providing support, supervision and leadership to a team of 12 staff ensuring quality and continuity of the service was provided and received an award for innovation.

Teresa has been working within the independent fostering sector since 2001. Having had parents who were foster carers, she has real insight into the valuable role birth children play and the impact fostering can have on them. She is passionate about ensuring everyone in the fostering family is fully supported. Teresa previously held the position of Supervising Social Worker and Senior Practitioner and has been managing fostering services for 9 years. She is a CEOP Ambassador and a Qualified Trainer in Skills to Foster.

### **Debi Atkin- Registered Manager**

A qualified social worker with extensive experience of working with children, young people and their families since 1989. Previous roles include direct work with children in a residential setting, Deputy Manager in residential child care, Area Manager of a Community Service setting up and providing projects for vulnerable 10-21-year olds and their families and Service Manager responsible for setting up and providing services for approximately 1500 unaccompanied minors seeking asylum age 15/17 years old. She has extensive experience of managing teams, working in partnership with councils and commissioners as well as managing substantial financial budgets, writing bids and securing funding. Debi was also an Approved Foster carer and has valuable insight into the realities of fostering and a heart for supporting foster carers in the complex work they do.

Debi has a Level 7 Diploma in Management and is a Qualified Trainer in Skills to Foster. She has been working within the independent fostering sector since 2001. She has been managing fostering services since 2006 and has been a Registered Manager since 2011. Debi has strong leadership skills and ensures her team has access to high levels of management, support and supervision in order to fulfil their responsibilities and meet the expectations of the agency and their profession.

### **Tracy Price – Senior Practitioner**

A qualified Social Worker since 1998 with previous social work experience in a range of settings including youth offending, children's services, education and drug and alcohol

rehabilitation. Tracy has extensive experience working with families individually and in group settings. She has worked directly with children and with a range of diverse issues including relationships, domestic violence, post-natal depression, self-harming, anger management, self-esteem, managing children's behaviour and housing and benefit advice.

Tracy has a Level 3 Diploma in Therapeutic Parenting and has worked in the independent fostering sector since 2006 firstly as a Supervising Social Worker before being promoted to Senior Practitioner/Review Officer in 2010. Tracy is experienced in completing annual reviews and form f assessments. Tracy also provides guidance and support to new Supervising Social Workers. Tracy has extensive knowledge of attachment, trauma and loss and is committed to ensuring foster carers and the children they care for receive the therapeutic support they need to build resilience and help the children through their psychological recovery. Having established, co-ordinated and facilitated empathic workshops for foster carers and staff she has fully embedded therapeutic parenting in this service equipping foster carers with practical ways to work therapeutically with young people. She has organised these workshops in such a way as to also establish informal support networks amongst foster carers and develop peer support/mentoring.

#### **Chantelle Lacey – Supervising Social Worker**

A qualified and highly motivated social worker with a BA hons degree in Social Work. Chantelle is passionate about ensuring all young people within the service achieve the best possible outcomes. Chantelle is also fully committed to supporting foster carers, their birth children and extended families in understanding fostering is a whole family venture.

#### **Sharon Kailou – Attachment Worker**

Sharon is an experience foster carer for Kent County Council. She is also an experience panel member. Prior to this she was an experienced Nurse for many years and learning Support worker in a primary school. Her role as Attachment Worker is to provide affective empathic support to foster carers within the service (this is needs led by the foster carer), working as part of a team of professionals to ensure a comprehensive support package. Sharon plays a key role in building resilience in foster carers and sustaining placements. Their role ensures affective empathy is extended and available to foster carers in their role as therapeutic parents.

#### **Krista McAllister – Office /Finance Manager**

Krista is a highly experienced administrator with a Bachelor of Arts Degree and a 3 year Business Administration/Human Resources Diploma. Her previous experience has been in accounting, human resource management and office administration. Krista is also qualified

as a Teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages and is experienced in conversing with people from different nationalities. She has a firm grasp of the fostering process and the needs of both foster carers and the service.

#### **Lauren Hollands – Administrator**

Having successfully completed an Apprenticeship with Family Fostering Lauren is now our full time Administrative Assistant and is completing a level 3 Business and Administration BTEC. She is friendly and approachable, highly organised and always prepared to provide help where possible.

### **Panel (Central List)**

**Medical Advisor – Dr. Matthew Orr MBChB (Hons), MRCP, MRCGP.** A General Practitioner registered with the General Medical Council. Dr. Orr provides medical advice to staff and panel members in regard to foster carer reports being presented to panel as well as assessing and ratifying their Adult Health Report.

**Panel Chair - Patricia Burgess** A Family Magistrate in the East Kent Bench since 2008. Patricia also sits on the Family Panel as a Judge within the Canterbury Combined Court. She is qualified to Chair both the Adult and the Family Panel courts and has been appointed Deputy Chair of the Family Panel Bench for East Kent. Patricia is an experienced fostering panel member and is currently the Panel Chair of two fostering services and Vice Chair for three more. In addition to this she sits on a Fostering Advisory Committee, where decisions are taken with regard to policy and direction of the Foster Agency with particular regard to new legislation and development.

**Vice Chair/Legal Advisor - Sarah Stubberfield** A qualified solicitor specialising in matrimonial and family law. Sarah has a passion for children's rights including supporting and promoting welfare issues.

**Care Leavers Advisor- Wasim Akbari** Is a young person who was fostered for 4 years. Wasim has lived in the UK for 13 years when he was looked after as an unaccompanied minor seeking asylum. Wasim is now a university Student in the final year of his Engineering Degree. Wasim's experiences add a vital component to our panel. He has a real empathy for young people in care and states, "I am keen to set a positive example and show that even with lots of challenges ahead of you, when you are given the opportunity you can work hard and become something."

**Linda Underwood** - Linda was a Lecturer in Health and Social Care and Childcare at South Kent College for over 25 years. She was a course leader for the NVQ 3 in Caring for

Children and Young People and the NVQ 2, 3 & 4 in Community Work. Linda also taught the BTEC National Diploma Health Studies and Society Health and development. Linda is also the Manager for an accredited contact centre. She is the Regional Support Officer for the National Association of Child Contact Centre. Linda's other role is as a SENCO/ Early Years practitioner within a Preschool setting.

**Karen Healy** - A fully qualified, state registered nurse with over 35 years of experience. Karen specialises in mental health and has been practising as a community Mental Health Nurse for 16 years.

**Kostas Kailou** - Kostas had a 20-year career in the Prison Service and has vast experience in diversity and equality issues. In his additional role as the Area Lead for Diversity and Equality for 16 prisons he carried out many investigations regarding discrimination issues. He represented the prison service at recruitment fairs, conferences and on radio raising awareness of prison service policies such as: Impact Assessments, Suicides, Reducing Drug Taking and Race Relations. He has been awarded numerous commendations and two medals for his loyalty, commitment and innovation skills.

**Martin Meah** - An experienced foster carer with 14 years of experience caring for other people's children. He is passionate about achieving the best possible outcomes for the children and young people and understands the needs of both foster carers and the children and young people they care for.

**Sharon Kailou** - An experienced foster carer with her husband Kostas. Sharon has a passion for enabling children and young people to see their worth and feel valued and accepted. Prior to fostering, Sharon had a career in health, social care and education, with over thirty years' experience as a nurse and five years as a School Learning Support Assistant.

**Mark Buck** - A retired Detective Sergeant who was responsible for managing the Combined Safeguarding Team, managing the safeguarding of high-risk victims of Domestic Abuse and investigating allegations of serious abuse against children and vulnerable adults. The role involved a high level of risk management as well as working effectively with partner agencies including Social Services, Education & Health.

-Mark is also an experienced foster carer currently for Kent County Council and previously for an independent fostering service. His work-based training along with his fostering training has given me a sound knowledge base around the effects of trauma, separation and loss on children, families and fostering families.

**Craig Prentice** – Independent Social Worker with over 16 years' experience working with children and families. Craig's previous experience includes pioneering, delivering and managing services for parents and children and 5 experience of working in the Youth Offending Team. A Team Leader for a children's charity for 10 years managing a team of 12 staff and oversaw the delivery of a community youth work project, parenting support project, pre-school and counselling service. Latterly, he has also worked as an Intensive Family Support Worker supporting children, young people and their families with complex needs. Craig grew up in a children's home where his parents were house parents. His parents were also foster carers during Craig's adolescence and his wife's family are currently fostering.

## **Consultants & Therapists**

**Nicola Bond** – Advanced Diploma Integrative Counselling

**Geraldine Brown** - AQA CSCT Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling

**Jan Dalglish** - DipSW, BSc (psych), MSc in Mental Health

**Jacqueline Freeston** - Post Graduate Certificate in Aspergers and Autism. Level 3 Health & Social Care, C Card registered to support young people with sex and relationships. OU Certificate in Understanding Nutrition