



Statement of Purpose

2016

Publication Date	09.10.2019	Issue No 5
Author of Publication	Avril Smiles	
Post	Registered Manager	
Review Date	09.10.2020	
Published By Select Fostercare Services Ltd		

Contents

- 1 Introduction:
- 2 Organisational Structure:
- 3 Principles:
- 4 The Aims of Select Fostercare
- 5 The Objective of Select Fostercare:
- 6 Services provided to address the 5 Outcomes for children
- 7 Safeguarding:
- 8 Behaviour Management:
- 9 Promoting Contact:
- 10 Types of Placement:
- 11 Operational Pledge:
- 12 Equal Opportunities:
- 13 Recruitment and Assessment of Foster Carers:
- 14 Quality Assurance:
- 15 Confidentiality and Records:
- 16 Representation and Complaints:

Our foster families offer a warm, safe and nurturing environment, with clear boundaries where children can experience a loving family life. Children placed with Select Fostercare families will benefit from our “Team around the Child” approach, where they are valued and empowered to achieve and experience positive outcomes in their lives.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

1 Introduction:

This Statement of Purpose sets out the Aims and Objectives of Select Fostercare including the range of services provided. These have been developed to assist local authorities in fulfilling their responsibilities and to improve the wellbeing of “looked after” children in relation to the Five Outcomes for Children:

- Physical and mental health and emotional well being
- Protection from harm and neglect
- Education, training and recreation
- The contribution made by them to society
- Social and economic well being

A copy of our Statement is sent to the Chief Inspector for the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted), who is responsible for regulating and inspecting fostering services.

The Statement of Purpose is also given to our foster carers, prospective carers, children placed, their parents, Local Authorities, Select Fostercare Independent Foster Panel members and all staff employed by us.

Our Foster Care Manual includes all the detailed policies, procedures and standards to ensure foster carers and our staff have these at hand as a framework for carrying out their fostering tasks.

Equally as important, are the Guides for children and young people, produced in two formats to reflect the age and understanding of younger children and that of teenagers. All foster children, their parents, commissioning local authorities, and Ofsted are given copies of the relevant guides. Some children will need assistance from their carers to read, and understand the guide.

The Statement of Purpose and the guides for children and young people can be reproduced in different languages, the Makaton system to support spoken language, and audio CD's if required.

The Guide includes a summary of what Select Fostercare sets out to achieve, what the foster child or young person should expect from their carer's and what is expected of them. It also includes information about key professionals involved in their lives and their contact details. Additionally included, are details of the Complaints and Representations policies and procedures, and contact details for various agencies and

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

professionals who children can talk to for advice and support about any aspects of their lives, including the care provided to them.



Our Statement of Purpose, Foster care Manual, and Children's Guides are regularly reviewed to include developments in our service provision as well as any changes to the Regulations or National Minimum Standards (NMS). Ofsted will be notified, by Select FosterCare Services, of any changes or revisions within 28 days of the amendments.

2 Organisational Structure:

Director

The Director is the core of the Senior Management Team, delegating day to day decision making to the relevant managers. The Director has statutory duties and responsibilities under the Companies Act 2006. Additionally, he has overall responsibility for quality assurance and strategic decision making; compliance with legal requirements; the agency's operations, and commercial development.

The Registered Manager

The Registered Manager is responsible for the day to day management of the Agency, and is accountable to the Agency's Director. Duties include ensuring the effective implementation of all policies and procedures in relation to the running of the Agency, recruiting and supporting foster carers and staff, and ensuring the wellbeing of the child remains at the centre of all services provided. The Registered Manager also has specific responsibilities under the Fostering Services Regulations 2011. The Registered Manager oversees Independent SW's undertaking Form F assessments on the agency's behalf. They also have responsibility for recruiting foster carers and carer's training.

Social Work Manager

The Social Work Manager will be directly responsible to the Registered Manager and is responsible for the supervision of social workers supporting our Carer's. She/he also has delegated responsibility for Carer's support groups. The Manager is also responsible for the effective running of the "Duty" and the out of hours support service.

Fostering Panel Chairs/Panel Members

The Fostering Panel functions independently from the Agency. Its main duties concern making recommendations to the Agency on the approval of new foster carers and the statutory review of existing carers. The panel is also involved in the Agency's quality

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

assurance programme, development changes to relevant Agency policies, and the Agency's complaints and appeals policies and procedures.



Assessing Social Workers

The Assessing Social Workers are responsible for vetting and assessing prospective foster carers, in line with requirements of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011.

Depending on the prevailing needs of the Agency both freelance and employed social workers who have been trained for this purpose, may be used. These social workers are supervised by the Registered Manager.

Supervising Social Worker

Supervising Social Workers are responsible for ensuring implementation of Select FosterCare policies and procedures. They support and supervise foster carers and monitor the progress of the children in placement.

Their duties will include participating in the “Duty” and an out of hours support service, maintaining the link between the agency and the foster carer through regular visits and telephone contact. Attending all professional meetings involving the foster carer and or about the foster child to ensure the carer is fully supported and to help ensure the child's needs are being met.

Outreach Support Workers

The Outreach Support Workers will generally be employed on a sessional basis; however, they undergo the same rigorous recruitment checks as our full-time staff. They are responsible to the Social Work Manager who directs their work, which will include providing fixed time periods of direct work with foster children outside of their foster home, to help develop skills, interest and links in their community.

The Outreach Support Workers will also provide children with supportive and safe adult contact on a one to one basis for mentoring, and helping children to build up their confidence and self-esteem. Additionally, they may be used to offer support where foster children are involved with the police or the Youth Justice System.

3 Principles:

Select FosterCare has a team of fully trained and qualified staff including Social Workers, Social Work Managers, Foster Carers. As well as an Office Manager, Placements Office, Recruitment person and Admin Staff. Our team is highly skilled in recruiting, approving and supporting a diverse range of foster carers to provide

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

placements that match the individual needs of each child or young person placed with us.



There is an on-call duty system in place, which includes out of hours support, to respond to the needs of children in placement, foster carers, Local Authority social workers and Placement Teams.

We are committed to providing and developing services that address and exceed government targets for outcomes for children. These high standards will be achieved through our organisational processes and the delivery of quality services for looked after children, our foster carers, commissioning local authorities and our staff.

Our ethos is respect and the celebration of diversity, promoting and ensuring equal opportunities in all the agency's operations, all of which are pre-requisites for a framework that can safeguard the welfare of children and help them to achieve and thrive.

4 The Aims of Select FosterCare

- To promote and safeguard the welfare of children who are “looked after” to ensure they have positive experiences of childhood and are able to move successfully towards their independence.
- To provide clear procedural guidelines for all our staff and carers which define the Agency's standards and expectations.
- To, at all times, listen to children and young people and take their views and wishes into consideration.
- To provide a diverse range of high quality foster care placements to match the needs of individual children aged 0 - 18 years who, for various reasons, cannot stay with their own family.
- To recruit, train and assess foster carers from diverse backgrounds, who share our vision that the “looked after” child must have the same opportunity to live in a loving family with equal life chances to develop and thrive as any other children.
- To support carers by providing care packages and supervision that help to ensure children are able to maximise their use of education, support, and leisure opportunities available to them.
- To facilitate and support contact for “looked after” children with parents, other family members and significant others where appropriate.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

- To work with the foster child and their Local Authority to facilitate rehabilitation back to their family wherever this is possible.
- To work in partnership with other agencies in an open and transparent way, promoting diversity and equal opportunities in all our activities, to deliver high quality services that can help to achieve the best outcomes for children.

Honesty, integrity, fairness and equality form the foundations that underpin our efforts to achieve these aims.

5 The Objective of Select FosterCare:

- To ensure the welfare needs of “looked after” children remain paramount when they are matched with carers, with particular attention paid to the child's culture, religion and ethnicity. Decisions to place a child with a particular carer must incorporate the above as well as clear plans to safeguard and promote the child's well-being.
- To enable and ensure that “looked after” children's physical, emotional, and health needs are met to promote positive, rewarding experiences of childhood.
- To provide children and their foster carer with full time support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, from an allocated Select FosterCare Supervising Social Worker and our out of hours duty team. Additionally, planned support is available from our outreach workers for task centred work.
- To provide foster carers with a continual programme of training and access to higher training courses such as the Level 3 Diploma in childcare to develop their skills and understanding of the particular needs of “looked after” children.

This training programme will enhance the quality of care provided by the foster family, and the foster carer's contribution to our “Team around the Child” approach to planning, delivery and reviewing processes, which we will put in place for each child.

- To provide Local Authorities with a high quality service that exceeds the National Minimum Standards and improves the outcomes for “looked after” children. A service, we are sure, that will justify the term “Invest today and save tomorrow” that also offers good value.

Children who are “looked after” come from a diverse range of family backgrounds with specific care needs. These may change over time but the

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

child's welfare must remain paramount in all provisions of care services for them.



6 Services provided to address the 5 Outcomes for children

6.1 Physical and mental health and emotional well being

All foster children must be registered with a GP and dentist. They should have periodic health assessments as appropriate and have health, dental and ophthalmic issues addressed without delay.

Foster carers should maintain a healthy lifestyle for themselves that foster children can model, including their physical, emotional, and social well-being.

All foster carers undertake training on health and healthy living including sexual health, first aid and substance misuse, and can access a wide range of health support and advice services through Select FosterCare Services.

Some of our foster carers will be specially trained to support the medical and health care needs of children with disabilities.

6.2 Protection from harm and neglect

The Agency has a comprehensive in-house child protection policy and procedures for safeguarding children, which is in line with the guidance approved by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Our foster carers, adult members of their household and our staff, regardless of their post, undergo full background checks including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Foster carers are assessed and trained on safe care policies and receive regular supervision and support from their named Supervising Social Worker.

Foster children are given information on what they should and should not expect in the way they are cared for, which includes information on raising concerns and making complaints about any aspect of their care. We will ensure they can access independent advocates, their Local Children's Rights Officer, and Children's Champion at Select FosterCare. Carers are given comprehensive information on the law, and the Agency's expectations around permissible forms of sanctions.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IS NEVER ACCEPTABLE

6.3 Education, training and recreation

All foster children will receive the fullest support and assistance to attend school or alternative provision, including, where appropriate home tuition.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

Every looked after child in foster care must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) and for older teenagers a Leaving Care Pathway Plan, which shall be supported by our Agency and foster carers to help children and young people maximise the learning opportunities they are entitled to.

Select FosterCare Services and our carers will work in partnership with local authorities and Personal Advisers for older young people to identify and secure work experience placements and training opportunities for foster children leaving school or college.

We will ensure that every foster child has access to a personal computer, broadband access and IT support with software that meets their educational and development needs. Foster Carers and foster children, where necessary, will be given information and training on the safe use of computers and, in particular, the internet and mobile phones.

The Agency and its carers will ensure foster children have access and practical support to engage in extra-curricular activities including sports and leisure. Our approach will be flexible and dynamic to ensure children can safely experiment and take age appropriate risks in exploring their likes and dislikes, which we feel will best acknowledge their individuality and promote their exercise of choice.

We will be flexible in responding to requests from carers to fund appropriate activities that fall outside those provided by the school or provided for in the foster carer's allowance.

6.4 The contribution made by them to society

It is important that foster children are encouraged and supported to develop and reach their full potential and that achievements are acknowledged and rewarded, on an on-going basis.

All foster children, subject to age and understanding will have access to our Children's Council which is in the process of being established and will be facilitated by the Children's Champion to ensure their ideas, concerns and suggestions are recorded and taken into account.

This group will meet at least twice a year and feed their views into our quality assurance and annual review programme.

Our annual events will in the future include an award ceremony for all our foster children, carers and Social Workers, to acknowledge and reward efforts and achievements of our foster children. Our commitment also includes ensuring that children and young people feel important and included in the Agency's operations.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

6.5 Social and Economic Well-being

Education and training play an important part in the ability of children to aspire to their full potential, however, they will also need practical as well as emotional support and encouragement.

All our foster children will receive weekly pocket money with older children when possible have a savings account opened for them, into which they will be encouraged to save on a weekly basis. Additionally, the agency saves £10 a week per child on behalf of each foster child.

We expect our carers to participate in plans for all our foster children leaving foster care and provide practical assistance and support to ensure this move into early adulthood is as rewarding as possible.

7 Safeguarding:

All foster children must be protected from harm both in and out of the foster home. The recruitment, assessment and approval of carers are a key aspect of our safeguarding practices, as well as the careful matching of foster child/young person to foster carer. It is also vital that carers and our staff receive high quality standards of supervision, and access to a comprehensive range of training and support services including child protection, behaviour management and safe caring.

The Agency will work with Local Authorities and other agencies to secure and safeguard foster children. Our policies are in line with good practice requirements and the safeguarding protocols of the Local Safeguard Children Board.

Additionally, we have the following policies in place to protect children in our care which provide guidelines for foster carers and our staff.

- Non permissible forms of sanctions
- Safe care policy
- Behaviour management
- Complaints and representation
- Babysitting
- Internet/Social Networking
- Children Missing from care
- Child protection

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

- Managing allegations
- Anti-bullying policy
- Health and Safety

8 Behaviour Management:

At Select Fostercare we believe children and young people who grow up in a safe nurturing environment and experience positive forms of parental control will go on to develop their own good internal control mechanisms and strategies, resulting in behaviour that promotes positive responses to and from others.

The control strategies that foster carers utilise must be based on consistent positive reinforcement which encourages good behaviour and compliance with rules.

All our foster carers will receive training in this area and in conflict management and resolution.

Foster carers cannot use any form of corporal punishment, or treat the foster child in any way that is demeaning or disrespectful in terms of their religion, culture, race, sexuality, gender, or otherwise.

9 Promoting Contact:

Every foster child's placement agreement and care plan must address and make plans for the child, where appropriate, to maintain contact with family members and other important individuals in the child's network of friends, whilst living with the foster carer. Contact with family will not usually take place in the foster home.

Select Fostercare and our carer's are committed to actively support, promote and facilitate the safe contact between our foster children and their networks of family and friends, as agreed in their Looked After Children's Plans (LAC)

This will include facilitating supervised contact where requested by the Local Authority, which if organised away from the foster home, will be supervised by a trained Support Worker, who will provide the Local Authority, the Agency and carers with a feedback report post contact.

10 Types of Placement:

10.1 Unplanned Emergency.

Select Fostercare can provide unplanned emergency placements at short notice, day or night, for a few nights or even longer. Where required we can carry out assessments

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

to assist Local Authorities in planning for the medium to long term care of “looked after” children. These assessment reports are particularly useful where the child or young person is not previously known to the Local Authority prior to becoming “looked after”.

10.2 Long term placements.

Where returning to the family and the possibility of adoption are not options, we will provide placements leading right up to independence, including after care support and assistance.

10.3 Intensive Supported Placements.

At Select Fostercare we will develop placements with specialised foster carers who together with our team of social workers and outreach support workers, can respond to children aged 5 to 18 years of age, with a time limited intensive programme of care and support. The aim is to assist these children in gaining a greater understanding of their circumstances and make informed choices in their lives relative to their age and understanding.

These children are often presenting with challenging behaviours, including refusing to go to school possibly permanently excluded. They can be withdrawn and even aggressive, often with a range of complex needs.

By using good adult to children “befriending” techniques and maintaining clear boundaries with full respect for children's rights and their welfare, our team can provide high quality care and control for these children.

10.4 Solo Placements.

We will offer these placements for children and young people who have very complex needs and cannot be placed in foster household with other children. These placements will generally require increased supervision and support services for both carer and foster child.

10.5 Sibling Groups.

Select Fostercare understands the importance and the needs of “looked after” sibling groups to remain together in a foster family wherever possible. We have identified and trained foster carers who have the facilities, knowledge, patience and energy to support and care for sibling groups, where their need to express and develop themselves as individuals is promoted as well as the emotional support they can receive from kinship.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

10.6 Parent and Child Placements/Assessment.

This is a highly complex area of foster care where the welfare needs of the young parent and baby must be addressed individually as well as collectively. There are often many stakeholders with specific professional interests. Select FosterCare have recruited and trained motivated carers who have the energy and skills to care and support young parents needing guidance and practical training, to care for their baby appropriately. Parents will also have their own care needs and developmental needs which must not be overlooked.

10.7 Respite placements.

This provision allows respite for both our own in house foster parents and the needs of Local Authorities. These placements are generally offered from a few days and up to a month.

10.8 Placements for children from diverse backgrounds.

Select FosterCare recognises that foster children from black and other ethnic backgrounds as a group, are varied and have specific needs, both as individuals and in terms of their cultural beliefs and practices. Addressing these needs requires our attention to careful planning when matching and supporting placements, not just in terms of their diet, hair and skincare but also in preparing for the discriminatory ways they can be treated in society.

These children often have limited opportunities to experience positive role models outside of their family, schools and localities. Shortfalls in these experiences and the issues of Separation and possible loss of their birth family, coupled with discriminatory responses and failures to value and respect their contributions, will marginalise and hinder their ability to thrive and achieve.

All our foster carers and social wor

kers will receive training and support around diversity issues for these children, which will aid planning and supporting foster children to appreciate their cultural heritage and to face racism and discrimination.

10.9 Unaccompanied (UAM) Placements.

These children arrive from all corners of the globe where there are violent conflicts and wars. Often, they have lost parents and loved ones. With little or no English language, they can experience feelings of isolation, frustration and severe emotional trauma. Our experienced social workers and foster carers will access services and

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

information for these children and provide advocacy and support in the community and good quality care in the foster home.



10.10 Remand Placements.

There are some children who become “looked after” as part of Remand conditions imposed by the youth court. They will require intensive support and care to help them keep to the conditions of their remand, including attending their educational establishment and making appropriate use of their leisure time. Here, our planned “Team around the Child” approach comes into its own, to address the specific care and control needs of the child in respect of their Remand conditions and separation from their family.

This will often include daily one to one contact with one of our outreach support workers, who will work in partnership with the foster parent/s and the Supervising Social Worker to monitor and supervise the young person, ensuring they have appropriate support and assistance to satisfy their Remand conditions. A Remand foster care placement report will be made available at the end of the placement.

The underpinning ethos of Select FosterCare Service is to develop individual tailored packages of care that provide for the specific needs of each ‘looked after’ child or young person, that can promote positive experiences of childhood and good outcomes for the future.

10.11 Post youth Custody Placements.

As with our planned Intensive foster care programme, care for these young people will require an intensive time period (up to 6 months depending on the period of incarceration) to support the young person to resettle into the community and develop appropriate use of their time including educational training or return to school and the use of their leisure time. Positive re-engagement in their community will promote and assist them achieving success in their lives and reduce recidivism.

10.12 Children with Disabilities.

Select FosterCare aim is to recruit and maintain a pool of carers with specialist skills, knowledge and experience, who can work in partnership with other professionals providing services that address the specific care and health needs of these children including long term, short term and emergency placements.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

10.13 Young People over 18yrs in placement. (Staying Put Arrangements)



Select FosterCare Services will support and assist foster carers to help young people over 18yrs of age to “stay put” in their placement, where this is desired, to further promote and secure positive outcomes for their future, including:

- Remaining in education, employment or training
- Maintaining their secure base, and nurturing relationships with foster parents, and other significant figures
- Helping to ensure that the transition into adulthood is gradual and supported by the foster family
- Supporting post 18 year olds to access and maintain contact with their Personal Advisers and other support services, to ensure their needs are responded to in a timely manner

11 Operational Pledge:

Children’s welfare, safety, emotional and educational needs remain paramount throughout our care provision and decision making processes. All “looked after” children and young people must be encouraged and empowered to participate in these processes.

Select FosterCare Services is a limited company, registered (No: 7966032) in England and Wales under the Companies Act 2006. We provide Foster care and support services for children and young people who are “looked after” by Local Authorities. We are registered under The Care Standards Act 2000 and regulated by Ofsted

The legal framework that regulates and inspects Select FosterCare includes:

- The Children Act 1989/2004
- The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (NMS) 2011
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. Including Regulations and Guidance

This Operational Pledge provides a framework for monitoring and evaluating our services, to ensure we achieve and maintain good practices that exceed the minimum standard required under the regulations.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

Select Fostercare will comply with all foster care service regulations and associated National Minimum Standards requirements.



12 Equal Opportunities:

Children, young people and adults alike all have rights to Equal Opportunities in their endeavours and life chances, regardless of their culture, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion or disability.

At Select Fostercare we are well aware of the debilitating and destructive effects of prejudice and discrimination on the lives of children and adults alike; who can be treated negatively due to their ethnicity, culture, gender, disability, sexuality or religion. This is particularly true for children who are also “looked after”, often attracting stigma and low expectations of their ability to achieve and become good citizens.

Select Fostercare will not tolerate any form of discrimination either in our organisation or externally. We will work tirelessly to promote and celebrate difference, in the belief that the responsibilities we place on children and young people who are “looked after” must be balanced by valuing their rights as individuals to experience opportunities and life chances equal to other children in society.

Our policies include supporting young people with encouragement, advice and practical assistance to practice their religious beliefs and customs and to be proud of their heritage.

Foster carers will have access to literature both for themselves and the foster child's use, to develop their knowledge and understanding of the values and beliefs of different cultures and faiths. Our aim is that all our foster children will grow up feeling respected and valued regardless of their age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, disability or religion. This, we believe will also promote their appreciation and celebration of the diversity of “difference” in the makeup of other people in their community.

Select Fostercare management group will ensure that our policies on equal opportunities remain on the quality assurance agenda and permeate our day to day activities.

13 Recruitment and Assessment of Foster Carers:

Children who are ‘looked after’ come to us from diverse backgrounds of culture, ethnicity, and religion. It is imperative that we recruit foster carers that reflect these diversities. Select Fostercare welcomes enquiries and applications from adults who

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

reside in in England, regardless of their race, gender, sexuality, marital status, disability or religion.



Recruitment

Prospective foster carers will be recruited using a variety of methods including advertising in the local press, through our website, word of mouth, and referrals and recommendations from existing foster carers or staff.

In line with our diversity and equal opportunities policies, we aim to recruit applicants from diverse backgrounds, to ensure we have a mix of carers who are able to meet the needs of the diverse range of children and young people who require a foster home.

All applications are subject to initial screening by way of a telephone interview, to help ensure that only applicants who meet the basic suitability test in terms of their availability to foster, personal circumstances and their premises to accommodate a foster child or young person, are progressed.

Following this initial screening of suitability, the Registered Manager will progress the application for a home screening visit by one of our social workers. On the successful completion of the initial screening, the Agency will start to take up references in this stage 1 of the process whilst undertaking all other requirements of stage 1. Once stage 1 has been confirmed satisfactory the application can progress to stage 2 for a full assessment by an assessing social worker. This can take up to six months to complete and includes several home visits as well as meeting family members and support network/back up carers.

This process is rigorous and comprehensive to help ensure only suitable and fit applicants can progress to approval. Applicants are also expected to complete initial training which forms part of their final assessment report, which must be agreed by the Registered Manager, prior to consideration by the Fostering Panel for approval.

Decisions to approve applications for fostering are made by the Agency Decision Maker following recommendations by the Independent Fostering Panel.

Select FosterCare subscribes to the Foster Carers Charter 2011 in full and recognises the key role foster carers have in providing a loving, caring family life for 'looked after' children. Select Foster Care will deliver a high level of support and assistance to our carers, ensuring they remain at the heart of plans for the care of 'looked after' children.

Support and Supervision of Carers

To facilitate this, the Agency has in place detailed policies and procedures to ensure carers receive the highest level of support and training. These include:

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

- Regular monthly structured visits from a named Social Worker for support and placement monitoring
- Regular telephone contact to and from the Supervising Social Worker
- Support to help ensure the child's educational, health and social development is promoted which may include the support of an outreach Support Worker for agreed direct work with the child.
- Support from the Supervising Social Worker at professional meetings
- Provision of an "on call" duty system, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year
- Up to 14 days paid holiday or respite in addition to normal allowances and financial assistance to contribute to children and young people going on holidays with their carers
- A financial support package that ensures the full financial cost of caring for the foster child is met, and recognises the skills and experiences of foster parents
- Legal advice and insurance through paid for membership of Fostering Network
- Regular programme of training to meet carers' developmental needs pre and post approval
- Support groups for carers
- Flexible approach to request for additional assistance to support carers and children in placement
- Consultation on the function and operation of the Agency
- Access to our child clinician for advice and guidance about specific child care concerns
- Organised activities for carers and foster children throughout the year
- We believe by equipping our carers with these support systems, it will enhance their knowledge and skills to respond to children's welfare needs and day to day issues that arise.
- Foster carers will have regular contact with their Supervising Social Worker in a variety of formats including attending meetings together, phone calls, supervision, support groups and training. This regularity of contact will provide

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

the opportunity to respond, without undue delay, to events and changes in the foster child's welfare needs.

- **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.** Clear guidelines on permissible forms of sanctions will be provided to every child and foster carer. Additionally, every foster carer will receive specific training and guidance on managing conflict and challenging behaviour.
- Select FosterCare will promote and support the health, developmental progress, emotional, educational and physical needs of children who are “looked after” with us.
- Together with our carers we will access all appropriate services to respond to health care needs.
- On completion of a “Looked After Children” Review (LAC Review) our Supervising Social Worker and foster carer will act on all decisions without delay.
- Placements will only be made once a successful matching process has been completed taking into account the child's diversity requirements.
- Select FosterCare and our foster carers will identify and promote contact for the child/ young person and birth family wherever possible, including facilitating contact at the foster home or other venues.
- Select FosterCare will respond promptly to all safeguarding concerns, in line with agreed protocols and in-house procedures. Confidentiality around access and storage of records concerning children, foster carers and staff shall be maintained strictly in accordance with our policy and procedures.
- Appropriate educational provisions will be supported to ensure all “looked after” children have the opportunities to maximise their life chances. Children will be encouraged to engage in appropriate social and leisure pursuits.

Select FosterCare will maintain a clear and comprehensive complaints and representation policy and procedures, which is made available to all “looked after” children, their parents, foster carers, Local Authority Social Workers and our staff.

- All foster carers will complete weekly logs for their foster child, which will include information on education, health (both emotional and physical), leisure, movements and events. The policy and procedures for notifying significant events shall be adhered to rigorously.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

14 Quality Assurance:

Select Fostercare has in place systems for monitoring and evaluating our services to ensure the highest quality of service is provided to 'looked after' children.

Our evaluation programme culminates annually with the production of our Annual Quality Assurance Report.

Quality Assurance Programme (QA)

Fostering services are required by the Fostering Services Regulations (FSR) 2011 to have clear and effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the service. This includes the financial viability of the service, any serious incidents, allegations or complaints about the service and ensuring the quality of the service, (NMS 25).

There are a number of other Standards that require specified activities to be monitored and recorded including regular reports to the agency's management (FSR 2011 Reg 35). Quality of Care (Regulation 35/Schedule 6) are completed on a regular basis. Reference is made to these and other relevant Standards throughout the policy.

Aims and Objectives

To monitor and evaluate our systems, procedures and policies on a regular basis, including user feedback through consultation and questionnaires to help ensure we achieve and maintain a high-quality service.

- To meet and exceed the Fostering Services Regulations and National Minimum Standards and provide a high-quality service
- To ensure accurate information is available that informs the Service to plan the effective use of our resources in delivering our aims and objectives
- To ensure foster carers are properly trained and supported to provide high quality placements that meet the needs and promote good welfare outcomes for foster children
- To ensure our Supervising Social Worker' are effective in monitoring and supporting the work of foster carers
- To ensure the managers are aware of the demands being made on our foster carers and any issues that may arise for them
- Provide good leadership and management to ensure that resources are used effectively, to meet the needs of the Service and to identify shortfalls that need to be addressed

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

Management and Production of QA Reports

The management and production of an annual quality assurance report in the future will be outsourced to an independent senior social worker with experience of research and social work management. The Agency will provide administrative support to assist the auditing process and production of the final report.

The final report will be sent to Ofsted, the local authorities who have children placed with us and our fostering panel members. The contents will be discussed in the Agency's various staff meetings, and is made available to others, including foster carers, foster children and their parents.

The annual quality assurance exercise does not replace the need for the managers to carry out periodic monitoring of specific aspects of the Agency's services, as required by the Regulations, to maintain quality, and promptly address problem areas.

The Quality Assurance Programme

In order to ensure that Select Fostercare is delivering a high quality, well managed foster care service, the Agency Decision Maker will ensure that the annual report from the QA programme is prepared and shows how, as a minimum, the following performance indicators have been met:

- How the views and wishes of the child, their parents, Social Workers and those significant to the child are regularly sought and taken account of (standard 1.4, 1.7)
- The provision of all necessary information about the child's circumstances to help the foster carer fulfil their tasks (standard 3.9 and 11)
- Safeguarding children and young people and working in partnership with other Agencies concerned with Child Protection (Standard 4.7)
- The effective integration of the Agency's policies and procedures with the local Runaway and Missing from Home and Care (RMFHC) protocols (standard 5.6, 5.10)
- The frequency and quality of Social Worker support for carers and outcomes of unannounced visits (standard 10)
- Recruitment of a diverse pool of carers ensuring equality of opportunity, and the effective use for foster carers of delegated authority (standard 7.4)
- Promoting and valuing children's education (standard 8.5)

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

- Number of children excluded from school (standard 8.5)
- Giving feedback and sharing information with the Local Authority
- Reviewing Service policy on children's safety issues to keep up to date with current legislation and guidance (standard 10.4)
- Support for young people and foster carers in meeting the transition into independence (standard 11.5, 11.6 and 12)
- Management information systems are in place that provide regular and accurate data to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the agency in meeting its aims and objective

This programme is flexible to respond to the needs of the service and may include other areas for evaluation as required by the Agency. We have not tried to address every National Minimum Standard here, but hope it demonstrates our aims to address the requirements for the service and the operational needs of the Agency.

In keeping with all aspects of the Agency's work, we are committed to ensuring that the programme is managed in an open, honest and transparent way, where we will acknowledge learning and development needs and also highlight achievements and celebrate our successes.

15 Confidentiality and Records:

Select FosterCare Services, and our carer's will be committed to keep and safeguard all confidential information received, be it verbally or in writing and from whatever source, in reference to foster children, their families, our carers' and staff. No such information will be divulged without the person's consent, other than where we are required to do so legally, and the usual sharing of information with other professionals, where this has been agreed in the child's care plan.

The Agency is required by the Fostering Services Regulations 2011, to keep and maintain records on all our carers and foster children who are placed.

The management and storage of these records will comply with the requirements under current Data Protection requirements. Access to records can be arranged in line with our procedures published in the Young People Guide and the Foster Care Manual.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

16 Representation and Complaints:

By taking a positive approach to complaints and representations we have the opportunity to enhance our practice and reduce and avoid dissatisfaction with our service.

For children and adults alike, there is generally universal agreement on 'what is a complaint' and how resolving complaints can right wrongs, create clarity, and empower the individual.

Where individuals (particularly children) make representations about aspects of their lives, or the care they receive, any such representation should be treated with equal importance, as it would be for a complaint, and subject to the same procedures for recording and resolution.

At Select FosterCare we recognise that we will sometimes get things wrong. In acknowledgement of the need to respond to these occasions effectively, we have in place clear policies and procedures to ensure that all complaints and representations are considered in a sensitive manner without undue delay.

The policies and procedures have been developed to respond to issues raised by:

- Children/young people placed with our foster carers, their family, advocates or other representatives
- Our foster carers
- Local authority social workers, Independent Reviewing officers and professionals from other agencies
- Out staff (detailed separately in the Staff Handbook)
- Members of the public

These policies and procedures are repeated in the guides for children and young people, and our Statement of Purpose respectively. All complaints and representations will be listened to, recorded and responded to in an open and non-judgemental way.

No member of staff who becomes the subject of a complaint can take part in its investigation.

Complaints about the Registered Manager or other senior members of staff that are beyond the scope of an informal resolution and cannot be resolved by Select FosterCare directors using these procedures will be referred to Ofsted for guidance.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

Helping Children and Young People to make Complaints



The Children's Guides includes information on how to make a complaint about anything in the child's care that they are unhappy with and gives examples of types of complaints and representations. Children and young people are encouraged to complain to anyone they feel will listen to them including:

- Their foster carer
- Their family
- Their Social Worker
- The foster carer's Social Worker
- Select FosterCare Complaints Officer
- The Children's Rights Officer
- Teachers
- The Police
- The Children Commissioner

A "Children Champion" is allocated to each foster child/young person and can be contacted directly by the child/young person about a complaint or any issues they wish to discuss. The role is currently occupied by a qualified Psychologist.

The "Children Champion" will be advised and kept informed of all complaints and representations made by and in respect of foster children. Their views and observations will be recorded in every report on complaints and representations by and about foster children and their welfare. A summary of their work will also be included in our Quality Assurance programme.

What happens when a Complaint is made?

There are two stages in our procedures for managing and resolving complaints:
Stage 1 (acknowledged in writing within 5 working days)

We expect and encourage individuals to try to resolve complaints and representations informally at this, stage 1, with the Supervising Social Worker, their Line Manager and or our Complaints Officer.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667

Where this is not possible, the Complaints Officer will guide the complainant through our procedures and offer assistance to detail the complaint in writing for progression. Complaints that are resolved informally will be recorded and confirmed in writing by the Complaints Officer within 28 days of the complaint or representation.

Stage 2

Should a complaint move to stage 2 it becomes the responsibility of the Registered Manager or a Director of the Agency, to make the decision to investigate the complaint formally, which will include conducting interviews with those involved and affected by the complaint and prepare a written report on their findings and decisions of the Agency. This report will be sent out to the complainant and other appropriate parties within 28 days of the decision to move the complaint to stage 2.

Please note that for the purpose of this complaints policy and its procedures, allegations and concerns about safeguarding and child protection issues, are not managed under these procedures, but separately using the Agency's Child Protection Policy and the guidelines of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for the area in which the foster child lives.

Foster Carer(s) and Staff who are the subject of a Complaint

Should a foster carer, their Supervising Social Worker or any member of our staff become the subject of a complaint, the Agency will:

- Notify them verbally and/or in writing that a complaint has been made and ascertain their views and responses in writing
- The investigation will be undertaken by an appropriate manager and concluded within set timescales
- Treat them respectfully, honestly and fairly
- Provide guidance and advice for independent support where necessary
- Ensure that the person who is the subject of the complaint is not involved in any formal investigation of the complaint once it moves to stage 2
- Complaints that are resolved informally will be recorded and referenced for discussions with the person's line manager in supervision
- Complaints that move to stage 2 will be managed as detailed above and subject to our procedures for staff, as detailed in the Staff Handbook, and foster carers as detailed in their Contract of Agreement respectively.

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk



We expect most complaints and representations can be dealt with informally at stage 1 or formally at stage 2. There may, however, be occasions where due to the serious nature of a complaint Select FosterCare will be obliged to inform other agencies, such as Ofsted, Local Authorities, the Police and others.

Our complaints policy and procedures do not seek to replace or restrict the child and/or other individuals of their rights to make independent complaints and representations to outside bodies

Complaints Officer

Kerry Higginson

Select FosterCare

Warren Cottage

Overton Drive

Wanstead

London

E11 2LW

Tel: 0208 536 4949

Email: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

Ann Longfield,

Children's Commissioner for England

The Office of the Children's Commissioner

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667



M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Telephone Number: 0800 528 0731 (free
phone number)

Email:
help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, London, E11 2LW

• t: 0208 536 4949 • e: admin@selectfostercare.co.uk • www.selectfostercare.co.uk

Registered office: Warren Cottage, Overton Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2LW • Registered in England 7966032 • Ofsted Reg: SC459667