

## Fostering Service Monitoring Report Form (England) for NMS 25 and Regulation 35 reports

### 1. Introduction

Name of fostering service	Together for Children Fostering Sunderland
Period covered by the report	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022
Name of person completing the form	Daniel Kenny
Position in the fostering service	Registered Manager
Date form was completed	6 <sup>th</sup> May 2022

Date of last Ofsted inspection	September 2018
Overall judgement	Good
Statutory requirements for improvement (with dates)	

A fostering service provider must maintain a case record for each foster parent approved by them which must include copies of the documents specified in paragraph (2) and the information specified in paragraph (3).

The documents referred to in paragraph (1) are—

- (b) any recommendations made by the fostering panel,
- (d) the foster care agreement,  
(Regulation 30 (1)(2)(b)(d))

To be actioned by 30/11/18

#### Action undertaken to meet those requirements

This requirement was fulfilled within the necessary timescale. A new Foster Carer agreement was sent to all carers upon the launch of the new training, support and finance scheme in April 2019. In addition, revised Foster Care agreements are shared with carers following a change in their approval or following initial approval as foster carers with TfC.

#### Recommendations for improvement (with dates)

- Ensure that reviews of foster carers' approval are sufficiently thorough to allow the fostering service to properly satisfy itself about their carers' ongoing suitability to foster. ('Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards', 13.8) This is with particular regard to ensuring that all foster carers have their background checks refreshed every three years in line with the organisation's policy.

TfC Fostering have updated the use of our recording systems to inform Fostering Social Worker's via automated email, six months prior to expiry, that a DBS check is due for renewal. This process should ensure that all checks are returned to TfC in line with the organisation's policy.

- Ensure that the fostering service only suggests foster carers to local authorities as a potential match for a child if the foster carer can reasonably be expected to meet the child's assessed needs and the impact of the

placement on existing household members has been considered. Where gaps are identified, the fostering service should work with the responsible authority to ensure the placement plan sets out any additional training, resource or support required. ('Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards', 15.1)

Matching continues to be a pressure within the service, however our working group is established to update and develop matching paperwork and a greater emphasis across the team is in place to record the detail of matching conversations alongside the use of Fostering Champions who are linked to each team across Together for Children. In consultation with TfC's *Change Council*, a group of Cared For children and young people, our referral forms have been revised to ensure more effective exchange of information is undertaken between the placing Social Worker and Fostering Social Worker. In addition, the Foster Carer profile template has been revised which can be shared with placing Social Workers at the point when a match is being considered.

- Ensure that foster carers maintain an ongoing training and development portfolio which demonstrates how they are meeting the skills required of them by the fostering service. ('Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards', 20.4)

The social care system has now been developed to allow us to access a report for each individual carer. The established foster carer online portal also collates information for individual carers, including their learning logs and certificates of attendance (only released once learning log completed). Within the reporting period, TfC Fostering have invested significantly in our online training offer within this review period and any training completed is recorded within our electronic training record and considered as part of the carers Professional Development Plan.

- Ensure that each approved foster carer is supervised by a named, appropriately qualified social worker who has meetings with the foster carer, including at least one unannounced visit a year. Meetings have a clear purpose and provide the opportunity to supervise the foster carer's work, ensure the foster carer is meeting the child's needs, taking into account the child's wishes and feelings, and offer support and a framework to assess the carer's performance and develop their competencies and skills. The frequency of meetings for short break foster carers should be proportionate to the amount of care provided. Foster carers' files include records of supervisory meetings. ('Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards', 21.8)

We can now access a report from the social care system in relation to completion of monthly supervision of carers and unannounced visits. In respect of the monitoring of the quality of carer supervisions, this is conducted via dip sampling and developing an audit tool to explore the quality of the work produced. Furthermore, within this reporting period, TfC Fostering has implemented an audit process to further embed the oversight of the quality of work produced by the service and to explore any themes that may benefit the organisation.

- Ensure that the fostering service has and implements a written policy that clarifies the purpose, format and content of information to be kept on the fostering service's files, on the child's files and on case files relating to foster carers. ('Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards', 26.1)

A policy has been developed and shared with staff and carers. Regular attendance at Care Team Meetings and Cared for Reviews ensure that children's information is kept up to date along with the implementation of recording files for both carers and children's record.

- Ensure that staff, volunteers, panel members and fostering households understand the nature of records maintained and follow the service's policy for the keeping and retention of files, managing confidential information and access to files (including files removed from the premises). There is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take action when needed. ('Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards', 26.2)

A training course has been developed for carers and staff encouraged to attend. Training specific to panel members is built into the introduction to panel training and is planned to be part of a panel training day later this year. The implementation of full case file audits and within case supervision assist with the adherence to his.

Action undertaken to meet those recommendations

See above

## 2. Summary data

Foster carers				
Expressions of interest	April – June 2021 - 8 July – Sep 2021 - 5 Oct – Dec 2021 - 8 Jan – March 2022 - 14			
Assessments completed	There has been a total of 48 assessments completed within the reporting period.			
Assessments ongoing	18			
Approvals	Temporary Foster Carers (Reg 24) – 91 Connected Carers – 19 Mainstream Carers – 9 Long Team Permanence at Panel – 25			
Reviews completed	There have been 185 foster carer reviews completed within the reporting period.			
Foster carer training		2021	2022	
	ADHD Fostering	3	1	
	Adoption Fostering	1	0	
	Adverse Childhood Experiences Fostering	2	2	
	Advocacy Training Fostering	0	1	
	An Introduction to Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Abuse Fostering	1	1	
	Anti-Bullying Advanced Level Fostering	1	0	
	Anti Bullying Charter Mark	0	1	
	Anti-Bullying Fostering	28	6	
	Attachment	5	5	
	Attachment And Bonding Advanced Level Fostering	13	6	
	Autism Awareness	1	0	
	Autism Spectrum Disorder Fostering	1	0	
	Babies Withdrawing From Addictions Fostering	2	0	
	Basic First Aid	2	0	
	Caring For Sexually Abused Children Advanced Level Fostering	28	5	
	Caring for Sexually Abused Children Fostering	39	6	
	Child Development	7	3	
	Child Development Advanced Level Fostering	25	5	
	Child Development Fostering	28	7	
	Child Exploitation Fostering	3	2	
	Child Sexual Exploitation Advanced Level Fostering	11	5	
	Child Sexual Exploitation And Child Exploitation Fostering	17	7	
	Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Fostering	1	0	
	Communicating With Children Advanced Level Fostering	1	0	
	Communicating with Children Fostering	1	0	
	Complex Trauma Advanced Level Fostering	1	1	
	Connected Carer Initial Workshop	0	3	
	Contact and Birth Families Fostering	42	11	
	COSHH Fostering	17	7	

	Criminal Exploitation And County Lines Fostering	1	0
	CSE	9	5
	Cyberbullying Advanced Level Fostering	9	2
	Cyber Security Fostering	13	5
	Delegated Authority	6	0
	Depression And Suicide Fostering	2	0
	Domestic Abuse: Children And Young People Fostering	3	0
	Drugs and Alcohol Awareness Fostering	0	1
	Eating Disorders Fostering	2	3
	Emergency Duty Crisis & Child Expl	3	0
	Emergency Duty Team	5	0
	Equality And Diversity Advanced Level Fostering	9	3
	Equality and Diversity Distance Learning	0	1
	Equality and Diversity E-Learning	4	2
	Equality And Diversity Fostering	25	6
	Equality And Diversity Specialist Fostering	1	0
	E Safety	1	0
	Every Disabled Child Matters Fostering	1	0
	FASD	4	0
	Female Genital Mutilation Awareness Fostering	2	2
	Female Genital Mutilation Level 1 Fostering	11	2
	Fire Safety Fostering	19	9
	First Aid Essentials Fostering	20	8
	First Aid Refresher Fostering	6	1
	Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Fostering	2	0
	Food Safety And Hygiene Advanced Fostering	15	1
	Food Safety And Hygiene Fostering	7	0
	Food Safety And Hygiene Foundation Fostering	12	4
	Gangs And County Lines Fostering	1	2
	GDPR For Foster Carers Fostering	4	1
	General Data Protection Regulation Fostering	11	1
	General Data Protection Regulation Office Based Employee	2	0
	Health And Nutrition Fostering	11	8
	Health And Safety Fostering	25	4
	Impact of Abuse	28	15
	Impact of Sexual Abuse	1	1
	Infection Control Fostering	16	5
	Internet Safety Advanced Level Fostering	39	6
	Isolation Fostering	1	1
	LGBT Fostering	2	0
	Life Story Work	9	3
	Life Story Work Fostering	34	14
	Managing Allegations	4	5
	Managing Allegations Fostering	44	15
	Managing Challenging Behaviour Fostering	1	0
	Manual Handling Fostering	13	3

	Medication Advanced Fostering	24	0
	Medication Foundation Fostering	16	4
	Mental Health Fostering	1	0
	Mental Health Suite Module 1-The Prevalence Of Mental Health Problems In Children And Young People Fostering	3	0
	Mental Health Suite Module 2-Common Mental Health Problems In Children And Young People Fostering	5	0
	Mental Health Suite Module 3-Less Common Mental Health Problems In Children And Young People Fostering	4	0
	Mental Health Suite Module 6 - Risk And Protective Factors In The Development Of Mental Health Problems In Children And Young Pe	1	0
	Mental Health Suite Module 7-The Effect Of Social Media On The Mental Health Of Children And Young People Fostering	0	1
	Missing From Care Advanced Level Fostering	1	0
	Moving Forward With Delegated Authority Fostering	36	9
	Online safety	1	0
	Online Safety Fostering	3	0
	Other	50	27
	Paediatric First Aid	11	4
	Paediatric First Aid Fostering	34	17
	Permanence Training	9	9
	Play Therapy Fostering	5	1
	Prevent	26	0
	Radicalisation And Extremism Fostering	10	2
	Record Keeping	3	0
	Reporting And Recording Advanced Level Fostering	25	4
	Reporting And Recording Fostering	29	11
	Risk Assessment Fostering	1	0
	Risk Management And Safer Caring Fostering	42	9
	Safeguarding Adults Level 1 Fostering	8	2
	Safeguarding Adults Level 2 Fostering	7	2
	Safeguarding Children Advanced Level Fostering	14	2
	Safeguarding Children Foundation Fostering	13	0
	Safeguarding Children With Learning Disabilities Fostering	12	1
	Safer Caring	2	0
	Safer Handling of Medication	1	0
	Secure Attachment and Bonding Fostering	41	9
	Secure Base Model	2	3
	Self-Harm Advanced Level Fostering	1	0
	Self-Harming Behaviours Fostering	14	6
	Sexualised Behaviour Advanced Level Fostering	1	0
	Skills to Foster	12	0
	Solihull Approach	37	20
	Stress Management Fostering	1	0
	Support Group	159	45
	Supporting Boys and Young Men Affected by Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Fostering	2	0
	The Impact Of Trauma On Sensory Processing Fostering	2	1
	Therapeutic Care Fostering	2	2

	Theraplay	14	14
	Training and Development Standards	18	63
	Trauma Fostering	0	1
	Using Basic Theraplay Techniques Fostering	29	8
Foster carer support groups	Monthly support groups, including guest speakers have taken place each month in the reporting period. Due to the removal of restrictions, support groups have returned to in person since January 2022, something which foster carers have informed us was their preference.		
Terminations of approval	We have had 15 foster carers resign over the reporting period, 0 of these resignations were because of the agency raising standards of care concerns, and all were for a range of personal reasons.  We have had 18 foster carers temporarily approved under Regulation 24 whose approval has ceased within the 16-week period.		
Number of foster carers	182 fostering households		
Comment, analysis, and any action taken			
<p>TfC have continued to invest significantly into our online training programme and the uptake on the variety of courses has been high. We have consulted our carers regarding their preference in respect of accessing training and the majority of carers have preferred a hybrid approach to online and in person training. The service has been able to respond to this feedback and whilst continuing to offer a significant number of training courses online, in person training has continued including the facilitation of paediatric first aid and Solihull Therapeutic Parenting, TfC Fostering's behaviour management programme.</p> <p>Within the reporting period, we strengthened our relationships with Fostering Network and have been able to successfully launch two Mockingbird Family Model constellations.</p> <p>In addition to this, we have appointed a permanent full-time consultant child psychologist, Dr Harrison, to the service which has been very well received by both carers and Social Workers alike. Dr Harrison is currently supporting the service with the roll out of enhanced training to foster carers in order to support their training and development alongside the offer of regular consultation sessions with foster carers and advice to Social Workers in respect of a range of issues.</p>			

<b>Children and young people</b>	
Referrals	193
New placements	95
Placements ended	41
Unplanned endings	8
Number of children	164
<b>Comment, analysis, and any action taken</b>	
<p>Demand upon the service remains high with the requests for older children and sibling groups remaining challenging to find homes for. Performance colleagues are able to provide us with detailed breakdowns of unplanned endings and disruptions will allow us to monitor these closely and learn from each event. The number of children and young people received for referral within this reporting period are from Together for Children Sunderland as the placing authority.</p> <p>However, a disruption policy has been reviewed, implemented and disruption meetings are now held, being chaired by an Assistant Team Manager within the service. Currently this covers permanent homes for children who have lived there in excess of 3 year and children who have had multiple unplanned endings.</p>	

### 3. Detailed data

<b>Compliance with care plan</b>
<p>Within the reporting period, the Foster Carer Supervision template has been further updated throughout the reporting period to allow for greater reflection between FSW (Fostering Social Worker) and the foster care to reflect a Signs of Safety/Success/Wellbeing approach. This should ensure, that the carer is clear about the care plan for each child, and that the child is aware, subject to their age and understanding within this model of working which is the model of practice within the TfC wider organisation. It also considers if the carer is supporting each child to contribute their views, and know their plan as well as identifying if the carer contributes to the care planning process via attendance at meeting's etc.</p> <p>The Fostering Service has continued to work closely with the IRO service to ensure compliance with care plans, the IRO manager and Fostering Registered Manager are in regular contact and any issues/concerns are raised and addressed. The Fostering Service currently manually collates data on unplanned endings; however, this information is also monitored via Foster Carer Reviews with a report by the FSW having managerial oversight within the FSW's report.</p> <p>During the reporting period 10 young people have moved on to access 'staying put' arrangements and 32 children have moved on to live with prospective adopters.</p>



**Accidents, injuries and illnesses**

Evidence of notification under schedule 7 regarding death of a child, serious illness or accident, or outbreak of infectious disease

Within the annual reporting period, there have been 91 schedule 7 notifications regarding serious illness or accident or outbreak of infectious disease. 86 of these relate to either a foster carer or cared for child being positive for Covid-19, 3 incidents of self-harm and 2 of broken bones.

Comment and any action undertaken to improve care provided

The vast majority of these notifications within the reporting period are due to the outbreak of Covid 19 within a fostering household. Carers have responded excellently to the challenges the pandemic has placed upon them and the children they care for.

**Medication, medical treatment and first aid administered**

**Comment and any action undertaken to improve care provided**

The Foster Carer Supervision template includes prompts for discussion around medication, medical treatment and first aid. Together for Children established a relationship with The Big Initiative training provider and carers, Fostering Social Workers and Panel Members can now access a range of training programmes via this tool.

Mandatory Paediatric First Aid training is held and repeated every three years for all carers and can be extended to adult household members should the need arise. Within *The Big Initiative*, our online training platform, a significant increase in the online training offer to support carers understanding of these issues, including the safe handling and storage of medication has been provided. Carers have welcomed this addition to our training offer and the return of in person training to cover paediatric first aid.

**Measures of control, restraint or discipline**

**Comment and any action undertaken to improve care provided**

Face to face supervision of foster carers has continued uninterrupted throughout the reporting period, mindful of the management of risks to Fostering Social Workers and carers. Risk assessments have been in place to ensure that this risk is managed and balanced against the need to offer support and supervision to all carers and ensure the most vulnerable children and young people are seen regularly.

In addition to the training programmes available via The Big Initiative, we have continued in the roll out of the Solihull Parenting Programme having now trained over 150 carers within this approach.

In May 2021 and again in February 2022, TfC launched a Mockingbird Family Model constellation. The model of delivering foster care includes 15 fostering families and over 35 children and young people with an aim of providing a high level of peer support to the carers and normalising the care experience for those children and young people. We are currently waiting on our first annual data analysis report from Fostering Network which will provide the summary of the costs saved, avoided and overall impact of the model.

**Complaints in relation to children/about foster carers, and their outcomes**

Summary	<p>There have been no schedule 7 notifications regarding a serious complaint about a foster carer.</p> <p>During the reporting period there have been 41 compliments submitted to Together for Children's Compliments and Complaints Department.</p>
---------	--

**Evidence of notification under schedule 7 regarding any serious complaint about a foster carer, or information being provided to the Disclosure and Barring Service**

Within the current reporting period we have submitted no notifications to the DBS service.

**Allegations or suspicions of abuse or neglect, and investigation outcomes**

Evidence	<p>There have been 21 foster carers referred to the Designated Officer within the reporting period. Of those 21, 10 cases met the threshold for Designated Officer involvement and 11 were recorded advice given only and did not meet threshold.</p> <p>Of the 10 cases that were accepted, 3 were closed and all of these were recorded as unsubstantiated. The remaining 7 are open cases with no conclusion to date. There are 3 cases from November 2021 still open (1 police investigation and 2 Standards of Care) and 4 cases that are currently being investigated.</p>
----------	--

**Evidence of notification under schedule 7 regarding instigation and outcome of any child protection inquiry, or suspicion/involvement of child in "prostitution"**

There have been 5 schedule 7 notifications submitted due to 'instigation and outcome of any child protection enquiry.'

**Comment and any action undertaken to improve care provided**

As a service we continue to develop relationships with the Designated Officer and are introducing regular monitoring and information sharing meetings. This has allowed us to monitor trends and develop an appropriate action plan as required.

**Children missing without permission**

Evidence of notification under schedule 7 regarding a child missing from placement

There have been no notifications in this regard.

Comment and any action undertaken to improve care provided

Our ability to report using our social care system allows us to receive information in relation to children that go missing, this includes data around the child and the carer with whom they are living. This data is included within the agenda within the monthly management meetings. This data will allow us to identify any themes or trends that may emerge.

Additional training from colleagues who work within the Emergency Duty Team is also provided to carers to assist in their understanding of these issues.

**Allegations that a child has committed a serious offence**

Evidence of notification under schedule 7 regarding allegations that a child has committed a serious offence

There have been no incidences within the reporting year whereby a child has committed a serious offence and as such no notifications of this regard have been made to Ofsted.

**Serious incident necessitating police being called to the foster carer's home**

Evidence of notification under schedule 7 regarding a serious incident necessitating police being called to the foster carer's home

There have been 10 notifications made to this regard.

#### 4. Staffing

<b>Summary of staffing position</b>
<p>Registered Manager – Full time Assistant Team Managers – 2 FT Fostering Social Workers – 12 Assistant Fostering Officer – 1FT</p> <p>During the reporting period there have been some staffing changes, however the staff team is currently stable and with full compliment. Any vacancies are immediately advertised and recruited using safer recruitment guidance.</p>
<b>Recruitment of new staff</b>
<p>Recruitment of new staff is undertaken with the support and guidance of the Human Resources Department within Together for Children. HR ensures that appropriate checks are in place and saved on file prior to appointment.</p>
<b>Staff supervision</b>
<p>All staff have a named supervisor and receive monthly personal and case supervision. The TM undertakes ad hoc dip sampling of the supervision records for all staff. The monthly management meeting has a standing agenda item of 'staffing' and key points relating to individual staff members are explored within this.</p>
<b>Staff training</b>
<p>The current team plan was developed in September 2021. The plan incorporates a section on staff training and allows team members to influence training that is identified. Within the reporting year staff have also had access to training on Foster Care Supervision, the social care system, signs of safety, Train the trainers in relation to Solihull Parenting Programme (not whole staff team), Mental Health First Aid and Robust Analysis and an Evidence Based Approach Assessment. We have also supported Social Workers within the team to complete their Practice Educator Award's to support their development.</p>
<b>Staff appraisals</b>
<p>Staff appraisals are completed annually, and the development of a personal development plan is used throughout the following year.</p>
<b>Staff meetings</b>
<p>Team meetings are held monthly, they are chaired by the TM or an ATM in his absence and minutes are taken on a rota basis by members of the team. Within the reporting period, team meetings have been held in person to support colleagues as is their preference.</p>
<b>Comment and any action undertaken to improve care provided</b>
<p>Staff enjoy having areas of responsibility which they can 'own' and develop. They also appreciate their regular supervision and accessibility of both assistant team managers and the team manager. We work with a whole team approach which is supportive to all. The further established Connected Carer team within the reporting period has continued to expand the benefits of this specialised service and these are continuing to feed into the wider service.</p>

## 5. Fostering panel

### Summary of panel

The Fostering Panel has continued to function at full capacity during the reporting year and has returned to in person since January 2022. The Panel Chair, Panel Advisor and Panel Members have remained committed to their roles during this time and therefore as a panel the meetings have been quorate with a least 5 members in attendance at each panel, despite the changes to the regulations for quoracy.

Additional panels have been facilitated to meet the increased demand for cases to be heard, alongside the panel's planned introduction of Permanence Panels to consider the permanence planning for children 13 years and under. The Registered Manager is Panel Advisor for the Permanence Panels.

Fostering Panel are currently exploring how the use of alternative platforms such as Microsoft Forms can be utilised to increase the frequency of panel feedback received to further develop the panel experience for Social Workers and applicants.

### Panel meetings

There has been 26 Fostering Panels held during the reporting period.

**Cases considered and recommendations**

- Connected Carers – 36 Cases considered, recommendation to approve 30 cases and not approve 4, 7 deferred.
- Mainstream Foster Carers – 18, recommendation to approve all 18 carers
- Regulation 25's – 32, recommendation to approve 31, 1 deferred
- First Reviews – 17, recommendation on-going approval for all 17 cases
- Resignations – 26 including 16 connected carers
- Deregistration's – 2 due to the care afforded

**Panel feedback**

Evaluation forms completed by the applicants, the assessing Social Workers and where appropriate the child's allocated Social Worker in respect of their attendance at the Fostering Panel continues to be requested and the responses are collated and to date this has been largely positive. Applicants refer to being made to feel at ease by a professional but friendly panel, where time is taken to listen to their views.

**Training and appraisals**

Panel Members appraisals have taken place virtually and all Panel Members will have engaged in their appraisals by the end of May 2022. Panel business meetings have been held in 2020 and 2021 to inform the panel development, as has Panel Members training which took place in March 2021. With the increased demand for panels additional members are now sought with interviews taking place at the end of May.

**Comment and any action undertaken to improve care provided**

In respect of actions taken to improve care, any concerns in respect of safeguarding have been reported to senior managers and ADM. Panel have monitored that the Safer Care Policy for children living with Regulation 24 carers has been child specific and not generic, within the documents provided to panel. This has been a focus in terms of safeguarding and when considering the Voice of the Child. Finally, for further development to feedback to panel the outcome of any case reviews as identified by panel members.

## 6. Consultation with children and young people

Evidence	<p>An online survey using 'survey monkey' is completed annually with both carers and children living with our foster carers. The feedback is used to inform decisions relating to service development.</p> <p>Our annual carer and children's survey was commissioned in March 2022 to assist us in learning more about how we engage with children and the activities they enjoy, particularly relevant when restrictions were in place. Support events have been held during school holiday periods, and a large in person event was held in February 2022 to launch our second Mockingbird constellation.</p> <p>We have been able to reintroduce our children and young people's group, VOKOL (Voice of Kids Our Lives) children and young people group within this reporting period. The group, who meet monthly, is a combination of cared for children and carers birth children. The group offers them a shared activity space to come together for fun activities and to highlight ways in which the service can be influenced, particularly in relation to recruitment activities and the group has taken a particular lead in this area. The group have recently designed recruitment adverts for carers along with lending their voices to a new marketing campaign to highlight children's experiences of being cared for.</p>
Comment and any action undertaken to improve care provided	
See below, along with consultation with foster carers	

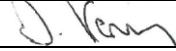


## 7. Consultation with foster carers

Evidence	<p>An online survey using 'survey monkey' is completed annually with both carers and cared for children who live with our foster carers. The feedback is used to inform decisions relating to service development. We have been unable to hold bi-monthly coffee mornings for carers which is an opportunity for them to chat informally both with staff and each other due to the Covid restrictions within the reporting period. Monthly support groups have continued to be held, these are more 'formal' and usually include guest speakers on a range of topics.</p> <p>We have an established consultative group which meets regularly, the Registered Manager chairs this group and over the reporting year I have seen the group change and attendance begin to increase. Carers advise they feel supported and listened to, they are empowered to raise issues as they know their concerns will be listened to and acted upon.</p> <p>Unfortunately, we had to restrict our annual Carer Celebration Event in May 2021 however we did recognise the amazing contribution two sets of carers have made, both with forty years' service respectively. We have plans to recognise the length of service of all carers within Foster Care Fortnight in May 2022.</p>
Comment and any action undertaken to improve care provided	
<p>Participation and engagement within the reporting period has posed additional challenges due to the restrictions placed upon on us however despite this, the service has continued to hold regular support groups, children's events and launched two Mockingbird constellation. Within our team plan we recognised that we wanted to really engage with children and carers at an informal and supportive level before enhancing this further with more formal routes of engagement.</p> <p>Carers report that they are listened to, they have direct contact details for the Registered Manager and are also able to meet with him/raise issues both at informal and formal meetings. Our training, support and fee scheme is a transparent way of financially supporting foster carers and has ensured that an unprecedented level of commitment to developing their own learning and in turn improving the level of care afforded.</p>	

## 8. Financial information

Comment																				
<p>1.1 The table below provides summary financial information relating to the Fostering Service for 2021/22.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>£</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Employees (inc Agency)</td> <td>807,005</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Premises (Room Hire)</td> <td>2,446</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Car Mileage (Employee)</td> <td>28,719</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DBS / Medical Reports</td> <td>50,799</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Equipment (Foster Carers)</td> <td>3,760</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Publicity</td> <td>48,207</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Running Expenses</td> <td>31,826</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Foster Care Payments</td> <td>6,101,029</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td><b>7, 073,790</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	£	Employees (inc Agency)	807,005	Premises (Room Hire)	2,446	Car Mileage (Employee)	28,719	DBS / Medical Reports	50,799	Equipment (Foster Carers)	3,760	Publicity	48,207	Other Running Expenses	31,826	Foster Care Payments	6,101,029		<b>7, 073,790</b>
Category	£																			
Employees (inc Agency)	807,005																			
Premises (Room Hire)	2,446																			
Car Mileage (Employee)	28,719																			
DBS / Medical Reports	50,799																			
Equipment (Foster Carers)	3,760																			
Publicity	48,207																			
Other Running Expenses	31,826																			
Foster Care Payments	6,101,029																			
	<b>7, 073,790</b>																			
<p>1.2 Key priorities for the agency remain the retention of its excellent carers and the recruitment of more foster carers. A major focus is on recruiting carers who will care for older children and teenagers, or children with complex needs, or large sibling groups and target younger carers who will provide longer term stability for younger children entering care.</p>																				

Signed	
Name	Daniel Kenny
Position	Registered Manager
Date	6 <sup>th</sup> May 2022