

West Midlands Statement of Purpose 2018/19



Contents



Contents	2
Introduction	3
Our reason for being	4
Aims.....	4
Objectives	5
Status and Constitution	7
Management Structure	8
Regional Team Structure	9
The Team	9
Head Office & Regional Organisational Chart	10
Innovation	11
Standards of Care.....	12
Service Provision	14
Fusion Fostering Panel	15
Priorities.....	16
Supporting Carers to Care	17
for Children	17
Ofsted	19
Complaints and Outcomes.....	20
Contact Details	21

Introduction



This statement of purpose has been developed in accordance with the requirements and regulations set out in:

- The Fostering Services Regulations (England) 2011
- The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services
- The Care Standards Act 2000

A copy of this statement of purpose has been placed on the Fusion Fostering website, and is made available, on request, to:

- Any parent or person with parental responsibility for a child placed with Fusion Fostering.
- Any person working on behalf of Fusion Fostering.
- Any foster carer or prospective foster carer.

All children and young people placed with Fusion Fostering are provided with a children's guide, in a format appropriate to their age and understanding.

Our statement of purpose aims to engage all stake holders in understanding our vision and philosophy with regards the care of looked after children, whilst explaining the services we provide to achieve excellent care and positive outcomes.

Our reason for being



“To ensure that promoting positive experiences for looked after children is at the forefront of everything that we do”.

Aims

Inspire

We want to encourage an environment and an innovative approach that allows all involved with Fusion Fostering to be truly inspirational.

Enjoy

We want everyone who comes into contact with Fusion Fostering to experience the passion, fun and positivity that is central to our approach.

Full of opportunity

We will be a provider of opportunity, for everyone and at every level.

Creative

We want to encourage creativity in the ways that we achieve positive outcomes for looked after young people.

Diversity

We will be a fully inclusive agency and our respect for diversity will be part of all that we do.

Achieve


We will promote achievement and always celebrate success, no matter how big or small.

Grow, Evolve and Adapt

We will grow in a way that provides security and stability whilst retaining our identity as a family run business that serves the needs of our local community.

Objectives

- Provide an available and professional 24 hour a day service for children, foster carers and local authorities.
- Ensure the provision of secure, consistent and safe care to all children and young people placed.
- Provide a stable, nurturing and stimulating environment where the children and young people will have a positive experience of family life.
- Develop professional foster carers who respect and value difference, and encourage children and young people to be proud of who they are.
- Provide opportunities for children and young people to remain with their siblings or have contact with their siblings and birth family members.
- Provide a bridge between the past and the present, the present and the future, for all children and young people placed with Fusion Fostering.
- Provide a service that works for children and is focused on meeting their needs and fulfilling the potential of all children and young people in our care.
- Promote educational attainment and meet the health needs for children and young people.
- Work with local authorities and other agencies in helping to meet the aims of each identified care plan and achieving positive outcomes.
- Provide an environment in which children and young people have a smooth and positive transition into adulthood.
- Provide a service that allows parents to be placed with their child(ren) and assessed as to their competency to care for the child safely and appropriately.

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- Recruit a range of foster carers in an efficient, effective and timely manner to meet the diverse needs of children and young people referred to Fusion.
 - Provide foster carers with the necessary support and training for their continuing development, with the aim of an overall robust package of professional support and financial remuneration in order to protect placement choice for children and young people.
 - Recruit and maintain a team of managers, practitioners and support staff who are appropriately qualified and trained in order to provide a high level of supervision and support to all foster carers.
 - Carefully match the identified needs of children and young people with the skills and experience of our foster carers.
 - Fusion Fostering recognises the importance of the contributions that children, young people and foster carers make to the development of the service, and will ensure that they participate in our process of continuous improvement.

Status and Constitution



Fusion Fostering is a registered and inspected independent fostering agency under the Care Standards Act 2000 / Fostering Services Regulations 2011. It is therefore properly constituted to provide foster care placements on behalf of local authorities.

Fusion Fostering is very clearly an owner managed company, which is achieving a planned expansion into a number of regions of the UK.

The board of directors are actively involved in the day to day running of the business.

- Gary Dawkins – Chief Executive and Responsible Individual
- Ron Scurr – Director
- David Tucker – Operations Director

The board of directors meet regularly and are responsible for the corporate governance of the company including:

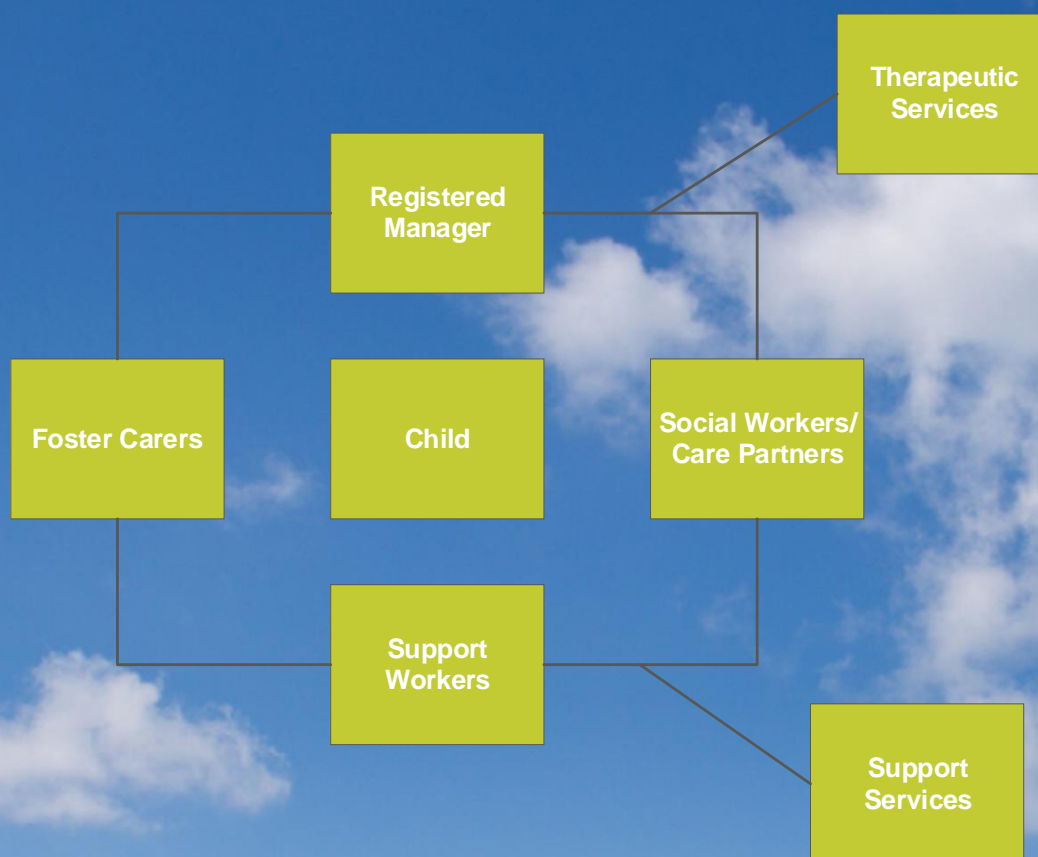
- Strategic Vision
- Quality Assurance
- Legal compliance
- Financial governance
- Policies and procedures
- Business continuity planning

Management Structure



The senior management team meets on a monthly basis with the directors and are responsible for the day to day running of the agency. Our senior management team provides significant experience within the field of fostering and adoption, and members hold a range of social work and childcare qualifications.

Regional Team Structure



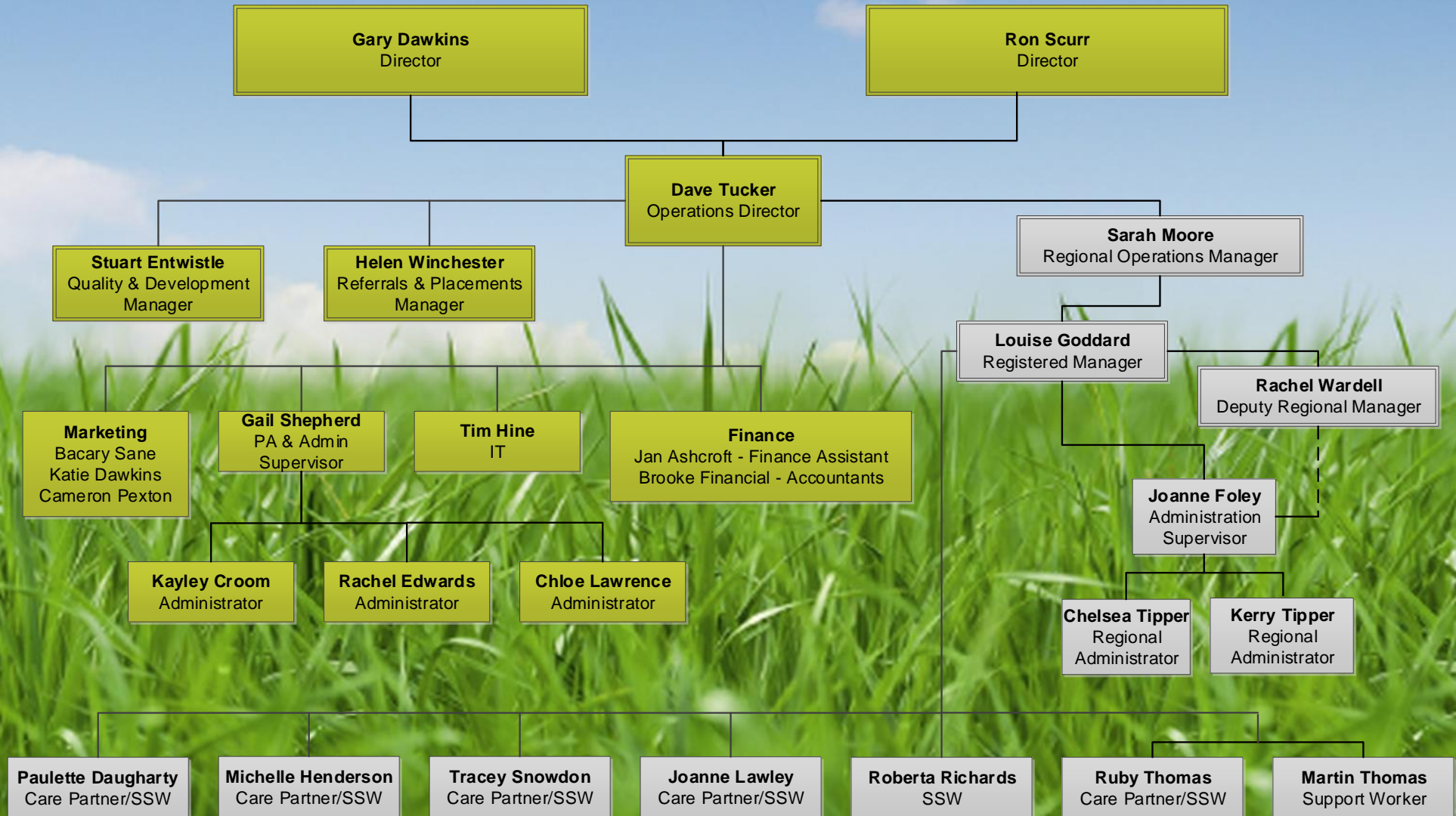
The Team

Fusion Fostering places a strong emphasis on the role of the team in ensuring high quality and consistent practice across the agency. Each region meets on a monthly basis following the Senior Management Meetings demonstrating good and pro-active governance.

Registered Manager – Our registered manager is responsible for the day to day running of the agency. She has over 20 years of experience of working and managing in fostering and child care services.

Supervising Social Workers/Care partners – are all qualified and experienced childcare practitioners with backgrounds in a range of settings. Operating in a small geographical area they are responsible for the recruitment, assessment, support and supervision of our foster carers.

Head Office & Regional Organisational Chart





Care Partners

At our inception we thought about the current issues facing fostering and social work in general and looked to provide some innovative solutions to these problems. This innovation has led to one of our key strengths as an agency.

We have introduced the concept of care partners as a way of addressing some of the shortfalls that we have experienced in fostering practice. Essentially our care partners carry out the traditional supervising social worker duties but they are empowered by a developing stake in the business. This symbiotic relationship creates a number of positive outcomes.

- Care partners recruit, assess and support their own carers. Foster carers are able to develop strong and lasting working relationships with one person. This not only improves retention but it also aids in matching, placement stability and satisfaction.
- Care partners are limited to a small and manageable case load. Given that there is no pressure to increase workloads to reduce costs, care partners are enabled to provide unrivalled support to their carers.
- Care partners have more autonomy in the way that they look after their carers, as well as having more responsibility. This helps them to ensure that carers feel supported and placements are stable and safe.
- We are able to attract a highly skilled and experienced work force by ensuring that social work practitioners can continue doing what they do best whilst being remunerated in a way that is relative to senior management positions.
- Care partners feel supported by our senior management team who retain a clear responsibility for ensuring standards, quality assurance and consistency.
- The care partner model offers flexibility to supervising social workers that allows them to deliver better outcomes for children and young people.

Standards of Care




Our philosophy of care encompasses the belief that all children and young people have the right to expect the following:

- To be kept safe.
- To be heard.
- To be valued.
- To be respected.
- To be supported and encouraged.
- To be involved in decision making appropriate to their age and understanding.
- To have access to high quality education.
- To have access to family and/or significant others that are important to them.

We believe that adults responsible for the care of children and young people should have the ability to recognise and respect each child as an individual, recognise their potential and assist them in finding and building solutions for their lives.

To enable Fusion Fostering to meet the needs of individual children and young people, we place an emphasis on careful matching with our foster carers. This ensures that children and young people are placed with foster carers who are best suited to meet their particular needs. This in turn enables Fusion Fostering to promote and evidence better outcomes for children and young people in key areas:

- Promoting a positive identity, potential and valuing diversity through individualised care.
- Promoting positive behaviour and relationships.
- Safeguarding children from harm and Child Sexual Exploitation.
- Safeguarding children and young people when they are 'missing from care' and acting to help avoid this risk in future.

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- Promoting good health and wellbeing.
 - Supporting leisure activities.
 - Promoting educational attainment.
 - Promoting and supporting contact.
 - Providing a suitable physical environment for the foster child.
 - Ensuring children and young people receive as much information and preparation for placement as time allows.
 - Promoting independence and moves to adulthood and leaving care or remain with their carers under a staying put arrangement.
 - Providing the opportunity to live as part of a family.
 - Promoting healthy attachments.

Service Provision



Fusion Fostering aims to offer a wide range of placement solutions to the local authorities that we work with. We firmly believe that working in partnership with the placements teams and social work teams enables us to offer safe, secure and specific placements to meet a wide range of needs.

These services include:

Mainstream Fostering

- Emergency Placements are provided at short notice and supported by a 24-hour emergency response service.
- Short Term Placements provide care for a few days, weeks or months while plans are being made for the child's long-term future.
- Long Term Placements provide permanent care for a child with their foster carers up to and into adult independence, where adoption is not an option.
- Respite Care is the provision of a time limited placement, either whilst main carers are temporarily not available, or as part of an ongoing care plan for the young person.
- Solo Placements require experienced and resilient foster carers who are able to meet the needs of more challenging young people.
- Siblings Placements enable large groups of siblings to remain together in foster care.
- Fusion Fostering focuses on recruiting carers able to offer this opportunity, given that this is a key area of need for local authorities, and an important priority

Other Services we offer:

- Parent and Child Placement - We have a lot of experience in providing safe and secure environments for parents and their children. We also can provide robust and well evidenced parenting assessments for the purposes of care proceedings. These services closely link with our sister organisation FAASS that provides residential parenting assessments.
- Bridging Placements are a short term, flexible placement, often used to ensure a positive transition from one placement to another.

Fusion Fostering Panel



In accordance with the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, Fusion Fostering maintains a central list of persons suitable to sit on fostering panels and has an established regular fostering panels who sit on a monthly basis whose overriding objectives are to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in foster care.

Our fostering panels meet at in Tamworth on a monthly basis. Panel members have a broad range of relevant experience, which reflects our commitment to bring together individuals from different backgrounds. Panel includes members who are care leavers and foster carers. Each panel has access to medical advice and an experienced panel advisor.

Priorities



No matter what type of placement we offer, we always ensure the following priorities:

- We will promote and provide education on health and related issues, supporting any referrals and access to specialist services.
- We will encourage and support school attendance ensuring.
- Children have the appropriate and necessary equipment and clothing.
- We will encourage young people to participate in making decisions, both about their lives but also about how we operate as an agency.
- We encourage children to be involved in the communities in which they live and maintain positive links with birth families where appropriate.
- We provide preparation for independence in supporting children and young people to gain the necessary skills for later life. Each child/young person placed with Fusion has savings set aside for the duration of their placement with Fusion.
- In accordance with National Minimum Standards for fostering (2011), Fusion Fostering has developed two Children's guides; one aimed at children under 10 (Fusion Fact Book) and the other for 10+ (Go-to Guide). The guides contain important contact numbers for children and young people to use if they wish to speak to an independent person.
- Fusion Fostering's key objective is to develop services that support and monitor the progress of children and young people in achieving positive outcomes, across all aspects of their lives.


Supporting Carers to Care for Children



Fusion Fostering values the work foster carers undertake and the contribution they make to the lives of children and young people. Appropriate support for families who foster is vitally important to a successful placement. Fusion Fostering provide creative and flexible support arrangements for foster carers and the children and young people placed.

Fusion Fostering offer the following services to support all our foster carers and their families:

- A minimum of monthly formal supervision and support from a qualified supervising social worker, including regular telephone contact.
- Foster carer support groups offering mutual support to each other.
- Out-of-hours service offering vital support to carers outside office hours. Access to a member of staff is available 24 hours a day.
- A level of financial support that values the skills and commitment of foster carers, paid in a timely manner. The Fostering Allowances Booklet is reviewed annually, and all carers receive a copy.
- A copy of the foster carers' handbook containing information and guidance.
- A consistent and reliable web-based recording database called Jelly Baby. This allows immediate and real time access to all essential information about the child or young person.
- A review, at least annually, in line with Fostering Service Regulations. Reviews also provide an opportunity for carers to evaluate their practice and their professional development plan. Other professionals involved and the children and young people in placement are invited to contribute to the review process.

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- Support for birth children of foster carers.
 - Regular activities for carers, their families and children and young people placed, to meet together throughout the year in informal surroundings.
 - Support for carers negotiating with schools in the promotion of children and young people's educational needs.
 - Post-approval training including the Training, Support and Development Standards for foster carers.
 - Regular on-going training that is relevant to individual foster carers.
 - Access to Fusion's policies and procedures via Inspire.
 - Individual membership of Foster Talk.



Fusion Fostering is registered and inspected by Ofsted in accordance with the Fostering Service Regulations 2011 and the Care Standards Act 2000.

Fusion Fostering West Midlands (URN: 1233309) was registered by Ofsted on the 10th August 2017. The Region was inspected on 6th – 10th August 2018 and rated **Good**.

The Inspection Report stated:

Children make good progress in all areas of their lives because of the care that they receive. Foster carers demonstrate commitment and dedication to the children that they care for. One foster carer told the inspector, 'We are really proud of what he has achieved. He is the child I get up for every morning, he is my purpose.'

Supervising social workers make sure that children live with foster carers who can meet their needs. For example, one child who had experienced 13 moves previously is now established with long-term foster carers. His social worker said, 'He seems to have found a place where he is safe and secure.'

Ofsted can be contacted at:

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Complaints and Outcomes



Fusion Fostering aims to get things right first time and all the time, but we recognise that we don't always achieve that. We welcome complaints as feedback about our service, and seek to learn from any complaint we receive. Fusion Fostering has a comprehensive complaints procedure which is made widely available in different formats for children, young people, parents, carers and professionals.

When a complaint is made about any aspect of Fusion Fostering services, our first aim is to resolve the complaint swiftly and informally at Stage One of our procedure. Most complaints can be successfully addressed by informal discussion with a local manager, which may result in an agreed change of practice, or an explanation, or other action. This action will then be confirmed in a letter to the person raising the complaint. The process will be completed within 20 working days, and often more quickly than that.

If the complaint is too complex to be addressed informally, or the person making the complaint is not satisfied with the result of the informal process, a request can be made in writing to Fusion Fostering for a formal investigation of the matter at Stage Two. The formal investigation will be carried out by someone independent of the local management of the service, often a Care Partner or manager from another region, or a Director.

If the person making the complaint is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 2 they can write to the Complaints Manager of Fusion Fostering at the head office in Taunton requesting the matter go to Stage 3. At this stage, all documents and enquiries will be reviewed by a Complaint Review Panel. This panel will include at least one person independent of Fusion Fostering, and will meet to discuss the documents and enquiries made with all those involved. The complainant will be invited to the Complaints Review panel meeting. The chair of the Complaint Review Panel will then make a decision and inform the complainant of the outcome within five working days.

Fusion Fostering has a Complaints Manager who has overall responsibility for ensuring that complaints are fully addressed. When a complaint has been concluded, the Complaints Manager will make any appropriate changes to procedures and guidance to avoid the same situation arising again, and will make sure that everyone is aware of the lessons that have been learnt from that complaint. The Complaints Manager can be contacted at the address overleaf.

Contact Details



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www.fusionfostering.com

