



# DMR Services

Developing Life Skills | Discovering Potential | Protecting Children

## Fostering Services Statement of Purpose

Updated November 2017



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Registered in England and Wales 05055189



### Safety and security for children and families

Children and families residential and community based services



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*Developing Life Skills, Discovering Potential,  
Protecting Children.*

# Introduction to DMR Fostering Services

## **An introduction to our Statement of Purpose**

This document sets out the Statement of Purpose of DMR Fostering Services; an independent fostering agency that is a part of DMR Services. It relates to the operations of DMR Fostering Services as a national Independent Fostering Provider, and specifically to our Birmingham office. It has been developed in accordance with the Care Standards Act 2000, Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011, Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services, The Care Planning, Placement, Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013.

Our Statement of Purpose is provided, and made available to our employees, carers, local authorities, children and young people in placement and the general public. It is updated annually by our Responsible Individual, Fostering Service Manager, and the Registered Manager.

## **Name and address of our Responsible Individual**

Sally Neville  
Responsible Individual and Agency Decision Maker  
102 Queslett Road East, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, West Midlands, B74 2EZ  
0121 352 1844 | [fostering@dmrservices.co.uk](mailto:fostering@dmrservices.co.uk)

## **Name and address of our Registered Manager**

Alison Corkingdale  
Registered Manager  
102 Queslett Road East, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, West Midlands, B74 2EZ  
0121 352 1844 | [fostering@dmrservices.co.uk](mailto:fostering@dmrservices.co.uk)

## **Inspection Body**

All of our fostering activities are inspected and regulated by Ofsted. Ofsted can be contacted at Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD  
0300 123 1231 | 0300 123 4666

## **Service Location**

Our Birmingham office is located at 102 Queslett Road East, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, B74 2EZ  
0121 352 1844 | [fostering@dmrservices.co.uk](mailto:fostering@dmrservices.co.uk)

# Our Structure

## Our organisations structure

DMR Fostering Services is a part of DMR Services. DMR Services was founded in 2002 by husband and wife, Sally Neville and David Miller.

DMR Fostering Services provides fostering services across the United Kingdom. Sally Neville is the Responsible Individual.

DMR Services is registered and inspected as an Independent Fostering Agency by Ofsted in accordance with the Care Standards Act 2000.

DMR Services is registered as a private Limited Company. Our registered office is 102 Queslett Road East, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, B74 2EZ.

Registered in England, Number 05055189.

The Registered Manager is supported by Sally Neville Responsible Individual, David Miller Managing Director and Jo Mountford Director of Services.

Support services including our training department, human resources, quality assurance and finance teams are located at our head office in Birmingham.



# Our Structure Continued

## Our Team

DMR Fostering Services' senior management team has a wealth of experience in the field of fostering and social care; and all hold management qualifications. Our Responsible Individual, Managing Director, and Registered Manager are HCPC registered social workers.

Our senior management team meet on a weekly basis, and are responsible for the strategic and operational aspects of our fostering agency. The Responsible Individual and our Registered Manager are responsible for the overall operation of the agency. Our Responsible Individual, and our Registered Manager are both HCPC registered social workers, experienced in both the statutory and private social work sectors; as well as within the inspection and regulation of services.

Our supervising social workers are all HCPC registered, with extensive experience; having worked in a variety of statutory social work settings. Our supervising social workers are responsible for visiting our foster families at home on a regular basis, whilst also attending meetings and spending time with the children and young people in placements as appropriate. They also make recommendations for the annual foster carer review.

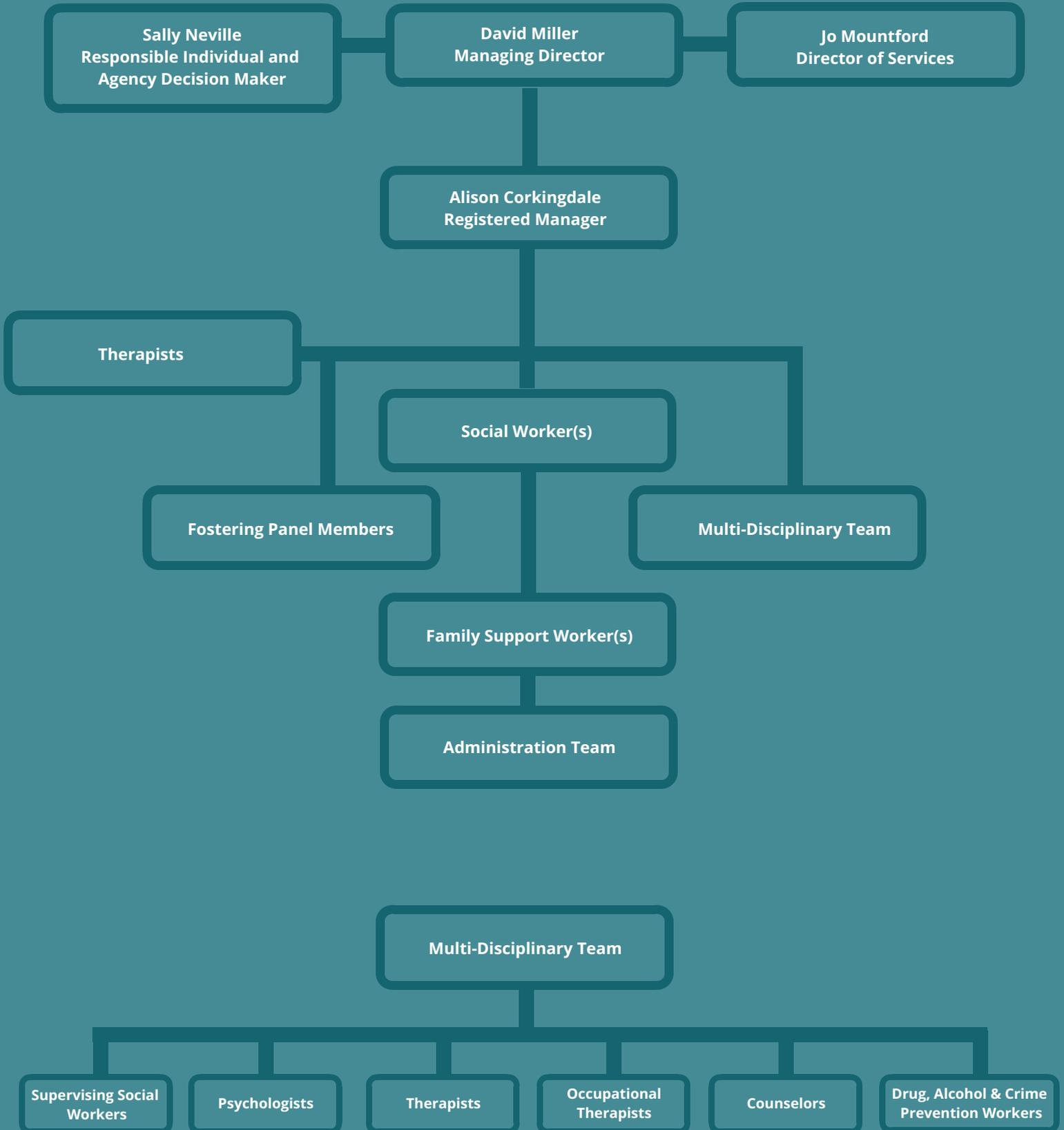
Our family support workers work in conjunction with our Multi-Disciplinary team and therapists; providing specific support to foster carers and children; through our Placement Sustainability and Support Service (PSSS). All members of our team, whether self-employed, casual or permanent, are suitably qualified, and hold relevant qualifications and memberships.

In addition to our permanent team members, we have a number of independent, self-employed professionals working in a variety of roles within the organisation including; Independent Form F Assessors, Sessional Social Workers offering placement support, Independent Investigators for formal complaints, Therapeutic Support, Child Helpline Co-coordinators, Medical Advisers, Marketing Professionals and an Education Advisor; who provides advice, support and guidance on educational issues for children and young people in placement.

Our multi-disciplinary team plays a key role within our Placement Sustainability and Support Service (PSSS). The team is comprised of:

- **supervising social workers** - are HCPC registered social workers have experience working within statutory social work settings. They form a key part of the prospective foster carer assessment, and provide ongoing support, advice and guidance to our children in placement and foster carers.
- **therapists** - where an assessment identifies a therapeutic intervention requirement, this is undertaken by our experienced team of therapists; who are appropriately qualified
- **occupational therapists** - our occupational therapists are available to support children in placement where an assessment shows a child would benefit from their input
- **drug, alcohol and crime prevention workers** - provide appropriate support, guidance and professional interventions to children in placement. Our Full Circle© programme is an assessment and intervention tool that aims to increase young peoples awareness and understanding of issues associated with offending and substance misuse.
- **psychologists** - work directly with children where an assessed needs shows they would benefit from their input. Our psychologists are appropriately qualified and members of relevant bodies
- **counsellors** - our child counsellors are support services and interventions to children where there is an identified need. They hold recognised qualifications, and are members of relevant bodies.

# Our Structure Continued





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*To create positive behavioural changes, we must first create a sense of belonging.*

# Our Vision and Values

## Our Main Aim

### Our values

- Children are at the heart and centre of every decision we make
- Listening to children and young people's experiences over the years has shaped our practice and has helped us to think and practice more creatively
- Children and young people's needs and interests take priority over the adults around them; they will always be listened to and be supported to participate in their own experience
- We support them to establish positive relationships with family members, carers and peers ensuring they develop a strong sense of value and identity
- We believe in the importance of recruiting a diverse range of foster carers from all backgrounds; ensuring we meet the diverse needs of children requiring placements
- DMR Fostering Services' policy and procedures reflect our child centred values
- We place high expectations on foster carers therefore our recruitment and training process remains robust and in the child's best interests at all times



*"Keeping to our core of  
Developing Life Skills,  
Discovering Potential and  
Protecting Children"*

# Our Vision and Values Continued

## Our aims and objectives

DMR Fostering Services strives to continuously deliver high standards of quality foster carer for the children placed with our foster carers.

We aim to recruit and retain a diverse team of foster carers that are suitably placed to meet the diverse and individual needs of children and young people.

## Our primary aims:

- we aim to recruit a team of high quality and diverse team of foster carers who are best placed to meet the individual and diverse needs of children and young people.
- to provide a high quality, value for money service for looked after children and young people of all ages whose needs, assessed by the responsible local authority are best met through a placement with a foster carer
- to ensure our foster carers have been recruited, assessed, trained, approved, and reviewed in accordance with national standards, regulations and guidance
- to support, supervise, develop and provide on-going high quality training to our foster carers; helping to ensure they are best placed to meet the individual needs of the children and young people placed with them
- to continually improve and develop our services, through the use of reflective practice, evaluation and feedback from service users, carers, local authorities and other relevant individuals or agencies.

## Our objectives:

- to ensure we promote the best interests of the child, ensuring their individual needs are met in accordance with their care plan
- to ensure we provide a provision of high quality, value for money care to children and young people in a safe and nurturing family home environment
- to ensure we offer access to appropriate 24/7, 365 day a year support to our foster carers, children and young people
- to value diversity, and promote equality, by identifying and recognising the importance of a child's ethnic origin, religion, cultural and linguistic background; and to consider fully a child's gender, identity, sexuality and any disability they may have
- to develop the child's sense of identity, self worth and encourage resilience
- to ensure the child's health and well being; including their physical, mental and emotional welfare needs are met
- to promote educational achievement, and encourage further learning
- to promote and encourage contact with the child's family and friends where appropriate in accordance with the care plan
- to prepare children for adult life and independent living
- to ensure we seek the views and opinions of the children placed, and promote participation alongside their families and their foster carers
- to ensure we provide accessible access to appropriate and high quality training for our foster carers; enabling them to develop their skills, knowledge and practice
- to ensure we offer placements that match the child's needs, to the foster carers training, skills and experience
- to review foster placements regularly; ensuring the individual needs of the child are being met, and where necessary, ensuring appropriate interventions and support is offered to prevent placement breakdowns
- to ensure the members of our team are provided with relevant and appropriate on going training; ensuring we better our own knowledge and skill base
- to ensure our policies, procedures and practice guidance is monitored, reviewed and updated regularly



# Our Visions and Values Continued

## Fostering Placements Provided

DMR Fostering Services works with a number of local authorities to understand their needs and requirements. We then aim to recruit high quality foster carers from a range of backgrounds, who given the best training and developmental opportunities are able to provide children, in the care of these local authorities with high quality care in a family home environment.

## Emergency placements

The agency will approve appropriately skilled Foster Carers to undertake emergency placements. Whilst DMR Services would always prefer to make placements on a planned basis, emergencies happen; and with a wide geographical coverage, we are often in a position to respond. Emergency placements can be offered to a specific Local Authority on a contractual basis or alternatively, as and when the need arises. DMR Services Duty officer will quickly respond to referrals, and our out of hour's service is available to support placement matching outside of normal office hours.

## Respite and Short Break placements

Respite placements are available on both an emergency and planned basis. Many Foster Carers have the skills required to meet the needs of looked after children but due to other commitments or personal preferences are not able to offer on-going placements. Respite placements will be sourced for a variety of required durations; from just a few days, up to a number of weeks.

## Short term placements

Short term placements are available throughout our operational area. They typically vary in duration, and are often linked to further assessments of the child and their family members. Short term placements can often change to long term placements with the same carer(s) where possible.

## Long term and Permanency placements

Long term fostering placements are available with trained foster carers who can accept referrals for individual children or sibling groups.

## Parent and child placements

Additional support and skilled carers will be identified to provide a personalised package of support. The placements can be provided with additional resources, such as comprehensive parenting assessments, and supervised contacts. The resources for the placement can provide a greater likelihood of achieving successful outcomes for the parent, child and family. Additional support may come in the form of extra input from our PSSS support system.

## Single placements

Single placements can be provided should this be requested by a referring local authority.

## Sibling placements

Sibling placements are for brothers and/or sisters who are all placed together with Foster Carers. Often the need to maintain relationships between siblings is the key consideration for a local authority when searching for the right placement. The agency will seek carers who are particularly skilled in providing placements that enable sibling groups to remain together in a single household

# Our Visions and Values Continued

## **Fostering Placements Provided Continued**

### Complex needs and Enhanced Placements

Every child is an individual with individual needs and in some circumstances these needs can be complex. The agency is able to offer a number of placement packages to meet needs that are identified by the placing local authority as requiring additional support. In such circumstances a personalised package of support can be provided which will add additional resources to the placement and provide a greater likelihood of achieving successful outcomes for the child. Additional support may come in the form of extra input from PSSS, qualified social workers, support workers, or through guidance and consultation to the Foster Carer from a psychologist. The precise package will depend upon the individual assessed needs of the child.

### Placements for unaccompanied children and young people

Placements can be provided for children who have entered the UK without a family or guardian.





# Putting Children First

## Children and Young Peoples Rights

DMR Fostering Services is an advocate for the protection of children's rights; to work together to meet their needs, and to improve opportunities that will help them reach their full potential.

## Physical Environments

DMR Fostering Services believe that good foster homes are those that are safe, stimulating and caring environments; where focus is placed on the child's health, education, protection and stability.

We believe in the importance of each child having their own bedroom; a space they can call their own. All children placed into a foster home have their own bedroom, unless otherwise requested by the local authority for the purposes of sibling placements, or holiday placements where appropriate. All foster homes are assessed to ensure their suitability on an annual basis.

## Setting Boundaries

Each of our foster homes has their own 'Safe Caring Policy', which identifies the boundaries within each home. Children and young people are encouraged to learn the house rules; and are included within their children's guide. Risk assessments and strategies of managing behaviour are identified and agreed at the commencement of the placement. These are recorded on the child's placement agreement or care plan.

Our policies on the use of sanctions, restraint and complaints are made available to children, their relatives and professionals. We believe in the importance of these policies to ensure fair, consistent and appropriate responses to behaviours. Any form of corporal punishment is forbidden.

## Health Matters

Working in collaboration with the child's foster carer, social worker and local health authority, the agency will establish the individual health needs of the child. If children are placed locally, they will continue to use their current health resources where appropriate. If this is not possible, children will be registered with a GP, dentist and optician. DMR Fostering Services has established excellent working relationships with local health care providers to ensure easy accessibility to expert advice; thus ensuring the individual health needs of each child are met appropriately.

The agency operates a robust policy on the storage, administering and recording of medication, which we ensure each foster carer adheres to. Our foster carers will encourage healthy eating; and all special dietary requirements are recorded within the placement agreement or care plan. Children placed are encouraged to partake in exercise; helping to ensure the positive development of their physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing. The agency's carers also encourage extra curricular activities that we believe help the child to develop their social skills, talents and other skills they may have.

# Putting Children First Continued

## Complaints and Protection

Every child placed with DMR Fostering Services has the right to be safe and protected. We also believe in the importance of each child being listened to; their opinions heard and their views acknowledged. Each child, relative to their understanding is given written and verbal guidance on our complaints procedure, and the different ways of accessing support. This includes the contact details of the child's social worker, their supervising social worker, DMR Fostering Services, Ofsted, NSPCC and Childline among others.

DMR Fostering Services is committed to delivering exceptional standards of care to the children placed with us. We understand the importance of identifying any arising issues, correcting them and learning from them.

We operate a stringent anti-bullying policy which aims to protect children. Our foster carers receive training on how to recognise the signs of bullying, and management strategies they can use to both support and keep the child safe.

## Contact with Relatives and Friends

DMR Fostering Services will ensure where appropriate, each child is encouraged to maintain contact with those most important to them. We have a number of NACCC accredited family contact centres throughout our operational region where facilities can be provided to ensure safe, and beneficial contact services for the child.

Contact arrangements form part of the child's placement agreement or care plan. Transport to and from contact sessions is usually provided by the foster carer, however this needs to be agreed to ensure each child's needs are met appropriately; particularly if the foster carer has other children in placement.

Our foster carers encourage children to make meaningful and positive friendships, and will facilitate visits and activities as appropriate.

In accordance with the applicable legislation, standards, regulations and appropriate guidance, DMR Fostering Services will work where appropriate with the child's parent(s), and any significant others. The agency understands the importance of this involvement where appropriate, and the significant impact it can have on the child or young person's life. Our social workers are experienced in working with families.

## The Importance of Education

We believe every child has the right to access appropriate educational provisions that will enable them to reach their full potential. Every child placed with DMR Fostering Services has a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis by the educational provision, the child's social worker and foster carer. We expect our foster carers to be fully involved in this process. Where possible, we enroll children in local schools where they can build social groups and become involved in local community activities. Where enrollment at an appropriate educational provision is not possible, we would expect the placing local authority to provide appropriate teaching hours.

# Putting Children First Continued

## **Managing Absconding**

We take the safety and the overall welfare of the children placed with us extremely seriously. All of our foster carers have access to our policy relating to missing children. Where there are identified risks of absconding, vulnerability or child sexual exploitation, an appropriate strategy of management will be agreed in the placement agreement or care plan; ensuring appropriate supervisory levels, and agreed forms of risk management. Where a child absconds from a foster home, an appropriate assessed package of support from our multi-disciplinary and family support team may be proposed. All children who abscond will be offered the opportunity to discuss the reasons for their absconding outside of the foster home.

## **Child Protection Procedures**

Protecting children is at the core of our service provision. Our agency has robust safeguarding procedures in place, which all members of our team and foster carers are familiar with. Our safeguarding procedures are based on local authority best practice guidelines. Where special arrangements are required in order to ensure the safety and protection of a child, these will be discussed with the placing local authority, and incorporated into the child's placement agreement or care plan.

## **Placement Sustainability and Support Service (PSSS)**

Our Placement Sustainability and Support Service is led by the Registered Manager, social work team, appropriate members of our multi-disciplinary team and therapists. It aims to prevent placement breakdowns by identifying and meeting the individual needs of children, young people and their foster carers. The service provides appropriate packages of support to increase placement stability and prevent placement breakdowns.



# Foster Families

## Foster Carer Recruitment

DMR Fostering Services recruits individuals and families from all cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds; and from all parts of our local communities. We aim to recruit new carers with different life experiences and skills; aiding our approach to ensuring we match children to the right foster carer who is best placed to meet their individual needs.

## Application Process

Our fostering website ([www.dmrfostering.com](http://www.dmrfostering.com)) provides prospective foster carers with information about fostering for our agency. Information packs are also made available through the website and in printed format. Enquiries can be made through our website, in person, or by telephone. Prospective foster carers will initially be contacted by a member of our Foster Carer Advice Line; where topics including, their motivation to foster, their household and rooms available, and the prospective carers family and how fostering may effect them, will be discussed. The prospective carer and the agency will then decide whether fostering could be a suitable option.

## Initial Visits

Initial visits are conducted in the prospective foster carers home, and usually last around two to three hours. The purpose of the visit is to provide the prospective carer with more information about fostering; and it enables the agency to gather further information in respect of their suitability to foster. Should the prospective carer and the agency agree to continue with the recruitment process, the prospective foster carer will be invited to complete an application form.

## Carers Who Transfer to us

Our agency understands that some foster carers decide to move between approving agencies. Where this happens, our agency will follow the Fostering Network procedures; working closely with responsible local authorities to ensure the care experiences, and standards of care for the child are not affected by the transfer.

# Foster Families Continued

## Assessment of Prospective Foster Carers

The assessments of prospective foster carers are undertaken by our HCPC registered social workers. The assessment usually takes between four and six months to complete. Prospective foster carers during this stage are required to: agree to the required statutory checks, agree to appropriate medical checks, provide three references, provide the details of any ex-partners, provide details of any children they have, and agree to an employer reference request.

As part of the prospective carers assessment, they will be required to attend our Skills To Foster™ training programme; aimed at preparing them for the role of a foster carer. Prospective foster carers will also begin to build their personal training portfolio. In addition to this, evidence based written reports will be completed covering; the prospective carers motivation to foster, their skills, experience and capabilities, the feelings, wishes and views of their household members and family, existing demands made on the applicant and finally, matching recommendations.

## Approval

Once the assessment of a prospective foster carer has been completed, that assessment is presented to our independent fostering panel, which is held at our head office in Birmingham. Our fostering panel comprises of independent individuals with expertise and knowledge, including health, education and experience of fostering, or experience of being a looked after child. The purpose of our fostering panel is to provide an independent quality assurance role, considering the approval of prospective carers, and their continuation. The panel makes a recommendation to our Agency Decision Maker (ADM), who makes the final decision to approve an application. Following approval, the carers are sent a Foster Carer Agreement, detailing their responsibilities and commitments from our agency.

Where a prospective foster carer is unhappy with the agencies final decision, they have the right to appeal. Appeals can be made direct to the agency or through the Independent Review Mechanism.

## Review and Terminations of Approval

We review the approval of our foster carers annually, or following a significant event or change of circumstances within the household. A full report will be produced by our social worker, encompassing contributions from the child in placement, their family, their social worker, the foster carers children, and any other relevant professionals. The review recommendation will be presented to the Agency Decision Maker for a review decision. Foster carers are informed of the agencies decision in writing.



# Finding the Right Placement

## Referral and Matching Process

DMR Fostering Services is committed to delivering the highest standards of care to children in placement. We believe in the importance of gaining a full picture of a child's needs; ensuring the important need of finding the right placement is met. Our agency considers a range of factors when proposing a placement including; the child's assessed needs, wishes and feelings, location, education and contact plans, to ensure the appropriate foster family can provide the necessary support that is required.

Our agency is able to receive referrals for fostering placements during both normal office hours, and out of hours from local authorities. Our referrals team will gather as much information as possible about the child's circumstances, before working closely with our social work and multi-disciplinary team to consider any potential matches with foster families. The following issues are considered during our matching process:

- the foster carers ability to meet the assessed individual needs of each child
- the foster carers approval
- other family members or existing foster children in the foster household
- the foster carers skills, experience, knowledge and ability to meet the individual needs of each child
- the proposed placement duration
- any risks that have been identified to include absconding, vulnerability or child sexual exploitation, and how these risks would be effectively managed
- where a child has a specific health need, the agency will give consideration as to whether suitable health resources are available to the child within a reasonable distance of the foster carers home
- where a child is placed with a foster carer from a different ethnicity or cultural background to their own, consideration will be given in respect of the foster carers ability to ensure the preservation of the child's identity and heritage

DMR Fostering Services understands the importance of information sharing with our foster carers where appropriate. Our foster carers are provided with all information made available to the agency from the placing local authority; ensuring the foster carer is able to make an informed decision as to whether they are able to meet all of the child's needs, and the care plan. Our foster carers are fully involved in the matching process, and they ultimately make the final decision on whether to accept or decline a placement.

# Supporting Children and Young People

Where our agency and a placing local authority have agreed that an identified foster carer is able to meet the needs of a child, a placement contract is produced; detailing the duration of the placement.

Where appropriate, the placing local authorities social worker, the child, and the child's relatives are invited to partake in a pre-placement meeting; where a foster placement agreement or care plan is produced. DMR Fostering Services will accept emergency and same day placement referrals, should this promote the child's welfare.

Our agency makes available a range of services for children including:

- assessed packages of support by our multi-disciplinary team and therapists
- preparation for permanence, or life story work
- NACCC accredited family contact services, as appropriate
- access to information, relevant to them in a format they understand
- access to national organisations for looked after children
- structured activities and events
- access to extra curricular activities where children are encouraged to pursue a hobby, or interest

## Education

At DMR Fostering Services, we place a strong emphasis on the importance of a good education. We believe every child has the right to access an educational provision that is appropriate and beneficial; enabling children to develop, build confidence and reach their full potential. Our agency will ensure an appropriate educational provision is sourced, and a Personal Education Plan (PEP) is produced, reviewed and monitored; helping to ensure the child's educational needs are met.

## Health

Our agency understands the importance of ensuring the health needs of children are met. Our foster carers and supervising social workers understand that the overall physical, emotional and mental well-being of a child needs to be considered at regular intervals, and all appropriate health checks are completed. We take the health of our children seriously, and as such our foster carers receive appropriate first aid training, as part of our comprehensive training opportunities for carers.

## Therapy

Where an assessment indicates a child would benefit from a therapeutic provision, this can be provided through our Multi Disciplinary and therapist team; who are fully qualified and appropriately experienced.

## Events

We organise and hold a number of appropriate events during the year for our children in placement, foster carers, and their own children. This allows for our team to meet with carers and children in an informal setting.

# Supporting Foster Families

At DMR Fostering Services, we believe in the importance of supporting not only fostered children, but also foster families, and their own children. Each of our foster carers has a named supervising social worker, who provides guidance and support in relation to a child's placement agreement or care plan.

Our supervising social workers:

- ensure foster carers are meeting the needs of their children in placement through supervision, development of skills and regular, structured support
- promote and participate in training aimed at developing the skills of foster carers to ensure they are continuously able to meet the needs of children placed
- review foster carers skills, knowledge and achievements on an annual basis.
- represent the agency in our relationship with local authorities, ensuring that placement agreements and care plans are made and followed

## Support For Foster Families

We believe that good support is a combination of multiple factors. Listening, understanding and working together to overcome challenges. We view our foster carers as members of our team. We actively encourage good relations between foster carers and their supervising social workers; where carers feel comfortable talking openly and honestly about any challenges, or issues they have, and how the agency can support them in managing, or overcoming them together.

## Developing Skills

We believe good foster carers are those that continuously broaden their skills base, and develop their knowledge. We encourage our foster carers to engage with further training and skill development opportunities through a number of different mediums.

## Supervising Carers

We actively encourage good relations between our foster carers and their supervising social workers. We believe in the importance of foster carers feeling able to seek advice, guidance and support from their designated supervising social worker. Where problems or concerns are identified, these should be openly addressed where appropriate, and a satisfactory resolution reached in accordance with fostering regulations and the agencies policies. We understand the importance of supervising social workers meeting with the children in placement and their foster family regularly.

# Supporting Foster Families Continued

## Supervisory Visits

Our foster carers will have a supervision visit at least once a month, by a qualified HCPC registered social worker; whose role is to ensure the standard of care the child receives is high, and their individual needs are met.

Supervisory visits concentrate on a number of key areas including:

- the child's placement agreement or care plan
- the child's achievements and the child's development
- the foster carers professional development
- family dynamics
- safe caring
- foster carer tasks required by the agency

We require our supervising social workers to complete at least two unannounced visits to the foster home per year; and a health and safety checklist completed annually, prior to the foster carers review.

DMR Fostering Services is able to provide a range of additional services to meet the needs of children in placements, foster carers, their families and placing local authorities including:

- NACCC accredited contact services between children in placement and their relatives as appropriate
- structured activities
- day care
- respite care of varying durations as appropriate

## Foster Carer Training

As an approved learning centre by the Open College Network, DMR Fostering Services is committed to the consistent delivery of high quality foster carer training; ensuring the welfare and protection of children in placement. This is reflected in our comprehensive training programme for foster carers. DMR Fostering Services considers that placement stability is crucial in meeting the individual needs of children; and incorporates the Secure Base model into our training programme.

Each foster carer household should be able to evidence through their workbook how the Training, Support and Development (TSD) for foster care has been achieved within a year of approval. All newly approved foster carers are required, as part of their approval, to complete all the core training within the first twelve months of approval, in line with our training policy. Carers will be expected to continue with their professional development through supervision every month and by attending training.

DMR Fostering Services has e-learning available to all carers which offers the core training alongside refresher courses other. The e-learning is managed by the Learning and Development Team with the aim of providing Foster Carers with the skills and knowledge to become the catalyst through which the child / young person can grow and meet their full potential. It provides Foster Carers with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to help children when they are at their most challenging.

# Supporting Foster Families Continued

## Events

At DMR Fostering Services, we organise regular coffee mornings, events and support groups, where foster carers can meet up with one another. We aim to utilise these events as a means to enhance working relations between our carers and our agency.

## Support Groups and Forums

We organise a number of regular support groups, where our foster carers can meet and socialise with one another. We believe our support groups will encourage good sharing practice between our carers; in addition to also developing peer support.

## Emergency Support

We believe in the importance of ensuring our children in placement, and foster carers feel supported by the agency beyond normal office hours. We provide a full 24/7, 365 day a year on-call support service for our foster carers. The support system is staffed by a HCPC registered social worker with appropriate experience, and access to senior management.

## Annual Review

All of our foster carers have an annual review, with the purpose of ensuring they remain suitable as an approved foster carer. Foster carer reviews are chaired by an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), whose role is to ensure all the statutory requirements are fulfilled, and that carers have the opportunity to reflect on their practice. The annual review also allows carers to set new goals and development plans for the coming year; and also requests any feedback on the support provided by our agency. This information is then passed to the Registered Manager.

## Information and Record Keeping

Our foster carers have access to our comprehensive fostering manual. The manual contains information and procedures to be followed in relation to the role of a foster carer. It is updated regularly to ensure it remains relevant. Foster Carers are expected to maintain records of events and information pertaining to the child or young person in placement. Foster Carers are also duty bound to complete monthly reports on the child or young person in placement. The agency utilises a secure online record keeping system, which enables foster carers to efficiently meet these requirements.

# Supporting Foster Families Continued

## Fostering Network Membership

All approved foster carers are entitled to an annual membership of the Fostering Network, paid for by the agency; which provides advice and guidance as well as access to legal advice, mediation and insurance.

## Finance

Our foster carers receive a generous fostering allowance payable during a placement. The level of this fostering allowance is relative to the type of fostering placement, the experience of the foster carer and the assessed needs of the child. Foster carers are also entitled to two weeks paid respite and a mileage allowance for additional travelling undertaken. The agency has also developed a close working relationship with a number of local accountancy organisations where foster carers are entitled to a free initial consultation.

## Insurance

- Personal and Public Liabilities (indemnity limit £5 million)
- Employer's Liability Insurance (indemnity limit £10 million)
- Professional Indemnity (indemnity limit £5 million)
- Abuse and Molestation (indemnity limit £5 million)
- Foster Carer's Public Liability (limit £100,000 for one occurrence)
- Medical Malpractice (indemnity limit £5 million)

# Contact Details

## Essential Addresses and Contact Details

### Children's Commissioner

Office of the Children's Commissioner for England  
Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT

020 7783 8330 | 0800 5288330 | [info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)

### Ofsted

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

0300 123 1231 | [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

### Voice

Voice is a leading national charity that empowers looked after children and young people; and campaigns for change to improve their lives.

320 City Street, London, EC1V 2NZ

020 78335792 | [www.voiceyp.org](http://www.voiceyp.org) | [info@voiceyp.org](mailto:info@voiceyp.org)



