

Swindon Borough Council

Induction of Foster Carers Policy and Guidance

Table of Contents

Section	Page(s)
Introduction and legal framework	3
<u>The first six weeks after approval</u>	5
<u>The first twelve months after approval</u>	7

1.1 Introduction and Legal Framework

1.2 It is important that foster carers receive the support and supervision they need in order to provide good care for the children and young people who are placed with them. The giving of information starts at the pre-approval stage when carers are provided training. As part of the assessment they also undertake tasks that help them to prepare for the job they are about to embark on e.g. safer caring policy. It is crucial that this support, guidance and information giving continues after approval and throughout their career. The guidance in this document is for the induction of new carers who have been approved or who are temporarily approved as foster carers.

1.3 The National Minimum Standards for Fostering states:

20.1) All new foster carers receive an induction.

20.2) All foster carers, including all members of a household who are approved foster carers, are supported to achieve the Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care. Short break carers who are approved foster carers are supported to achieve the Training Support & Development Standards for Short Break Carers. Family and friends foster carers are supported to achieve the Training, Support and Development Standards for Family and Friends Foster Carers.

21.10) On approval, foster carers are given information, a copy of the handbook, and Finance handbook electronically and also electronic resources, which cover policies, procedures (including with regard to allegations), guidance, financial information, legal information and insurance details. This information is updated regularly.

2.0 The first six weeks after approval (or temporary approval)

2.1 Within the first six weeks of being approved the foster carer should be invited to attend an induction meeting with a Manger in the fostering team Fostering Team. The foster carers should also meet with their supervising social worker who will ensure that they have been provided with the following induction information. Ideally these meetings should take place prior to any children or young people being placed.

2.2 The areas on the induction checklist should be discussed with the carers and this should be recorded with dates to confirm completion.

This induction includes the areas outlined below:

- All foster carers should be provided with or know how to access the foster carer handbook and relevant policies and procedures.
- Ensure that foster carers have the secure and lockable place where they can store confidential information
- SSW to discuss with the foster carer the expectation regarding keeping logs, recording medication and completion of incident forms.
- SSW to go through the Foster Carer Agreement with the carers and ensure that this is understood and signed
- Provide carers with copies of the expense claims forms and talk to them about how and when these should be completed
- Complete the supervision agreement, discuss with the carers the purpose of supervision, how this will be recorded and agree future supervision dates
- Ensure that carers are aware of the Statement of Purpose and how they can access this
- Ensure that the foster carers profiles have been completed, up to date and scanned on the carers electronic record so it is accessible to those who may be making placements.
- Discuss with carers what to expect regarding information about a child and check that they know what information they should be asking for when considering a placement
- Ensure that the foster carer understands the purpose of the statutory reviews for children looked after and their role within this

- Provide carers with a copy of the Children's Guide
- Ensure that the carers have access to the current foster carer training programme
- Complete the Personal Development Plan for each carer which should include the core induction modules which should be completed within 12 or 18 months of approval
- Ensure the carers are registered with Moodle and are able to complete their training.
- Ensure that the foster carers have the appropriate TSD (Training, Support and Development) Standards induction workbook. This should have been provided during the assessment stage. SSW to discuss with the foster carer a strategy as to how the foster carer(s) will be able to gain the knowledge and experience to enable them to evidence the workbook. For carers who are not temporarily approved it is also advisable to check that they have received the cross referencing grid linking the assessment process with the Training, Support and Development (TSD) Standards so this can contribute to their workbook. Those who are temporary approved should receive this when their assessment has been completed.
- Ensure that the Safe Care Family Plan has been completed and Shared with all family/household members. The foster carer should be provided with a copy of the 'Safer Caring' book from Fostering Network
- Foster carers to have a fire plan and to arrange for a Fire safety visit from the fire service
- Inform the carers that they will be given membership with Fostering Network and ensure that the process for them to become members is completed
- Ensure that the carers are aware of the Swindon Foster Carer Association and contact numbers and email addresses are provided
- Ensure that the Foster carers and their children are provided with information about Kids united and inspiring youths.
- Ensure that the carers have the relevant telephone numbers of the SSW and phone numbers of the support line and the out of hours emergency telephone number. In addition to this provide other relevant phone numbers
- Provide the carer with the name and telephone number of the fostering team manager.

- Ensure that the foster carers are aware of the complaints procedure for themselves as well as the 'have your say' procedures for any comments, compliments or complaints for children and young people.
- Discuss the possibility of putting the foster carers in touch with a more experienced foster carer as an additional support.
- Provide carers with the information about local support groups and how they might access these
- Provide carers with information about the role of the Virtual School
- Provide foster carers with information about the role of the children looked after health team
- Arrange for ID cards for the carers to be completed.

Any outstanding actions from the above list should be clearly recorded in the supervision record and monitored to ensure that they are all completed.

3.0 The first twelve months after approval (or temporary approval)

- SSW's to monitor completion of all the tasks noted above and continue to note in supervision if there are areas that have not been completed, the reasons for this and the plan to ensure they are completed.
- Supervising Social Workers to monitor and give feedback on the carers record keeping, this includes foster carer logs and medication.
- The TSD (Training, Support and Development Standards) workbooks should be worked through to ensure that the carers have all the information and evidence they require to complete the appropriate workbook. Workbooks should be completed within the appropriate timescales (12 months from approval for foster carers and short break carers and 18 months for family and friends carers)
- SSW's to discuss the carers on-going development and help them to identify further training and development needs and how these may be met.
- Foster carers to maintain their own personal learning and development record and supervising social workers to ensure that this information is also recorded on the foster carer file.
- Ensure that foster carers have access to and an understanding of all the relevant policies and know how to access these
- Foster carers have an understanding of the purpose of the annual household review and are clear about who is consulted for feedback and the feedback that foster carers and their families are expected to provide
- Foster carers to have completed their Annual household review meeting and to attend Foster Panel for their first review.