



ASPIRE FOSTER CARE

Statement Of Purpose

Aspire Foster Care Ltd.

Reg address: First Floor Office, 20 The Green, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B38 8SD
Company reg no: 5669293. Director: Nigel Grogan. Co Secretary: Nigel Sabell

I n d e x

Page Number	Contents
3-5	Operational Status Management Structure and Staff
6	Our purpose, Mission Statement, Aims and Objectives
7	Model of Care
8-9	Placements and Services provided
9	Statement of Principles
10	Compliments, Comments & Complaints
11-12	Support, Training, Recruitment and Approval of Foster Carers
12	Number of Foster Carers, children in placement and complaints

Operational Status of Aspire Foster Care

Aspire Foster Care Ltd, (A.F.C.), is a company limited by guarantee number 5669293

A.F.C. is an Independent Fostering Agency.

A.F.C. has a set of standards and criteria that it regularly revises and updates to reflect changes in legislation, policy and good practice in order to ensure the effective provision of the fostering services offered and for other services offered to children and families.

The numbers and grades of all staff are adequate for the effective provision of the fostering services offered by A.F.C.

A.F.C. has a clear training and support programme for carers designed to support the carers in meeting the needs of the children placed.

A.F.C. has access to appropriate medical, professional and legal advice.

Directors of Aspire Foster Care

Nigel Sabell None executive Director, Company Secretary & Agency Accountant.

Nigel Grogan Managing Director

Management and staffing structure of Aspire Foster Care

Jean Smith..... Responsible Individual.

Nigel Grogan..... Registered Manager.

Ann Moore..... Supervising Social Worker

Ann Hall..... Supervising Social Worker

Kay Sabell..... Office/Finance Manager

Julia Reddihough..... Administrative assistant

Caroline Price..... Foster Carer Trainer.

Kate Gooch..... Sessional Worker.

Jean SmithSocial Work Consultant and Agency Responsible Individual.

QualificationsCQSW/Diploma in Social Work.
Post Qualifying Certificate in Child Protection

Experience Jean has a total of 23 yrs experience as a qualified Social Worker as well as a further 7 years unqualified. Jeans experience includes 20 years as an Approved Social Worker, Child Protection work, Emergency Duty Work, Supervision of Offenders and work with adults and children with disabilities. Jean has also run Offenders groups in conjunction with the Probation Service. Jean became the Agencies Responsible Individual in Oct 07

Nigel Grogan.....Registered Manager.

QualificationsDiploma in Social Work/Dip HE
BA Hons in Applied Social Science (2:1)
Diploma in Management

Experience Nigel has a total of 21 years experience in Social Care Work, including 9 years experience working in Independent Fostering Agencies, which includes previously establishing a Remand Fostering Scheme. He also has 3 years experience working in Local Authority children's residential units and 5 years in Local Authority Family Support Services.

Ann Moore.....Supervising Social Worker

Qualifications.....Diploma in Social Work (CQSW) University of Central England
NVQ Level 1 Child Care and Education

Experience.....Ann has worked in a Children and Families Team with a Local Authority, and as a Senior Social Worker at a Child Protection Unit. She has chaired Child Protection Review Conferences and has also worked with schools as an Education Social Worker. Ann has worked as a Supervising Social Worker with Independent Fostering agencies for over 3 years.

Ann Hall..... Supervising Social Worker

Qualifications CQSW. BA Hons in Literary and Cultural Studies.

Experience Ann has had 13 years' experience in the Probation Service including 6 years as a Civil Courts Welfare Officer and Guardian ad Litem linked to the Family Courts. Ann has had 8 years' experience as a Local Authority Social Worker including some years in Fostering and Adoption, also placing children with disabilities with respite carers. She has also worked as an Education Social Worker.

Kay Sabell..... Office Manager

Qualifications..... Cert. Ed. (Manchester)

Experience.....Kay has been a foster carer for a Local Authority. She established and still runs an accredited pre school, registered with OFSTED, organising all administrative matters and managing a team of 5 staff. Kay has completed a number of courses including Child Protection, and First Aid. Kay has worked for 31/2 years in Independent Fostering Agencies as an Administrative Officer.

Julia Reddihough Administrator

QualificationsDiploma in secretarial training (Leeds)

Experience Julia has worked at Aspire Foster Care for 10 months in an administrative role and has several years previous experience in secretarial work.

Caroline Price.....Sessional Form F Assessor/Trainer.

Qualifications.....CQSW/Diploma in Social work (Coventry)

Experience.....Caroline has a total of 20 years Local Authority Social Work experience including Child Protection and Adoption and Fostering. Since qualifying, Caroline has attended a wide variety of short courses in Child Protection, adoption issues and legal and procedural developments. She has also completed the 'Choosing to foster training for trainers course'

Kate GoochSessional Worker.

Qualifications.....5 A Levels (3A's 2 B's)

A post-graduate, LLB Law at Birmingham University

Experience.....Kate has worked, both as a play worker, often having a supervisory role, in an after school club and as a youth worker. She has experience of working with teenagers with learning and behavioural difficulties and has also worked as a sports coach, using her Community Sports Leaders Award. Kate has worked for 2 years as a Project Worker for an Independent Fostering Agency, supervising daytime activities for young people on remand.

Our Purpose

To provide the highest standards of Foster Care, thereby creating the best possible opportunities for children and young people to have a positive experience of family life.

Mission Statement

Our goal is to work toward providing the best service for children, Foster Carers and placing authorities.

Our motivation is the belief that children and young peoples futures can be positively influenced by those given responsibility for their care. It is essential that these key people demonstrate:

- A Child-centred philosophy

And are committed to:

- Partnership working, for the good of the child/young person

Aims and Objectives

Our aim is to 'improve the outcomes for children and young people in public care through the provision of a quality child care service'.

Our objectives are: -

1. To recruit a diverse range of Foster Carers, from within the West Midlands region, who will provide a high standard of care to `looked after children` aged 0 -18 years.
2. To develop a "quality fostering service", including same day, respite and resources permitting, remand placements, for children and young people in the `looked after` care system and when requested, to support young people through to independence.
3. To develop plans with placing authorities in order to meet the individual needs of children and young people. These plans may include therapy, supervised contact, education, and life skills
4. Afford ongoing training and support services to all Foster Carers in order to promote their professional development, and to ensure that the focus is always maintained upon children and young peoples care, safety and progress whilst they remain `looked after`.
5. A focus on continuous improvement, quality assurance and to meet or exceed all of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services

Model of Care

A.F.C. will seek to provide foster homes to meet the needs of individual young people and sibling groups. A.F.C. will provide quality care in a family setting through a variety of foster care options.

Our aims and objectives are to meet the needs of deprived and damaged children and young people, within the environment of stable and supportive families, who are well supported to undertake this task.

The current information on patterns and outcomes for children and young people "looked after," makes sobering reading. A.F.C. intends to practically challenge these outcomes by placing children and young people with Foster Carers who are committed to meeting their needs and where possible to assist children and young people in re-integrating back into their home communities.

Respect and recognition will always be given for the importance of ethnic origin, cultural background, religion and language of each young person and their families.

Consideration must be given to the gender, sexuality and any disability of the young person who is fostered, so that individual needs are met in every placement.

Continuity and consistency of training will have a high priority in order to support the Foster Carers and social workers thus enabling them to meet the needs of the child/young person, and where a young person is placed on remand, the objectives of the Court.

Respect for the Foster Carers will always be shown, as will the recognition of the uniqueness of each individual Foster family. This will always be a priority when identifying an appropriate placement for a child/young person.

Partnership working will be encouraged with all those involved in wanting what is best for the fostered child/young person.

Placements and Services provided by Aspire Foster Care

Placements Provided

The following placements are available:

Planned short term, task centered placements

Working towards specific goals. These may include assessment placements, bridging, preparation for adoption, permanency or placements, which meet other specific care, plan objectives.

Planned longer term placements

For individual children or young people and sibling groups. Carers are available who are able to make a longer-term commitment and offer stability for young people until they move on to independence.

Sibling Placements

Are available, in order to keep children and young people together. Carers will have been assessed as having sufficient space, skills and energy to take on this demanding task.

Parent and child placements

Are offered with carers who have sufficient experience and an interest in helping young parents to develop their parenting skills and who can offer assessment and monitoring as required.

Unplanned, short notice or emergency placements

May also be available including the possibility of placements for asylum seekers, or other specialist requirements.

Services provided

1. The provision of supervision and support by a qualified social worker in addition to that given by Local Authorities.
2. Provide quality training for all Foster Carers. This will commence during the assessment process and continue with regular post approval training events for Foster Carers.
3. Where possible, A.F.C. will facilitate the provision of respite for Foster Carers as appropriate.
4. Emergency cover (24 hours every day of the year). Each foster carer to receive contact numbers as part of their Foster Carer Handbook.

5. Any specific therapeutic support package or leaving care programme will either be provided by the placing authority or arranged/provided by A.F.C. at an agreed cost.
6. Support of contact arrangements between the placed child and his/her birth family where agreed and in the best interests of the child.

Statement of Principles

1. That all children have a right to some experience of positive family life and values, thus encouraging a sense of belonging and identity which will be of benefit to them in moving more successfully into adulthood.
2. That each individual family shall be free to function as is natural to them and shall not be subject to unnecessary interference on the part of the management team, whilst acknowledging that each family will be accountable to A.F.C. for carrying out their duties in accordance with A.F.C. principles. Moreover, support, training and advice will be available from the Staff Team.
3. A.F.C. is a Christian or faith based organisation, and therefore all prospective Foster Families will be made aware of and be expected to uphold the ethos and values of the organisation. AFC believes in the development of the whole child and is therefore committed to the emotional, physical and where appropriate, spiritual development of each individual child/young person.
4. That the skills and knowledge and services of a wide range of professional and lay people shall be drawn upon to ensure that each is given the chance to reach their potential and that families are adequately resourced and equipped in their task. (People are our greatest asset).
5. The provision of supervision and support by a qualified social worker in addition to that provided to the child in placement by the Local Authority.
7. Provide quality training for all Foster Carers. This will commence during the assessment process and continue with regular post approval training events for Foster Carers.
8. That A.F.C. will operate according to the statutory responsibilities of a childcare organisation as defined by the 1989 Children Act and Associated Guidance and Regulation Documents.

Compliments, Comments and Complaints

All Foster Carers will be made aware of Aspire Foster Care Complaints Procedure as part of their induction training. Children will be verbally informed and formally notified of the procedure via the Children & Young Persons Guide. Local Authorities will also be made aware of the policy and be expected to inform the parents of such. Any complaints will be taken seriously and addressed as a matter of priority. A copy of this procedure will be given to any party entitled to it (FSR 2002 18.3).

All children and young people will be given a copy of a 'Children and Young Person's Guide'. Included in the guide is an explanation of who they should talk to if they have a problem or complaint. In the event of a complaint being made by a young person, it will be taken seriously; and AFC will ensure that s/he is safeguarded from any reprisals and the child's social worker for the placing authority will be informed.

If a child has infrequent contact or none with his birth family s/he is entitled to the provision of an Independent Visitor via the responsible placing authority. The role of the visitor is to 'visit, befriend and advise' the child/young person. Some children may require the support of an advocate to assist if they have particular and specific special needs.

We want everyone to be satisfied with our service, however, if anyone is feeling dissatisfied with any aspect of Aspire Foster Care, attempts will be made as soon as possible to resolve the issue in an informal way. It is not intended that all problems that arise in day-to-day childcare should be elevated to the status of a complaint. A matter, which is promptly resolved to everyone's satisfaction, when drawn to the attention of a member of the Aspire Foster Care team, is not something that requires referral to the formal 'Complaints Procedure'.

This procedure is to provide a framework for handling complaints that have not been sorted out by discussion. All complaints to be dealt with under this procedure are to be presented formally, in writing. The complaint will be logged in the 'Complaints Book'.

The formal complaint should be made to the AFC Registered Manager who will respond within 14 days. If the matter is not resolved, or if a complaint involves Aspire Foster Care's Registered Manager, then a report should be made directly to the Responsible Individual who will investigate and respond within 14 days.

If the matter still remains unresolved, then an independent person will be asked to investigate and again respond to the complaint within 14 days. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint s/he may then refer to the policy of the placing Local Authority.

Ofsted should be informed of all complaints, the contact details being as follows.

Support of Foster Carers

See pages 6-7 'Services Provided'

Training of Foster Carers

An evaluation of training will be carried out annually, and the needs of Foster Carers and staff will be discussed during supervision.

Ongoing training for all carers through the planning and delivery of tailored packages, taking into account current qualifications and skills.

Recruitment and Approval of Foster Carers

1. A.F.C. will use a diversity of methods to recruit interested applicants.
2. On approach to A.F.C., all applicants will be screened by the Agency, at whose discretion, an informal visit will be arranged.
3. A social worker will then either visit the applicants at home, or applicants will come to the office for an informal discussion.
4. All suitable applicants will be asked to complete an initial application form and will be invited to attend training sessions. They will be given 'Applying to become a Foster Carer' and 'The Assessment', which will explain the competency based approach and the competencies required.
5. An A.F.C. social worker will meet with applicants regularly to discuss what fostering entails and the competencies, (skills) and qualities required. Together they will plan what information applicants will need to collect to show what they can offer.
6. Applicants will be made aware of and assessed against A.F.C.'s Equal Opportunity Policy.
7. A previously completed BAAF Form F will be obtained where applicable, or a Form F assessment will commence.
8. Throughout the process, the social worker will discuss how the assessment is going and what information is still needed.

9. All Foster Carers must complete an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure Form. Checks with other agencies will also be carried out by A.F.C. Certain specific information will be required (for example, a birth certificate or a passport as proof of your identity).
10. Where applicable, references will be taken up from the Local Authority with whom the applicants currently foster, and arrangements made to consult with relevant Local Authority personnel who have knowledge of the applicants child care capabilities.
11. Personal references will be taken up and the referees will be interviewed.
12. In accordance with BAAF practice, a full medical examination will be arranged and the results will be shown to A.F.C. Panel's medical advisor for comments.
13. An A.F.C. social worker will then write a report, pulling together all the information collected during the assessment process. The report will outline applicants' skills, training needs and areas of vulnerability. S/he will recommend the number and age of children the applicants' could foster.
14. Applicants will see the report and will have the opportunity to comment on it, in writing.
15. The report will be presented to the A.F.C. Fostering Panel. Applicants are expected to attend and will be invited into the meeting after the A.F.C. social worker has presented the report in order to ask, or respond to any questions.
16. Following the panel meeting, applicants will be informed of the decision in writing.
17. If approved, an A.F.C. social worker will guide Foster Carers through the next steps.
18. If applicants are not approved, a written notice of the decision will be given, together with the reasons for the decision, and an invitation to submit any written representations within 28 days of the date of the notice.
19. AFC`S Fostering Panel will meet to consider the written representations. Applicants will be informed of the decision in writing.

Aspire Foster Care

Number of Foster Carers approved on 1st April 2008 18

Number of children in placement 14

Number of Complaints 0