



Statement of Purpose

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Flying Colours Foster Care

Statement of Purpose

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1. **The Aims, Objectives and Principles**

Aims:

- i. Flying Colours has been established to offer Foster Care Placements to children and young people whose development has been impaired by abuse, trauma and neglect.
- ii. Flying Colours aims to provide a positive experience of family life which offers consistent levels of care, respect, affection and age appropriate boundaries to children and young people in order that they can grow and develop into well rounded adults capable of forming meaningful relationships despite their previously neglectful and damaging experiences.

Objectives:

To achieve these principle aims Flying Colours will:

- i. Recruit, retain and develop foster carers in order that Flying Colours can offer a broad range of appropriate placements for 'looked after' children and young people that gives due regard to racial, cultural, religious and linguistic needs of individual children.

- ii. Ensure a system is in place which provides for a supportive response to foster carers, local authorities and children and young people 24 hours a day.
- iii. Ensure that the five key outcomes of 'Every Child Matters' are central to the organisation's development and the day to day practice of staff and foster carers. Thus securing and maximising each child and young person's right to:
 - Be healthy
 - Stay safe
 - Enjoy and achieve
 - Make a positive contribution
 - Achieve economic well-being
- iv. Provide meaningful support and high quality training to foster carers in order to equip them with the skills and knowledge base necessary to undertake specialist foster care.
- v. Develop and maintain effective working relationships with placing local authorities in order to effectively implement and monitor the child or young person's care plan. Further, to ensure that through working collaboratively and seeking the views of the child or young person themselves, all opportunities to maximise their potential are explored.
This relates to all dimensions of the individual's development i.e. physical, emotional, psychological, educational and social.
- vi. Ensure the company is established and run on a sound financial basis, develops and maintains policies that comply with all relevant statutory requirements and maintains and improves best practice for carers and staff through training and supervision in order to provide a reliable, cost-effective and well informed placement service to local authority customers.
- vii. Provide suitably located office premises that are equipped with all furnishings, fittings and equipment necessary to ensure the safe management of information. Moreover, that the working environment is of high quality and reflects the standard of accommodation expected for all children placed with Flying Colours.

Principles and Values

Flying Colours' practice and conduct is informed by the following values and principles:

- i. Each individual is unique and has an inherent right to develop their potential regardless of their previous life experience.

- ii. Children have the right to be looked after by adults who offer them respect, concern, affection and experiences appropriate to their individual needs.
- iii. Adults need to respect the significance for the child of their birth family, their race, culture and religion, and their area of origin.
- iv. Children have the right to say what they think about anything which affects them. What they say must be listened to carefully.
- v. All behaviour is a communication.

2. **The Standards of Care to be Followed**

- i. The Directors of Flying Colours will ensure that the standards of care provided pay due regard to legal requirements and good practice recommendations arising from, but not limited to:
 - The Care Standards Act (2002)
 - The Children's Act (1989)
 - The Children's Act (2004)
 - The Fostering Services Regulations (England) (2011)
 - The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (2011)
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children
 - The Data Protection Act (1998)
- ii. The Registered Manager is responsible for the management, compliance and monitoring of all standards allied to the Foster Services Regulations (England) (2011)
 The Directors and Registered Manager regularly monitor the incidence of:
 - Child Protection allegations
 - Children who go missing without authority
 - Complaints and outcomes
 - All other 'significant events'
- iii. There is an established complaints procedure which is available for, and adaptable to the particular needs of:
 - Children and Young People
 - Foster Carers
 - Local Authorities
 - Birth Families
- iv. Safeguarding

Flying Colours safeguarding procedures lay down a clear format for the reporting of any child protection matter to the Flying Colours Registered Manager. The over-riding aim of the use of the guidelines and procedures is to ensure the safety and protection of children.

Flying Colours foster carers are required to care for children safely and securely, ensuring their protection and welfare at all times.

Every foster carer is required to undertake safeguarding and Safe Caring training and produces a household Safer Caring Policy, which sets out how they intend to ensure the protection of all children in the household. The Safer Caring Policy is reviewed every 6 months, or sooner if necessary, and with each new placement of a child.

Flying Colours has a clear policy that corporal punishment is not acceptable, this includes smacking, slapping, shaking and all other humiliating forms of treatment or punishment.

The organisation operates a Non-Smoking Policy for the protection and health of Looked After Children, which foster carers are expected to work towards.

On receipt of any allegation Flying Colours will, without undue delay, seek instruction from the child's placing authority and will also liaise and consult with the host authority.

Allegations of abuse against a foster carer or other members of the carer's household (including foster children) may result in a formal investigation under the provisions of Section 47 of the 1989 Children Act and Working Together to Safeguard Children 92015). The procedures and protocols to be followed in such cases are contained within the Foster Carer Handbook.

Flying Colours will aim to make contact with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) representatives at regular intervals to share and discuss policy and practice developments in child protection and to enhance good working relationships between agencies.

Flying Colours follows the 'Warner principles' when recruiting and selecting staff. Both the Director and Registered Manager hold responsibility for conducting DBS checks, employment safeguards, Local Authority checks, references and all employment safeguards.

v. Recruitment and Approval of Foster Carers

Flying Colours is committed to the recruitment of foster carers which can offer a broad range of placement choice to referring Local Authorities

paying due regard to racial, cultural, religious and linguistic needs of individual children.

Where individuals express an interest in becoming a foster carer, Flying Colours will gather basic information on the person's general suitability. If appropriate Flying Colours will forward more information on the work of the organisation together with a detailed description of the role of a foster carer.

If the individual remains interested, Flying Colours will arrange a home visit by one of its Social Workers where the applicant's interest and suitability can be further explored.

Should both parties agree to proceed, the applicant(s) are requested to complete a formal application form, including their consent for Flying Colours to undertake all checks necessary to ensure the applicant(s) have not taken part in any activity or behaved in a way that could endanger the safe care of children. Such checks will include:

- Identity Checks
- DBS (including all adult members of the household)
- Social Services Departments and their Child Protection Registers
- Other agencies as appropriate ie. NSPCC, Probation Service where applicable

Applicants will be required to undertake a medical examination with their GP, the result of which will be made available to Flying Colours Medical Advisor to ascertain any contra-indications to the role of fostering.

All applicants who meet the necessary criteria will be required to undertake preparation training where the role of a Foster Carer is more comprehensively explored together with their responsibilities to Flying Colours, children placed with them, birth families and the placing Local Authorities.

If appropriate, Flying Colours will allocate a qualified Social Worker to undertake a thorough assessment of the applicant using the current Form F format published by BAAF Coram.

The applicant's assessment is considered by the Flying Colours Fostering Panel who will make a recommendation as to the applicant's suitability to foster together with any attendant restrictions relating to gender, age range and numbers of children they may look after in the future.

The agency Decision Maker will make the final decision on the applicant's approval on behalf of the agency, taking into account the Foster Panel's recommendations.

Application, assessment and approval takes an average of 4-6 months to complete.

vi. The Fostering Panel

Flying Colours has a Fostering Panel which includes representatives of the agency and at least four independent members. The panel consider all applications from prospective foster carers based on the completed Form F Assessment.

All first annual reviews are considered by the panel, thereafter subsequent reviews will be considered by the panel at no longer than three yearly intervals. These subsequent reviews will be chaired by an independent reviewing officer.

The Flying Colours Fostering Panel will also advise and assist the agency in its development of policy and procedures.

The chair of the Fostering Panel will present an annual report on the Panel's activity to the Director of Flying Colours along with any recommendations to improve practice.

vii. Foster Care Agreement and Undertaking

Foster Care Agreements are undertaken following approval. All carers are issued with a hand book containing information, and expectations and responsibilities of Flying Colours in relation to:

- Standards of Care
- Support and Training
- Annual Carer Reviews
- Complaints and Grievance Procedures
- Child Protection Procedures
- Behaviour Management
- Confidentiality Policy
- Record Keeping
- Safe Care
- Legal Framework in relation to Foster Care and Looked After Children

All foster carers have an allocated supervising Social Worker who in addition to day to day support will visit the foster carers on not less than a monthly basis, or more often if necessary.

Foster carers have access to 24 hour support provided by qualified Social Workers.

A core training programme is provided for all foster carers in addition to more bespoke specialist training if this would maximise outcomes for a child or young person in their care.

3. The Service

- i. Flying Colours aims to provide a wide range of placements in order to offer the best possible placement choice to referring Local Authorities with particular matching needs for the children and young people in their care. Notwithstanding the specific individual needs, Flying Colours offers the following:
 - Long Term Placements
 - Permanency Placements
 - Short Term Placements
 - Respite Placements
 - Assessment Placements
 - Bridging to Adoption Placements
 - Emergency Placements
 - Sibling Group Placements
 - Parent and Child Placements
 - Sole Placements

Wherever possible pre-placement planning takes place in order to allow the child to meet their prospective foster carers and move in a planned way. This will include the drawing up of a placement agreement and allow time for any changes to the child's care plan.

In the case of emergency placements, Flying Colours will seek to have a placement agreement and planning meeting convened within seven working days.

- ii. Information For and From Children and Young People

Upon arrival at a Flying Colours family placement, each child or young person will be provided with a welcome pack which will include the following: a description of what the service seeks to achieve for children and young people, the standards of care they can expect, contact details of and guidance on how to exercise their right to an independent advocate, a clear explanation of the complaints procedure and finally the contact details of the registering authority for the service and those of other organisations/bodies which offer advice to children and young people i.e., Child line, The Who Cares Trust, The Children's Commissioner for England.

The organisation shall secure the facility to have the children's guide adapted to the needs of individual children i.e. in the case of sensory impairment or where English is not their first language.

4. **Status and Constitution**

Flying Colours Foster Care Limited, an Independent Fostering Provider, is a Private Limited Company, registered in England and Wales. Company No. 6403120.

Management Structure

Flying Colours Foster Care Ltd has two Directors:

James Hamil, Director of Fostering and Registered Manager

Debbie Hamil Responsible Individual

Jayne Westcott, non-executive Director and Agency Decision Maker.

The Directors take responsibility for maintaining, including update and review, of the following:

- Strategic Development
- All Policies and Procedures
- Values, Aims and Objectives

Flying Colours is managed by a Director of the company, (the Responsible Individual). A qualified Senior Manager, (the Registered Manager) is responsible for overseeing the day to day operational activity of the service, ensuring the services, support and developmental needs of all staff, carers and children and young people are consistently maintained to a high standard.

The Responsible Individual is Debbie Hamil

The Registered Manager is Jim Hamil

6. **Numbers of Staff, Foster Carers and Children in place (as at 21/04/17)**

Staff	3
Fostering Households	9
Children in Placement	14

7. **Number of Complaints and Outcomes in last 12 months**

None.

8. **Statement of Financial Position**

Available on request.

Contact details:

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