

# Statement of Purpose



Longham Business Park  
Unit 5 + 6, 168 Ringwood Road  
Ferndown, Dorset, BH22 9BU  
Telephone: 01202 573408

## **A footprint makes an impression.**

At Footprints, we recognise everyone is unique and individual. We want to be there for every child and young person entrusted to our care. We are fully committed to offering them care, support and encouragement in order for them to make steps towards a brighter future.

## **We believe we can make a difference.**



This Statement of Purpose has been developed in accordance with appropriate fostering regulations, statutory guidance and National Minimum Standards.

- The Care Standards Act 2000
- The Fostering Services Regulations 2011
- The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011
- The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services
- Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers: Amendments to the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services July 2013

## Aims and Objectives



To offer a high quality service to local children based in the area we cover.

To offer personalised support by remaining small and focused in the local area where we can develop strong links with local authorities and specialist knowledge of other partnership agencies and resources.

To recruit a high calibre of foster carers to ensure children receive the best care.

To recruit foster carers from diverse backgrounds to reflect the needs of the children looked after.

To be mindful of the matching process so children are placed with carers who have the right skills and experience to meet their needs.

To offer a high standard of physical and emotional care and a safe and secure environment in which children are protected from abuse and harm.

To develop our foster carers giving them opportunities to enhance their personal development and have a direct input into running "their" agency.

To recognise each child's potential and work with our carers to ensure that they make progress whilst they are in our care.

To be flexible and adaptable responding to feedback from children and young people, foster carers, Local Authorities and other stakeholders ensuring we deliver the service people want.

To promote anti-discriminatory practice by training and challenging practices to ensure children can be protected from prejudice.

## Services and Facilities



Footprints offers a full range of foster care placements including:-

- Short-term fostering for periods of one day to many months while plans are being made for children
- Long-term fostering for older children who will not return home but need to maintain strong links with their birth family
- Permanent fostering for children who need to stay with a family for the rest of their childhood
- Fostering for older children and teenagers who are struggling with the changes and pressures of adolescence
- Placements for siblings needing to be placed either together or separately
- Placements for unaccompanied asylum seekers/minors in families where cultural and religious diversity are actively celebrated
- Emergency placements
- Parents with babies

We are happy to discuss any prospective placements needed and will only offer placements where we have foster carers with the relevant skills and expertise to match the needs of the child.



## Status and Constitution

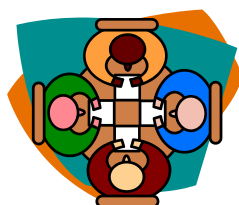


Footprints Foster Care Ltd was established in April 2012 as a small independent fostering agency aiming to offer a high quality, personalised service to local children. The agency is based in Bournemouth and covers Bournemouth and the surrounding areas of Poole, Dorset and some parts of Hampshire.

Footprints Foster Care Ltd is registered with Ofsted, under the Care Standards Act 2000. Ofsted regulates Independent Fostering Agencies to ensure they meet the requirements of the Fostering Regulation 2011 and the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services. They also ensure providers delivery high quality outcomes to children and young people and provide information about the quality of service.

Footprints Foster Care Ltd is a company limited by shareholding and is registered with Companies House (Registration No: 07879639).

## Management Structure



Footprints is owner managed with a small board of Directors who have direct control of the day to day running of the agency. This enables us to offer a service where all carers and children placed are known personally ensuring each child receives care specifically tailored towards their individual needs.

The day to day running of the company, including monitoring of practice to ensure compliance with regulations and standards, will be initially carried about by the Responsible Individual and the Registered Manager.

## Qualifications and Experience of Staff



### Vanda Leigh, Responsible Individual.

Vanda has worked in the social carer field for 30 years. She qualified as a social worker in 2000 and completed her post qualifying child care aware in 2005; she is registered with Social Work England. Vanda has worked in various field work teams and residential child care, where she was an integral part of the therapeutic team. Vanda has extensive knowledge of working for the Local authority fostering team, as a supervising social worker. She has been actively involved in the recruitment and assessment of foster carers, and was a practice supervisor for students studying for their social work degrees. Vanda has experience in learning and development; this has included the design and delivery of the interagency safeguarding training, for the Local authority. Vanda completed the NVQ Level 5 in Leadership for Health and Social Care in 2016.

### Stephanie Omosevwerha, Registered Manager.

Stephanie has worked in the social care field for over 25 years. She qualified as a social worker in 1996 and is registered with Social Work England. Stephanie has experience working in various field work teams and residential child care. She has also worked as a social care inspector for NCSC, CSCI and Ofsted and has an extensive knowledge of social care regulation for children's services, including fostering providers. Stephanie completed the NVQ Level 5 in Leadership for Health and Social Care in 2016.

### Chris D Jones, Supervising Social Worker.

Chris qualified as a social worker in 2012 and is registered with Social Work England. He gained experience working in local authority childcare teams with children in need, looked after children and child protection cases. A significant part of this time was spent in a specialist team working exclusively with teenagers. More recently Chris worked in the private sector as a supervising social worker for a large independent fostering agency before deciding to work with a smaller agency where he feels he can develop his commitment to providing higher levels of support to a smaller number of foster carers.

### Kayleigh Smith, Supervising Social Worker

Kayleigh qualified as a social worker at Bournemouth University in 2014 and is registered with Social Work England. Prior to becoming a social worker, Kayleigh volunteered with Home Start, providing guidance and support to vulnerable families and was a sessional worker for the local authority, which involved supporting children in need and supervising contacts. Kayleigh also did some work with the young carers group. Kayleigh began her social work career working for the local authority in the childcare team and held cases

consisting of child in need, child protection and looked after children. Kayleigh also worked in the looked after team, working specifically with teenagers. This gave Kayleigh a sound understanding and experience of policies and procedures involving a child in care. Kayleigh wanted to utilise her knowledge and experience, whilst being able to provide increased support to a smaller caseload, therefore moved to Footprints in 2018.

#### Emma Rowles, Supervising Social Worker

Emma qualified as a social worker at Bournemouth University in 2014 and is registered with Social Work England. Since qualifying in 2014 Emma has gained knowledge, understanding and experience in working within both Children and Adults Social Care Sector. Prior to starting with Footprints in 2018, Emma gained experience working in local authority childcare teams with children in need, looked after children, and often worked alongside child protection cases. Following this Emma then spent two years within the Local authority Fostering team in which she thoroughly enjoyed, assessing, recruiting, and training foster carers whilst finding them suitable placements. Emma is dedicated to improving the outcomes for looked after children, Emma decided to join footprints so that she was able to offer her full support to a smaller agency. Concentrating on a reduced caseload has enabled Emma to offer a high level of qualitative support to her foster carers.

#### Barbara Winwood, Supervising Social Worker

Barbara qualified as Social Worker in 1999 and is registered with Social Work England. Until 2008 she supported young people and adults as project manager, social worker and in a residential setting. For nearly 10 years after this Barbara was a Supervising Social Worker for a Local Authority and then worked independently as Form F Assessor, Independent Reviewing Officer, Member of Fostering Panel and allegations advisor. In 2018 Barbara completed her certification as Life Coach and is registered with the Coaching Association. She joined the Footprints Team in July 2020.

#### Julia Keleghar, Administrator

Julia has provided administration support for a wide range of organisations for over 30 years. These include publishing companies, an architectural practice, Volunteer Centre and the Citizens Advice Bureau. Julia has previous experience in the recruitment and organisation of training for volunteers. Her first introduction to the social care field was when she joined the Footprints team in October 2018. More recently Julia has been involved in organising mandatory training for Foster Carers and in the recruitment process for new applicants.

#### Natasha Steele, Support Worker

Tasha has just joined the Footprints Foster Care team at the start of August 2020. She has had a vast range of jobs, from retail to office. But started working as a Youth Support Worker 7 years ago as well as being a Teaching Assistant in a primary school.

Tasha is new to the fostering world but is learning quickly. Her Support Worker role is to support our foster carers and children in a range of ways on a need's basis.

## Numbers of Foster Carers and Children Placed



We currently have 20 approved fostering households in the Bournemouth/Poole area and 28 children in placement and 1 parent and child placement.

## Complaints and Outcomes



Footprints has a comprehensive complaints procedure that is available in a variety of formats suitable for children, young people, foster carers, parents and professionals.

Children can also contact the Children's Commissioner for free advice, support and information on Freephone: 0800 528 0731 or use the website [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand)

This year we had 1 recorded complaint which was found to be unsubstantiated. We have been able to use this to positively reflect on practices and make changes for the better.

As an organisation we welcome complaints as a way of putting things right and improving our service. As a result of the above complaint we have made some changes to practice and implemented additional policies and procedures to promote better outcomes for the children in our care.



# **Procedures for recruiting, approving, training, supporting and reviewing carers**



## **Assessment of Prospective Foster Carers**

In assessing prospective foster carers, Footprints follows the Fostering Services Regulations, England (2011), National Minimum Care Standards Act (2000), The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and BAAF and Fostering Network good practice guidance.

Following an initial enquiry, prospective applicants are visited at home so they can further discuss fostering for Footprints. Once a formal application is received, a competency-based assessment with the prospective carer, based on the BAAF Process is undertaken. This assessment follows a two stage process. The first stage includes undertaking statutory and best practice checks; these include a number of formal checks with agencies such as the police, health and education. Personal references and home health and safety assessments are also undertaken. The second stage consists of an assessment undertaken by a qualified social worker. During, the assessment, prospective carers attend an initial training course in Skills to Foster. This training is an essential element in the preparation of foster carers for the task of looking after children and young people.

## **Approval of Foster Carers**

The assessment process culminates in a written report which is then read and signed by the prospective carer and presented to an independent panel for review. The panel reviews the form, and asks relevant questions to enable them to make a recommendation.

The recommendation of Panel is sent to the Decision Maker for the agency. The Agency Decision Maker has the final decision on approval of foster carers.

On approval, a supervising social worker will be allocated to support the new foster carer with their task.

## **Training Foster Carers**

All foster carers are expected to participate in locally-delivered core training which is essential to undertaking the fostering task, and are required to complete Training, Support and Development standards. A comprehensive programme of additional training is also available for foster carers. This provides training in issues specific to the young people foster carers may be supporting as well as offering excellent personal development opportunities.

## **Supporting Foster Carers**

All foster carers are allocated a supervising social worker, who has the responsibility of managing and supporting the foster carer. Monthly formal supervision is complemented by support groups, automatic membership of Foster Talk and access to daily duty and out of hours services.

All foster carers will receive a Foster Care Handbook which details policies, information about fostering terms and conditions, guidance about requirements concerning care and control of children, contacting the Out of Hours Service, record keeping, the complaints procedure, and child protection procedures. Every foster carer will be expected to sign a Foster Carer Agreement upon approval, in line with Schedule 5 of the Fostering Services Regulations 2011.

Foster carers can also access a range of other services to support themselves and the children in placement. These services are listed in the foster carers Handbook and are known to the supervising social worker. In addition, foster carers are encouraged to participate in informal support and social opportunities organised by other foster carers.

## **Reviewing Foster Carers**

Formal supervision with foster carers and their social worker takes place a minimum of every 4 weeks and includes reviews of foster carers' record keeping and the outcomes they are delivering for the children in their care.

A supervising social worker will also undertake unannounced visits to the foster home. There is a formal annual review of each fostering household carried out by an Independent Reviewing Officer. Alongside this, Footprints procedures indicate situations in which further reviews should be undertaken, for example, in the case of a serious complaint, or if a change in approval is recommended.

