



Statement of Purpose April 2016

This statement of purpose is written in accordance with the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, part 2, regulations 3 and 4 and the National Minimum Standards (NMS), standard 16.

New Chapters FosterCare Statement of Purpose is available to:

- Anyone working for New Chapters FosterCare
- Current and prospective foster carers
- Any children placed with New Chapters FosterCare and the parents/primary carers of any such children
- Local Authorities
- Colleagues from other Social Care agencies
- Chief Inspector

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1. Introduction, aims and objectives

New Chapters FosterCare is an independent fostering agency (IFA) and is currently a private limited company registered under the Companies Act 1985 (company number 9282856). In accordance with the Companies Acts 1985 and 1989 we have produced a Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association. New Chapters FosterCare is dedicated to delivering a quality, therapeutically based fostering service. The statement of purpose, as required by **National Minimum Standards (Standard 16)** and the **Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 (Regulations 3 and 4)**, describes how the fostering service ensures best outcomes for children in foster care. It includes aims and objectives, values and legislation that guide service delivery and services provided.

Throughout this document the terms “child” and “children” refer to anyone aged 0-18 years.

There are three directors, Craig Walton (Registered Manager), Rosie Cavalot (Head of Therapy) and Martin George (Responsible Individual) who are responsible for the governance of the agency, as well as determining and ensuring all matters listed below are reviewed in line with our quality assurance policy.

- Values, principles and culture
- Strategic direction, vision and forward planning
- Annual business plan - reviewed and revised business plans will be developed and agreed by the directors prior to presentation to wider stakeholders for consultation and feedback
- Performance management, training & development programme

- Policies & procedures
- Financial management
- Self assessment report (SAR) and quality improvement plan (QIP)
- Legal compliance (including confidentiality and disclosure of information)
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Safeguarding

Our aim is to deliver a fostering service that offers an excellent range of foster care placements that promote and achieve the best possible outcomes for children. New Chapters foster placements offer a safe environment, where children have the opportunity to express their wishes and feelings, are listened to and have their views respected and, wherever possible, acted upon.

Our aim is to create and maintain a service that is local, has a ‘family feel’ and offers support by using a solution focused approach that will inform all aspects of the agency. We aim to fulfil objectives detailed in individual children’s care and placement plans, personal education plans (PEP’s) and any other relevant individual programmes. Our goal is to meet and exceed National Minimum Standards (NMS) for fostering services and comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

To ensure we achieve these aims we recruit, assess, train, support and supervise foster carers so they have the skills and experience to provide quality and stable placements. The catchment area for recruiting foster carers will be the West Midlands. New Chapters FosterCare will maintain a supportive and local presence to foster carers and local authorities within this geographical area. All staff and foster carers will promote and exceed National Minimum Standards while working towards achieving the five outcomes in the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well being

All managers and social workers are professionally qualified and registered individually with the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC). The wider company support, in terms of human resources (HR), accountancy and solicitors/legal support is provided by people who hold professional qualifications in their respective disciplines. New Chapters FosterCare holds appropriate professional indemnity and public liability insurances.

New Chapters FosterCare utilises a pool of independent workers who undertake work for the agency. For these workers verification of any necessary formal qualifications in relation to the work undertaken is obtained and our safe recruitment process is followed.

The Directors have engaged the services of a critical friend. The Directors meet quarterly with the critical friend to aid their reflection and learning and support the advancement of the agency. The critical friend is a trusted person who asks provocative questions and offers constructive critique of the agency. The critical friend is an advocate for the success of New Chapters FosterCare and introduces a degree of scrutiny at the senior management level, ensuring we remain on course to fulfil our company's aims and objectives. The person we have engaged as our critical friend is a very experienced social worker who has held middle and senior management positions.

2. Values and legal framework

The values of New Chapters FosterCare are consistent with those embedded in the National Minimum Standards, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 and any good practice guidance relevant to fostering or looked after children that is issued nationally or locally. There are a set of key values that New Chapters FosterCare places particular emphasis on;

- the child's welfare, safety and needs are at the centre of the care afforded to them
- children should have an enjoyable childhood, benefiting from excellent parenting, education and healthcare, whilst enjoying a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills, leading to a successful adult life
- children are entitled to grow up in a loving environment that can meet their physical, emotional and social developmental needs
- every child should have his or her wishes and feelings listened to and taken into account in all decisions about their well-being



- each child should be valued as an individual and given personalised support, consistent with their individual needs and background in order to develop their identity, self-confidence, self-belief and self-worth
- the particular needs of disabled children and children with complex needs will be fully recognised and taken into account
- the significance of contact for looked after children with their birth and wider family is recognised, as is the foster carer role in this

- children in foster care deserve to be treated as a good parent would treat their own children and to have the opportunity for as full an experience of family life and childhood as possible, without unnecessary restrictions
- the central importance of the child's relationship with their foster carer should be acknowledged and foster carers should be recognised as core members of the team working with the child
- foster carers have a right to full information about the child
- it is essential that foster carers receive relevant support services and development opportunities in order to provide the best care for children
- genuine partnership between all those involved in fostering is essential to deliver the best outcomes for children. This includes the Government, local government, other statutory agencies, fostering service providers and foster carers

Our Statement of Purpose meets the requirements arising from regulations and guidance that are in force regarding children in care and consideration has been given to the following;

- Children Act 1989 (as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002)
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Young Person's Act 2008
- Children and Families Act 2014

It has also considered further key regulations and guidance and these include:



New Chapters FosterCare

- *Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 as amended by the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013*
- *Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 as amended by the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013*

- *Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations volume 4 – Fostering Services as amended by the Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers: Amendments to the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations volume 4*
- *Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations volume 2 – Care Planning, Placement and Case Review as amended by the Delegation of Authority: Amendments to the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations volume 2*
- *Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations volume 3 – Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers*
- *Independent Review of Determinations (Adoption and Fostering) Regulations 2009*
- *Data Protection Act 1998*
- *The Children (Leaving Care) Regulations 2010*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013*
- *National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services*

Collectively these form the basis of the regulatory framework for the provision of fostering services and the inspection framework used by Ofsted

3. Services and support provided

New Chapters FosterCare approves foster carers to look after children 0-18 years of age. The carers provide safe, stable, nurturing and therapeutic foster placements and, along with the agency and the placing authority, develop flexible packages of support to meet the assessed needs of the children in placement.

The range of placements offered includes:

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- emergency
 - respite
 - short term (including shared care regular short breaks)
 - medium term
 - bridging
 - long term
 - sibling group
-
- parent and child
 - children with disabilities
 - solo
 - unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC)

All requests for placements follow a matching process to make sure the competencies and knowledge of our foster carers meet the needs of each child placed. New Chapters Fostercare ensures the children placed retain contact with their family and friends where appropriate. All placements are discussed with the placing local authority and individual placement contracts are agreed in accordance with current legislation.

Consistent with the regulatory framework, placement plans are completed for each child, covering aspects such as essential information and delegation of authority. Pre-placement preparation takes place wherever possible. For children placed, risk assessments and safe caring processes are completed. We ensure that our foster carers adhere to all health and safety requirements within the care environment.

New Chapters Fostercare provides an out of hours duty service (365 days per year) to foster carers with foster placements.

The therapeutic approach we have chosen to underpin our practice is the solution focused model. Essentially the solution focused narrative has refined two simple ideas in supporting children. Instead of trying to understand and fix problems, the solution focused approach works by charting a way forward and then seeking the resources needed to take this path.

The guiding principles centre on;



- working with the child rather than the problem
- looking for resources with the child rather than deficits
- exploring possible and preferred futures with the child
- exploring what is already contributing to those possible futures and treating the child as the one who is most knowledgeable about all aspects of their life.

Our approach offers a pragmatic way of talking with children in their day to day lives in order to bring about positive change.

Running parallel to the therapeutic model will be the role of our senior practitioner and supervising social workers (SSW's). Our senior practitioner and SSW's will each manage a caseload of 12-14 fostering households. They will have regular contact with the foster carers and children in placement. They will complete unannounced visits and be part of the out of hours service offered to foster carers. The SSW will liaise with the team around the child and contribute to the formal meetings that take place regarding a child in care. They will assess, plan and review the competencies of the foster carers on their caseload. This will enable them to respond to any training needs to help foster carers achieve, maintain and exceed the Training Support and Development (TSD) and the national minimum standards. The SSW will complete outcome trackers on the children placed, in consultation with the foster carers and placing authority.

New Chapters FosterCare believes that the recruitment and retention of dedicated and highly competent carers is fundamental to its success. Recruitment and retention success is based firmly upon the highest standards of support, management and training. New Chapters FosterCare ensures we enable our carers to meet the needs of the children they look after, and to that end they receive:

- dedicated support 24 hours per day, 365 days per year
- minimum of a monthly visit from their SSW
- regular phone support
- support in meeting the child's educational needs
- support of their SSW at professional agency meetings
- generous fostering allowance whilst a child is in placement
- regular programme of training and development covering core and enhanced training topics



- regular support group meetings
- organised activities for children
- buddy and mentoring programme

A SSW or relevant professional from New Chapters Fostercare will complete unannounced visits at least annually. For each unannounced visit, the SSW or relevant professional will complete an unannounced visit report, a copy of which will be given to the foster carer. A copy will also be placed on the foster carer's file. Any areas of concern will be addressed during the next available supervision or, in the case of any areas of serious concern, reported directly to the Registered Manager and Panel.

A compliments and complaints procedure is in place, along with a management monitoring system. New Chapters Fostercare uses compliments to inform best practice and complaints are always taken seriously, and we make every attempt to resolve problems and discontent through dialogue and negotiation. New Chapters Fostercare believes every carer, child and partner agency has a voice and a right for this to be heard. Comments, compliments and complaints are a useful medium to help develop the services delivered by the agency.

A whistle blowing policy is in place for foster carers, staff, children and partner agencies.

Any foster carer or foster child may choose to contact our regulator, Ofsted, directly regarding any complaint/allegation concerning the standard of service provided by New Chapters Fostercare, or about the management of our service. New Chapters Fostercare will co-operate fully with any investigation conducted by Ofsted.

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The Registered Manager will automatically refer any serious complaints against foster carers to Ofsted, for information, and will advise Ofsted of the outcome of any investigation.

All complaints, representations and allegations against foster carers are monitored by the Registered Manager and reported to the management group. Their outcomes are annually evaluated as a basis for informing future service provision. Comments and compliments are also collated, analysed and included in management reports. Information from these processes will be shared with staff and the fostering panel.

4. Children's guide and listening to children

Subject to the child's age and understanding, New Chapters Fostercare ensures the child receives the children's guide to being fostered at the point of placement and that the foster carer explains the contents of the children's guide in a way that is understandable. Family support workers will also look at these with the child when they complete their first introductory visit.

The children's guide includes a summary of what the fostering service sets out to do for children, how they can find out about their rights, how a child can contact their independent reviewing officer (IRO), children's rights director or Ofsted if they wish to raise a concern.

We take children's views into account when developing future paperwork and policies. They will be supported and encouraged in making decisions and being involved in reviews, where they are of an age and understanding to be able to contribute. Through the family support service New Chapters Fostercare will develop regular groups for both looked after children and birth children of foster carers. This will provide an opportunity for children to share their experience of foster care. On receiving a complaint or allegation from a child, New Chapters Fostercare will always take the matter seriously and act in accordance with the agency policy.

NB: This Statement of Purpose will be updated at least annually or when a significant change occurs.