



Statement of Purpose

New Life Fostering

February 2019



New Life
Fostering



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*Please note: The agency's 'formal' registered name is **New Life Fostering Agency**. However, **New Life Fostering** is used in all our promotional activity and throughout this document.*

1. Introduction

It is a requirement of the Fostering Services England Regulations 2011 and National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services that each fostering agency produces a Statement of Purpose, including its aims and objectives, and a description of the services and facilities that are provided. This Statement of Purpose gives an outline of those requirements, how the service is managed and its fitness to provide fostering services. It shows the policy and performance framework that underpins our work and shows how good outcomes are achieved for all children in our care. It also demonstrates the systems that we have set in place to recruit, train, supervise and support foster carers.

The Statement of Purpose also links with the Children's Guide that is provided to all children, subject to their age and understanding at the point of placement.

This statement is available to all staff, foster carers, children and birth parents and is publicly available on our fostering website. A copy of this statement is also lodged with Ofsted.

This statement is updated and amended annually.

2. National Legislative and Policy framework

New Life Fostering is run in accordance with the principles outlined in:

- The Children Act 1989
- Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
- Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2013 (Amendments to the Children Act 1989)
- Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (2011)
- Children Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services (2011)
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010
- Care Planning and Fostering Regulations (Amendments) 2015
- The Disability and Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Training, Support and Development Standards (TSD) for Foster Carers



3. Principles

*'New Life Fostering is a place where all children thrive and are safe from harm' –
Our Vision*

New Life Fostering is a place where all children are supported to maximise their life chances.

New Life Fostering is a place where all children have access to good education and feel prepared for adulthood.

New Life Fostering is a place where all children are supported to feel physically and emotionally healthy.

New Life Fostering work to ensure that the services provided to children are of high quality and meet or exceed national minimum standards where applicable.

New Life Fostering work to improve outcomes for all children, with a targeted approach to narrowing the gap for certain groups where they might fall behind their peers.

New Life Fostering encourage all children to have secure relationships with family, friends and carers.

New Life Fostering advocate for the rights of children and look to include their voice in decision making.

New Life Fostering value each foster carer and welcomes their input in helping us guide the direction of the agency.

More information about New Life can be found on our website:

<http://newlifeagency.co.uk/>

- and you can follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

4 Aims and Objectives

The safety and welfare of the children in our care are central to the work of New Life Fostering. We believe that all children requiring a foster placement have the right to live in a safe, supportive and nurturing environment.



New Life Fostering aims to:

- Provide the highest quality of care for children through the provision of approved foster carers who can offer a safe and supportive environment.
- Promote an atmosphere of partnership and co-operation so that all those involved in the care of a child or young person are working together to meet their needs.
- Recruit, assess and approve a wide range of foster carers who can meet the diverse needs of children in care. This includes carers who can provide short term, long term and respite placements, including placements for sibling groups and teenagers.
- Provide support to carers to fulfill their role as a full member of the 'team around the child' in care planning.
- Provide a high-quality service to approved foster carers including training, support and supervision.

5. New Life Fostering's Values

Children

- Children are valued as individuals.
- Children feel and are safe and protected, free from fear and danger.
- Children are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy.
- Children enjoy their childhood and are given the opportunity for social engagement in their communities.
- Challenge discrimination and celebrate diversity.
- Ensure children's voices are heard and that they have the right to participate in decisions about their care.
- Support young people in making a smooth transition towards adult life and in shaping their own destiny.

Carers

- Value working with carers as partners.
- Support and enable carers to be competent and confident and meet required standards.
- Recruit as many carers as possible to meet the diverse needs of children in care.
- Ensure we provide year-round, including out of hours, support for foster carers and their own children.
- Encourage self-care and peer support amongst foster carers

Work as a Team

- Value and respect each team member.
- Always be available to support each other.
- Embrace a multi-disciplinary approach to our work.
- Be receptive to feedback and act upon it.
- Focus energy where it adds best value.
- Go the extra mile in pursuit of excellent care.

Lead by Example

- Act with integrity.
- Listen and act professionally.
- Be receptive to new ideas.
- Communicate effectively.
- Be creative and flexible in seeking solutions.
- Expect high quality performance always.
- Strive to exceed targets.

- Enjoy what we do.
- Work with a range of partners to ensure good standards of care.

6. Confidentiality and Conflicts of interest

Foster carers are provided with full information about the children placed with them and are expected to observe high standards of confidentiality. As an agency we maintain records on carers and children in care that are subject to General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Staff and foster carers are expected to declare any potential conflicts of interest. Where a conflict of interest arises, New Life Fostering will prepare a risk assessment to manage the risk.

7. Children's Guide

Subject to a child's age and understanding, the fostering service ensures children receive the Children's Guide at the point of placement and that foster carers explain the content of the Children's Guide in a way that is accessible and can be understood. The Children's Guide includes a summary of what the fostering service sets out to do for children, and how a child can contact their Social Worker, Independent Reviewing Officer, the Children's Commissioner and Ofsted.

8. Services Provided

The Fostering Service aims to develop and maintain a range of foster care placements to meet the needs of children and young people.

Many of the children placed have experienced difficulties, including abuse or neglect, before being fostered. New Life Fostering assess, approve and support a wide range of carers to provide a range of placements to match children's diverse needs.

All New Life foster carers are financially supported through payment of appropriate remuneration in respect of each child in placement. They comply with Regulations, Statutory Guidance, the National Minimum Standards and the Training, Support and Development (TSD) Standards for Foster Carers.

New Life Fostering offers the following categories of placement:



Short term care

Care up to 2 years' duration or a period in keeping with the care plan for the child and court timetabling. Such carers are often involved in moving children on to other placements in a planned way.

Long-term care

Care offering permanence through to adulthood for children who have been formally matched with their carers. This includes an engagement with the 'Staying Put' scheme when the child reaches 18 years old.

Respite care

Short breaks for children to support them in the community or whilst their own foster carers are away.

Parent and Child care

Parent and child foster care is an exceptional arrangement for very young babies and their parents. New Life Fostering offers Parent and Child placements to support a parent in caring for their child in a supervised setting. Full training and support is provided for this type of placement.

Therapeutic Care

Therapeutic parenting is a specific type of foster care based on PACE principles and an enhanced understanding of the child in placement. It has been evidenced that improved outcomes for children result from an extended period of care from a therapeutic foster carer. Full training and support is provided for this type of placement.

9. Recruitment of Foster Carers

There is a need for more placements for teenagers. There is also a need for more placements for children requiring long-term care, children with disabilities, those who are part of a sibling group or are from a black or minority ethnic group.

The fostering service has an ongoing recruitment strategy that uses a variety of media to recruit new carers. The strategy is informed by research on the most successfully employed advertising methods and is targeted to help ensure all children have a placement choice.



10. Approval and Assessment Process

People over the age of 21 may apply to become foster carers with New Life Fostering. Prospective carers who wish to have further information will be invited to a coffee morning and visited by a suitably qualified employee of the fostering service to explore further the process of becoming a foster carer. All applicants are assessed by a social worker.

Interest is welcomed from all members of the community, regardless of relationship status, employment situation, class, gender, sexuality, culture, ethnicity or religion.

Full statutory checks and references are undertaken on all applicants and DBS checks on any member of the household over the age of 18 years. There is immediate exclusion of any applicant who has been convicted of any serious offence against a child or adult.

All applicants are invited to attend a course of pre-approval training during, and as part of the assessment process. The preparation training covers areas such as child development; separation and loss; working together, managing complex behaviors and safe care. The assessment process involves completion of the CoramBAAF Form F assessment form and is compliant with the Fostering Regulations and Statutory Guidance.

The assessment of a foster Carer takes place in the applicant's home over a period of six to eight visits, plus reference interviews and interviews involving other relevant parties. The social worker will assess past and present experiences, any significant relationships, family dynamics and the characteristics of the foster carers to inform the assessment. The assessor will also use this process to assess the applicant's suitability to foster children with differing needs. The assessment is then presented to the fostering panel. Applicants are encouraged to attend the New Life fostering panel with their assessing social worker. All information gathered is shared with the applicants prior to the panel.

New Life fostering panel makes recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker who then makes a final decision. Any appeals can be made within 28 days and may either make further representation to the fostering panel or have their assessment considered by the Independent Review Mechanism which in turn will make a recommendation back to the agency.

11. Supervision, Support and Training of Foster Carers

- All foster carers are supported and supervised by a supervising social worker. Foster carers may also contact New Life Fostering for advice and support.
- Foster carers can still access support from New Life Fostering staff outside of office hours.
- Foster carers have access to a developing network of support groups and forums.
- Foster carers who are assessed as needing respite on a planned basis can access respite services with other foster carers.
- Foster Carers have access to an equipment store for items such as car seats and baby equipment.
- Foster Carers are provided with membership of the Fostering Network including independent support and legal advice.
- On approval, foster carers are required to undertake a programme of continuing professional development and are offered training that reflects their knowledge, skills and developmental needs.

12. Reviews of Foster Carers

All foster carers are subject to an annual review of their status as foster carers. This is a formal review of the work they have undertaken during the year and includes an opportunity to reflect on achievements and learning. Annual reviews are undertaken by an independent reviewing officer and will hope to draw on contributions from a wide range of other people who contribute to the care they provide.

A report is presented to the fostering panel in the case of all first reviews, significant changes to the carers' registration or cases of concern.

13. Safeguarding and Allegations

If the Registered Manager or Head of Operations believes there is a safeguarding concern they will adhere to the safeguarding procedures of the relevant Local Authority and notify the Local Authority's children's social care team by telephone as a matter of priority.

Please ask to see New Life Fostering Safeguarding Procedures.

All allegations in relation to foster carers are investigated by the Registered Manager and reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on



behalf of the Local Children's Safeguarding Board in line with New Life Fostering Safeguarding Procedures.

Foster Carers are offered independent support during this process from The Fostering Network.

14. Profile of New Life Fostering

As at 1 July 2018 there were 24 approved foster carers in 15 fostering households who can look after children and young people.

A target has been set for 1 April 2019 to increase the number of fostering households by approving 15 new households taking the total to 30. This number relates to approved fostering households and not individual carers.

As at 1 July 2018 New Life Fostering were caring for 24 children.

15. Monitoring performance

Overall responsibility for New Life Fostering rests with the Director.

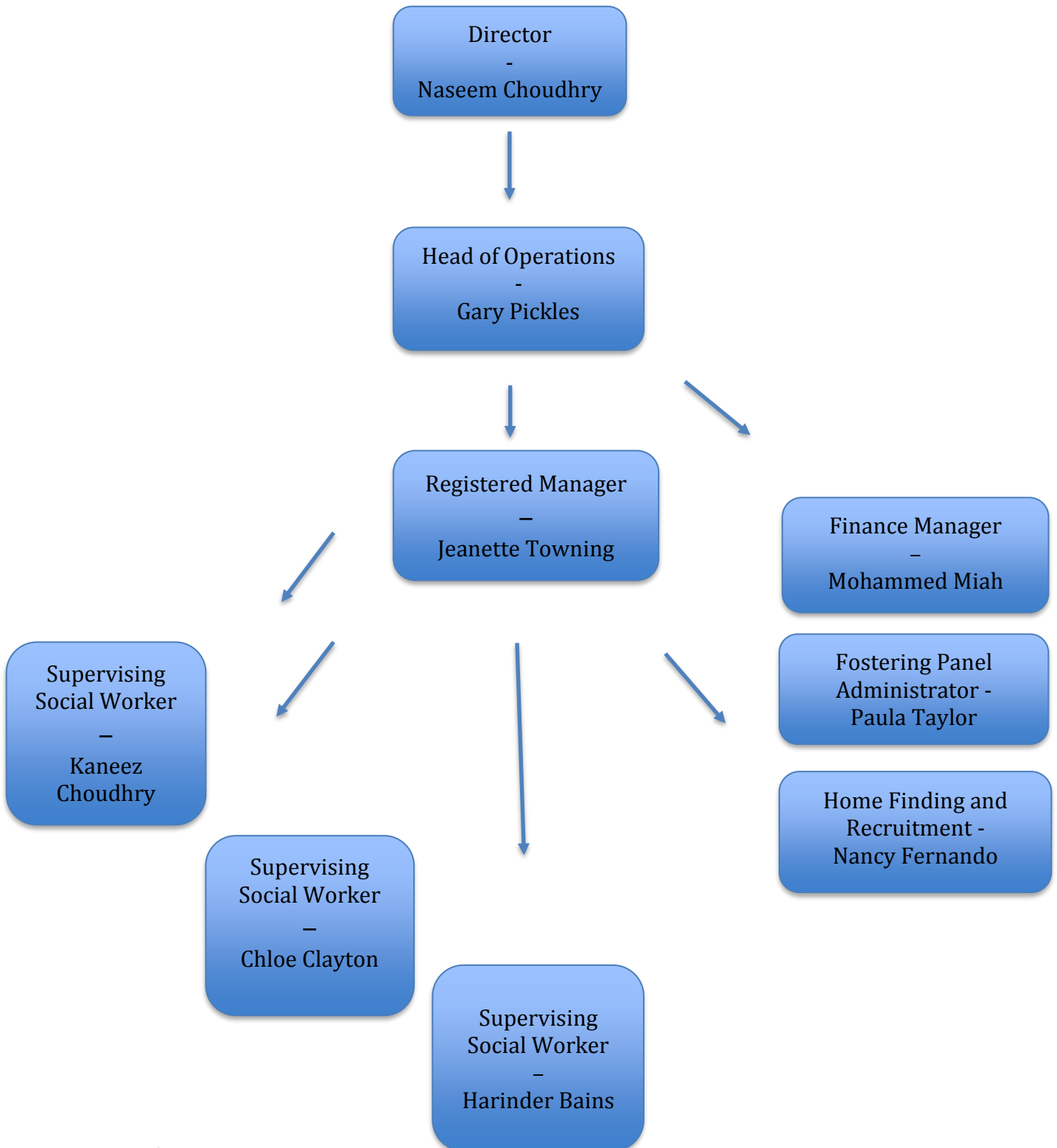
Overall accountability for agency decisions, quality assurance and performance matters rests with the Head of Operations.

Overall accountability for all social work and practice matters rests with the Registered Manager.

The performance of New Life Fostering will be monitored at several levels and in a variety of ways:

- Ofsted inspects New Life Fostering to ensure it complies with the Social Care Inspection Framework which focuses 'on the things that matter most to children's lives'.
- The Registered Manager completes a Regulation 35 monitoring report at appropriate intervals.
- New Life Fostering's overall business performance is monitored by the Senior Management Team, chaired by the Director.
- New Life Fostering reports regularly to its own Improvement Board.
- New Life Fostering operates a variety of mechanisms to monitor fostering practice and ensure it continually improves.
- Individual staff performance is monitored in staff supervision.

16. Management of the Service: Structure as of February 2019





17. Staffing

There are 5 qualified social workers across the service (including managers) with differing responsibilities for and within the agency. All social workers hold a social work qualification and are registered with the HCPC.

There are 3 other members of staff in the agency who have vital support functions including management and key administrative roles.

18. Complaints

New Life Fostering has a complaints procedure. The procedure is made available to all children, parents and foster carers. A guide to making complaints is also available for children who are placed with foster carers and is in the Children's Guide.

You can contact us at:

New Life Fostering
90 New Town Row
Aston
Birmingham
B6 4HZ
Tel: 0121 359 8811
Email: fostering@newlifeagency.co.uk

All complaints made to the service are subject to a monitoring procedure. This assists the service to develop.

Foster carers and children are also able to make complaints to Ofsted who are responsible for the inspection and registration of the fostering agency. An inspector from Ofsted can be contacted at:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231
E-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk



19 Questions about this Statement

If you any questions or queries, please contact us at fostering@newlifeagency.co.uk

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