

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE****25 SEPTEMBER 2018****AMENDMENTS TO THE NYCC FOSTERING FRAMEWORK****Report of the Corporate Director – Children and Young People’s Service****1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To amend the NYCC Fostering Framework following the required two yearly review and consultation with Foster Carers and all other stakeholders.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The NYCC Fostering Framework was first implemented on 1 April 2015. This was following an extensive project that ran through the autumn of 2014 into the winter of 2015 and involved several formal consultation events with Foster Carers.
- 2.2 During 2015, Short Break Foster Carers were integrated into Fostering North Yorkshire (from Barnardo’s in the West and Action For Children in the East). A further, smaller round of consultations with Short Break Foster Carers was completed and on 1 April 2016 the NYCC Fostering Framework was updated to include Short Breaks for disabled children.
- 2.3 Thereafter, the NYCC Fostering Framework is to be reviewed every two years.
- 2.4 One small addition was made in early 2017 with respect to emergency placements made by EDT. To encourage more Foster Carers to come forward and offer this service it was agreed to pay double payment for a maximum of the first seven nights.

3.0 ISSUES

- 3.1 Following a consultation process (as outlined in Section 7.0 below) the following amendments were identified as required to update the NYCC Fostering Framework:
- i. Greater clarity with respect to how to fairly progress from Accredited to Advanced Foster Carer status and associated payments
 - ii. Greater recognition re the amount of direct contact that Short Break Foster Carers (caring for disabled children) have with the disabled child’s parents and to better tailor Short Breaks Mandatory Training to the requirements of the role
 - iii. More flexible approach to training requirements for different carer groups, specifically:
 - Allow new Short Break and UASC Foster Carers 18 months to complete their Fostering North Yorkshire Mandatory Training

- If a Foster Carer delivers training (or supports the delivery of training) to other carers (at an Advanced/Specialist Away Day, a general Support Group or indeed any training event) for this to count as one of their mandatory three 'Learning Events' a year
- iv. Change the requirement of Advanced and Specialist Foster Carers to complete TCIf training to completing the 'Fostering Changes' Course
 - v. To reduce the confusion created about the purpose of the NYCC Fostering Framework (and incorrect association with the assessment of children's/young people's needs), to rename it the: NYCC Foster Carers' Framework
 - vi. To change the review period of the framework to periodically (but not more frequent than every two years or less frequent than every four years).

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 As the NYCC Fostering Framework is a policy of itself, the above listed (in Section 3.0) and below identified (in Section 5.0) suggested amendments are effectively small policy changes.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There was one further amendment identified as required to update the NYCC Fostering Framework that has a small financial implication:
 - i. Commitment to more equitable financial support to Foster Carers during the process of an allegation investigation. Advanced and Specialist Foster Carers continue to be paid their relevant Fee (until the outcome of the associated investigation) and so the amendment is for the continued payment of the Premium to Accredited Foster Carers even if the children/young people are moved out of the placement
- 5.2 The number of allegations made against Foster Carers each year is relatively low and so the maximum annual financial impact associated with this amendment is in the order of £3-5K.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are not any legal implications to these proposed amendments

7.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

7.1 The consultation methodology adopted for the 2018 review of the NYCC Fostering Framework was as listed below:

- Survey of all Foster Carers in March/April 2018. (In 2016 Fostering North Yorkshire initiated a biennial Survey of Foster Carers and Section 3 of the Survey is all about the Fostering Framework.)
- Feedback from the Foster Carer Association Chairs
- Foster Carer Association Chairs met with the Lead Elected Member for Children's Services on 28 June 2018
- Seek feedback from the Safeguarding/LAC/DCS Social Work Teams
- Seek feedback from the IRO Service

7.2 The Biennial Fostering North Yorkshire Survey ran from 7 March 2018 to 9 April 2018 and there were 108 responses. Out of approximately 300 Fostering Households this is an excellent return. The breakdown of the 108 Foster Carers who completed the Survey is as below:

- 11% Family and Friends
- 11% Pre-Accredited
- 38% Accredited
- 21% Advanced/Specialist
- 9% Respite
- 8% Short Breaks
- 2% Did not select their category

With the exception of Advanced/Specialist, this is a proportionate representation of the Fostering North Yorkshire Foster Carers.

7.3 Several themes of feedback were also received from the Foster Carer Association Chairs and from their meeting with the Lead Elected Member for Children's Services

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 For Executive Members to agree all the amendments to the NYCC Fostering Framework as outlined in Sections 3.0 and 5.0 of this report.

Stuart Carlton
Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service

COUNTY HALL
NORTHALLERTON
10 September 2018

Author of report – Alan Tucker, Placement and Fostering Manager
Presenter of report – Stuart Carlton, Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service

Background Documents – updated NYCC Foster Carers' Framework (with new text shaded in green)

Text shaded in green are the suggested amendments following the 2018 review of the framework.

NYCC Foster Carers' Framework (Version 6.0 – October 2018)

Overview

- This framework underpins the Fostering North Yorkshire Service commitment to achieving best possible outcomes for children in care who are fostered and supported by skilled, motivated and rewarded foster carers. The framework has a pre-accreditation period and then three accredited grades of payment based on complexity of placements and on carers' skills and experience. It provides entry requirements and expectations regarding carer training and skills development and reflective learning for each level.
- A pre-accredited foster carer is a person who is approved as a local authority foster parent in accordance with Regulation 27 of the 2011 Regulations, or temporarily approved under Regulation 24 of the 2010 Regulations but who has not yet progressed via completed Training and Development Standards and Core Training to become an accredited foster carer.
- From 1st April 2015, this policy supersedes all previous policies on the provision of payments to persons approved by NYCC as foster carers in accordance with regulation 27 of the 2011 Regulations, or temporarily approved under regulation 24 of the 2010 Regulations. It applies to both related (Connected Person/Family and Friend foster carers) and unrelated foster carers and to both long term and short term placements.
- From January 2016, the fostering framework was modified to take into account the introduction of a county wide short break service for disabled children and their families. (All text highlighted in yellow is for easy recognition of the short break components of this framework.) It is recognised that for foster carers involved with short break care there may be a greater necessity/expectation to form a deep working relationship with the disabled child's parents.
- This framework aims to assist foster carers by providing clarity about expectations and requirements at each grade, both for new entrants and for those approved carers wishing to progress to a higher level. It is also applicable for Early Permanence Placement arrangements and to support situations where foster carers later wish to adopt.
- The model has minimum entry requirements for new carers at each grade and also allows for existing carers to progress up through the grades if they meet the tasks, skills and competencies required for an advanced foster carer, specialist foster carer and specialist short break carer providing there is a requirement for new advanced or specialist foster carers.
- This framework will be reviewed periodically (but not more frequent than every two years or less frequent than every four years).

Progression

- Following approval, most foster carers will be pre-accredited foster carers. Once they have successfully completed the Training, Development Standards (CWDC workbook), completed the core training and had a positive foster carer review they are eligible to progress to become accredited foster carers. For those in their first year of fostering the foster carer review is returned to the foster panel and the decision confirmed by the Agency Decision Maker. Once this is signed off the carer can progress to become accredited foster carers. **The target for most unrelated carers will be to achieve accredited status within twelve months. The exceptions to this will be unrelated foster carers offering care to UASC (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) and short break carers for whom the target will be eighteen months.**
- In addition to meeting the foster carer characteristics required and carrying out the main tasks, skills and competencies for carers at the pre-accredited level (left hand column in black type on the grid below) foster carers are encouraged to develop increasing levels of skills, knowledge and experience which will be recognised by designating three grades of accredited foster carer. There are various Training and Learning requirements as shown on the grid, which must be met and reported to the foster carer's annual review before progression can occur. For advanced foster carers and specialist foster carers, there also needs to be **an identified requirement for new advanced or specialist foster carers or carers can acquire their new status in readiness for a future child/young person with that level of need.**
- There are three grades of accredited foster carers each of which receive a specific premium or fee: accredited; advanced and specialist. The payment levels reflect the tasks, skill and competency requirements for that grade. The child's needs and carer abilities will need to be demonstrated to be requiring an advanced or specialist placement to the satisfaction of the relevant **forum or** panel.
- Foster carers will need to provide evidence for their foster carer review that they meet, or continue to meet, the requirements of the respective grade. Advanced foster carers and specialist foster carers will need to produce their evidence to their annual Appraisals and foster carers review.
- Foster carers wishing to be considered for progression to another grade should discuss this with their supervising social worker who will be able to provide further advice on progression requirements and procedure.
- Some foster carer applicants (e.g. experienced foster carers from other agencies) may express a commitment to being 'fast tracked' to a specific foster carer level, and as such may initially be recognised at that level and need to demonstrate during placements that they meet the requirements so their continuation at this level can be established (there needs to be a requirement in the cases of advanced or specialist levels). This would be through an agreed time limit. **Foster carers who wish to progress through the scheme are able to apply 'recognition of prior learning' if appropriate from attending other means of learning/training. However demonstration on these acquired skills will need to be shown through reflective practice.**
- If a foster carer consistently fails to meet or retain grade requirements (including training), a foster carer review will be undertaken with a time limited action plan to recover put in place. If this is not successful then a reduction in grade approval level, suspension of approval or ultimately, withdrawal of approval as a foster carer (if practice falls below the Fostering National Minimum Standards).

Payment

- Pre-accredited foster carers are paid a weekly age-related allowance when a child/young person is in place but do not receive any premiums at all. This is based on Fostering Networks recommended annual increase related to the rate of inflation.
- For accredited carers, child age-related premiums provide a degree of financial reward to foster carers but are only payable alongside the weekly maintenance allowance payments for each child in placement, with no allowances or premiums payable when the carer has no placements.
- For advanced foster carers and specialist foster carers a fee is paid in addition to weekly basic maintenance allowance payments for any child in placement and provides financial reward to foster carers following a matching of their skills and competencies and their ability to undertake specified tasks to the levels within the foster carer tasks, roles, responsibilities and foster carers characteristics category and will continue to be payable when the carer has no placements (usually to a maximum of three weeks per year – ***see specialist terms and conditions within the foster care agreement**). As fee paid carers advanced and specialist carers receive twenty eight days annual leave.
- Traditional short break carers offer in the range of 24 – 50+ nights care a year and are paid for each night of care given. Specialist short break carers make an agreement to give up to 200 nights of care a year and as well as receiving payment for each night of care also receive an annual fee. Thus, for traditional short break carers a short breaks nightly allowance is paid and for specialist short break carers this allowance and a weekly fee are paid. (The specialist short break carer's fee is a proportion of the specialist weekly fee.) In all other respects, the skills level of traditional short break carers is equivalent to advanced carers and specialist short break carers to specialist carers. The annual leave for specialist short break carers is also a proportion of the specialist carers annual leave entitlement and is a maximum of fifteen days (28 x 200/365).
- In exceptional circumstances, there will be social work practice issues that will necessitate consideration of placing a child/young person with assessed advanced or specialist needs with an accredited foster carer. In such circumstances the foster carer may temporarily be paid as an advanced foster carer or specialist foster carer for the duration of the placement by recommendation of the Placement, Permanence and Complex Decision Making Forum and agreement of the Head of Children and Young People's Resources/Assistant Director (subject to an agreed signed specific contract). For advanced carers, there will also be an expectation that there is a decrease in working hours/income that is compensated for by then receiving the advanced fee. The carer will return to the accredited or advanced level unless there is a requirement for new advanced or specialist foster carers and they meet the criteria for the level. If the temporarily approved advanced or specialist carer remains caring for the same child/young person and needs to seek new part-time employment or additional hours to current employment then payment of the temporarily higher fee can be continued for a maximum of twelve months.

- Child's age-related allowances and premiums and fees for pre-accredited and accredited foster carers are shown below:

1 Age ranges	2 Weekly basic maintenance allowance 2015/16 (all foster carers, including pre-accredited receive per placement)	3 Weekly age-related premiums 2015/16 (only accredited foster carers receive per placement)	4 Total per week per placement (accredited carers only)
0-4	149.83	49.92	199.75
5-10	170.71	62.03	232.74
11-15	212.36	74.69	287.05
16-18	258.35	87.34	345.69

Foster carers who take in a child/young person out of office hours will receive double the Allowance and Premium for that child/young person for the nights that they are resident up to a maximum of seven nights.

Skills fees to be paid for advanced and specialist foster carers are shown below:

Grade	Allowance per child placed according to age – Column 2 above	Premium payable for each child placed – Column 3 above	Weekly 'skills' fee (advanced or specialist only)
Pre-accredited	Yes	No	No
Accredited	Yes	Yes	No
Advanced	Yes	No	209.72
Specialist	Yes	No	480.35

Specialist foster carers who are currently receiving a higher rate will continue to receive this amount throughout the duration of the child or young person in placement. Those carers on £490.02 will not receive an annual inflation increase until there is parity with other specialist carers on the lower £480.35 rate. Foster carers who receive £314.62 rates will continue to receive this rate throughout the duration of the current placement for the child or young person in placement. They will not receive annual inflation increase. All carers will be reassessed once their current placement moves on in line with the new tasks, skills and competencies framework.

For foster carers who look after a mother and baby placement, payment will be considered in conjunction with the legal requirements for the placement and whether the mother has some source of income from which she can contribute (and would be means tested). However, the principle would be for the foster carer not to be out of pocket financially in having to also provide care for the mother.

Additional Day Care of a child/young person in foster care (to cover, for example, attendance at a training event) is paid at a rate of £6.26 per hour.

If an allegation has been made against a foster carer then the premium or fee will continue to be paid until the completion of the investigation.

For short break carers the following table is applicable:

Intensity of care (as assessed by the Disabled Children and Young People's Service)	24 hour period short break allowance (for both traditional short break and specialist short break care)	Calculation for additional specialist short break care weekly fee
Regular (for up to 24 hours)	£36.70	200 'nights' care + 15 'nights' annual leave* x specialist weekly fee (£480.35) 365 days a year = £282.95 *pro-rata 28 nights annual leave specialist entitlement
Significant (for up to 24 hours)	£52.43	
Exceptional (for up to 24 hours)	£73.40	

For periods of care longer than 24 hours, up to 6 hours of Day Care can be claimed (at £6.26 per hour). This is to accommodate children/young people being dropped off at, for example, 10.00a.m. on the first day and not being collected until 4.00p.m.-5.00p.m. on the last day of the short break.

For introductory (often tea time) visits the Day Care rate of £6.26 per hour can be utilised.

Carers will need to demonstrate the requirements within the grid for their status and any previous requirements. Progression assumes that tasks, skills, competencies and foster carer characteristics at earlier fostering levels continue to be met and are built upon with more developed tasks and expectations. Thus, specialist foster carers are expected to achieve everything typed on the whole grid (in black, blue, green and red type), advanced foster carers everything in black, blue and green, accredited foster carers everything in blue and black and pre-accredited foster carers everything in black type only. For foster carers who are approved to provide overnight short breaks for disabled children they will need to take into account the information provided in purple text within the framework.

Pre-Accredited	Accredited	Advanced (Traditional Short Break Care – in purple text)	Specialist (Specialist Short Break Care – in purple text)
<p>1. AVAILABILITY: Main tasks roles and responsibilities</p> <p>1. Provide and maintain suitable accommodation for the number, needs and age of the child/ren in placement.</p> <p>2. To meet Fostering Regulations and National Minimum Standards.</p>	<p>1. Remain available to foster existing or new children on request within reasonable limits and within approval.</p>	<p>1. To be available, accessible and meet unexpected situations that will come up in caring for children/young people with advanced needs. If advanced carers are in employment this</p>	<p>1. To be available on a full time basis to care for the young person placed.</p> <p>2. An additional placement can be taken subject to appropriate matching, stability and space. This</p>

Pre-Accredited	Accredited	Advanced (Traditional Short Break Care – in purple text)	Specialist (Specialist Short Break Care – in purple text)
		<p>needs to be on the basis that it provides flexibility to meet the demands of fostering.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. An additional placement can be taken subject to appropriate matching, stability and space. This placement would be paid at the accredited rate. 3. If a carer is without an advanced placement they will retain the advanced fee for only three weeks per annum. 4. If a child/young person is still in placement and has been reassessed as no longer meeting this level of need, the carer will retain their fee for a maximum of three weeks and then choose to either: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Receive the lower fee. b) Offer a new advanced placement with appropriate matching. c) Make themselves available to offer support to other foster carers as part of an agreed support package working alongside of the foster carers and in conjunction with the fostering service. 5. When advanced carers are only caring for a young person for school holidays and sometimes at weekends (when the young person attends a Residential School for 38 weeks a year) the carers to either (when available): intensively support other placements and offer respite care or be paid pro rata 	<p>placement would be paid at the accredited rate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. If a carer is without a specialist placement or the child/young person has been reassessed and no longer meets this level of need. The carer will retain their fee for a maximum three weeks and the choose to either: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Receive the lower fee. b) Offer a new specialist placement with appropriate matching. c) Make themselves available to offer support to other foster carers as part of a support package working alongside of the foster carers and in conjunction with the fostering service. 4. When specialist carers are only caring for a young person for school holidays and sometimes at weekends (when the young person attends a Residential School for 38 weeks a year) the carers to either (when available): intensively support other placements and offer respite care or be paid pro rata 5. Specialist foster carers may be asked to support other foster carers out of hours. <p>For short break (specialist short break care) fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing prolonged night care for children who do not readily settle and need direct supervision.

Pre-Accredited	Accredited	Advanced (Traditional Short Break Care – in purple text)	Specialist (Specialist Short Break Care – in purple text)
		<p>6. Advanced carers may be asked to support other carers out of hours.</p> <p>For short break (traditional short break care) fostering:</p> <p>1. Short break carers need to provide a minimum of 24 nights care per year.</p>	<p>2. Specialist short break carers need to provide a minimum of 100 nights care per year.</p>
<p>2. CARE/BEHAVIOURALSUPPORT: Main tasks roles and responsibilities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Care for the child as if s/he was a member of your family. Respond to all basic care needs of child in placement including providing appropriate levels and standards of clothing. Keep to Safer Caring Agreement for each child placed. Contribute to Life Work and maintain a Memory Box for child in placement. Ensure the physical condition of the home is conducive to fostering. Establish and maintain daily routines for children e.g. school attendance, mealtimes, bedtimes, homework completion. Provide a range of age appropriate activities and opportunities for developing interests. Maintain confidentiality. Provide a pattern of care designed to meet the cultural needs of the child. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a high standard of care to the child in placement in a safe, healthy and nurturing environment meeting fostering regulations and National Minimum Standards. Help children cope with separation and loss and assist them with coming to terms with previous experiences. Act in the best interests of the child in co-operation with other professionals and agencies e.g. education, health, police. Maintain a Safe Care plan to protect each child placed from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation. Provide foster care that positively values and promotes diversity and equality. Enable children to move on positively to other placements when required and as part of their placement plan e.g. return to a birth parent, to other foster placement or to an adoption placement. Promote and encourage the development of life skills to help 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Be committed to working with children/young people with complex needs and be confident in positively managing challenging behaviour. To attend and support child with all appropriate appointments. Promote positive behaviour and provide clearly understood boundaries. To be able to implement positive/risk behaviour plan or Individual crisis management plan (ICMP). <p>For short break (traditional short break care) fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Work with relevant professionals in managing and supporting intimate care. Manage feeding routines including gastrostomy and nasal gastric feeding. Manage and support child with physical or sensory needs. Enable an appropriate social/leisure life for a child with low cognition and high mobility Manage all intimate care needs including menstrual cycle whilst 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist carers must have the required confidence and skills in positively managing extremes of challenging behaviour. Provide a positive parenting experience which contributes to the child's wellbeing and sense of self-esteem. To take responsibility for individual programmes of skills development for young people and work with their parents and other professionals to achieve these goals. <p>For short break (specialist short break care) fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring, moving and positioning children according to care plan and using any prescribed equipment

Pre-Accredited	Accredited	Advanced (Traditional Short Break Care – in purple text)	Specialist (Specialist Short Break Care – in purple text)
	young people develop the skills, confidence and knowledge necessary for independent living.	6. maintaining dignity and working towards independence. Undertake washing, bathing and dressing of children who need total support.	
<p>3. HEALTH/EDUCATION: Main tasks and roles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help encourage children to be healthy via healthy diet, lifestyle and regular exercise. 2. Attend to all medical needs and arrange any necessary health appointments. 3. Support the child's education by promoting learning at home, maintaining links with school and attending PEPs. 4. To transport children to and from school if available. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote and ensure health of children via healthy diet, lifestyle and regular exercise. 2. Encourage awareness of drug and alcohol; issues and positively promote good sexual health. 3. Play an active role in relationships with education providers e.g. attending parents' evenings, contributing and commenting on school reports and actively supporting school-home agreements. <p>For short break fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage a range of health needs such as diabetes, epilepsy, asthma and administer routine prescribed medication. 2. Support child with cognitive learning needs in line with their Education, Health and Care Plan. 3. Support child with physical or sensory needs including use of any specialist equipment. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the child's education by promoting learning at home, maintaining links with school and attending PEP meetings. When required to transport children to and from school or education resource. 2. Make pro-active contributions to problem-resolution in school or other settings for children placed, alongside supporting birth parents in problem resolution where appropriate. 3. To be sufficiently flexible and available to provide day care for periods in the event of young people being excluded from school. <p>For short break (traditional short break care) fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage seizures to minimise the risk of harm include administering emergency medication. 2. Support child with profound cognitive and complex learning needs in a uniquely personalised way with a sensory approach. 3. Prevention of skin breakdown for children with mobility needs using interventions described in the care plan. 4. Provide reassurance, support for children with stress and anxiety 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide day care often for extended periods of time in a variety of scenarios, for example, in the event of young people being excluded from school or subject to a partial educational timetable. 2. To provide day care for other local foster carers children if current placement is in education. <p>For short break (specialist short break care) fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage and administer complex medical care e.g. suction, injections, tracheotomy care and administer emergency medication. 2. Manage a complex range of medical needs such as uncontrolled epilepsy, dystonia, SATs monitoring and end of life care. 3. For children with mobility needs were there has been a skin breakdown, to provide a dressing regime in line with the care plan 4. As prescribed by a mental health professional as part of the care plan provide reassurance and support for children with extreme levels of stress, anxiety disorders or mental health issues.

Pre-Accredited	Accredited	Advanced (Traditional Short Break Care – in purple text)	Specialist (Specialist Short Break Care – in purple text)
		disorders to help manage their feelings.	
<p>4. RECORDS/Written ASSESSMENTS: Main Tasks and roles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain systematic record of developments on child in placement. To pass on records when child or young person moves on. To share if appropriate information with the child or young person held by the foster carer. To provide information for court reports if required. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain detailed and thorough written records of all significant developments within placement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> At times to provide specific written reports to assist with the assessment of a young person placed. <p>For short break (traditional short break care) fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Daily recording of medication/care regimes for disabled children in line with the care plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To produce, when required, thorough and detailed assessment reports on the children/young people in their care. <p>For short break (specialist short break care) fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recording adjustments to daily medication or care regimes in line with the care plan.
<p>5. PLANNING/TEAM WORKING: Main tasks and roles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to care planning. Attend all review meetings and planning meetings relating to the child. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Work as part of a professional team and at times follow guidance and instruction in carrying out aspects of the care of the young people placed. Attend court proceedings involving children and/or provide statements when required. <p>For short break (traditional short break care) fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain the home communication books. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To work as part of a tight inter-disciplinary team. To work at times under direction and follow detailed placement plans.
<p>6. PLACEMENT STABILITY: Main tasks and roles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To sustain and provide stability for the children. To end placements in a planned way unless it is unsafe. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate commitment to sustaining a placement as agreed in the child's care plan. Demonstrate a commitment to ending placements, where needed, 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To provide durable and stable placements. In the event of a placement having to end, this should be achieved in a considered way appropriate for the child or young person. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> There exists a strong expectation that specialist placements will be robust and durable and unplanned placement endings or crisis disruptions will be an exceptional event.

Pre-Accredited	Accredited	Advanced (Traditional Short Break Care – in purple text)	Specialist (Specialist Short Break Care – in purple text)
	in a planned way and in the best interests of the child.		
<p>7. TRAINING /SUPPORT/ SUPERVISION: Main tasks and roles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attend local support groups regularly. Prepare for supervision and accept guidance from a supervising social worker. Undertake actions agreed in supervision with supervising social worker. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Make positive use of supervision and guidance from a supervising social worker. Reflect and learn from advice given. Demonstrate reflective practice from training or learning. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attend any training, development or learning opportunities as identified within the Personal Development Plan. Attend advanced/specialist focus groups. Complete all the professional training requirements reflected in the role. Demonstrate how training and learning can adapt practice. <p>For short break (traditional short break care) fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attend bespoke training with relevant health professionals in relation to child's health care plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attend and help to facilitate local support groups with fostering service. To complete all professional development and training targets identified within the Personal Development Plan and appraisal each year. Specialist carers need to have an advanced capacity to reflect on their work and take responsibility for their own training requirements and their professional development.
<p>8. CONTACT: Main tasks and roles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promote contact with the child's kinship network in line with the care plan. Provide emotional support for a child having contact. If appropriate support contact within the foster carer home subject to a risk assessment To record impact of supervision within child's file. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To take appropriate steps when required to promote and facilitate contact of the children placed with their families. Help to facilitate contact with siblings. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promote, support and supervise contact, where appropriate. <p>For short break (traditional short break care) fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a partnership with birth families of disabled children receiving short breaks. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> On occasions where appropriate supervise contact providing detailed analysis and a high level of recording and reporting. Work professionally with parents even where there is conflict.
<p>9. ADVANCED/SPECIALIST CARE: Additional requirements for Advanced/Specialist</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Empathise with the children and young people referred for advanced care and have well developed skills in engaging, communicating and building 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Be committed to working with very complex and vulnerable groups of children or severely disabled children. Note the range of complex needs specialist carers

Pre-Accredited	Accredited	Advanced (Traditional Short Break Care – in purple text)	Specialist (Specialist Short Break Care – in purple text)
		<p>relationships with these children and young people.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Utilise basic therapeutic parenting techniques under the guidance of social workers or other professionals. 3. Provide support to inexperienced foster carers. 4. Be involved in buddying/mentoring new foster carers. 5. Ensure emotional resilience in children and young people is developed and the child's voice is heard. 	<p>are likely to be expected to meet as listed below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Empathise with the troubled and disadvantaged young people referred and have highly developed skills in communicating and building relationships with these young people. 3. When required, to produce thorough and detailed assessment reports on the young people placed. 4. To take part in intensive therapeutic work with children following appropriate advice and direction or to work closely with other professionals in carrying out individualised therapeutic programmes, skills development or educational programmes. 5. On occasions and where appropriate provide a second short term holiday/respice placement for another child/young person placed on the specialist scheme. 6. When specialist carers are 'between placements' to provide time limited emergency placements or carry out additional tasks to assist young people and other foster carers. 7. Uphold high professional standards. 8. Challenge constructively opinions and views of other professionals and agencies.

Pre-Accredited	Accredited	Advanced (Traditional Short Break Care – in purple text)	Specialist (Specialist Short Break Care – in purple text)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Participate in training and support of foster carers and social workers. 10. Mentoring newly approved foster carers. 11. Co-facilitate information evenings. 12. Where appropriate assist fostering social workers in making joint visits to prospective foster carers.
<p>Foster carer characteristics required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some experience of childcare such as parenting, child-minding or looking after other people's children. 2. Show a commitment to fostering children and to understanding and meeting their individual needs. 3. Have a warm and nurturing home and adequate space including a spare bedroom for sole use of the child or siblings (age appropriate). 4. If a car driver, willing to use for fostering. 5. Clear enhanced DBS or approved by Fostering Manager. 6. Good network of support. 7. Medical clearance to meet approval. 8. Financially secure. 9. Non-smoker if fostering children of five and under, or provide a smoke free environment. 10. No formal qualifications are necessary but a willingness and ability to communicate clearly are essential. 11. Have a basic understanding of child development and how this 	<p>Foster carer characteristics required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have six months minimum experience of childcare such as parenting, paid or voluntary work in childcare or previous fostering. 2. A genuine interest and empathy for children and a commitment to providing life enhancing opportunities. 3. Provide a safe, stimulating and stable environment appropriate to the varied needs of individual children, taking into account their backgrounds and experiences. 4. Ability to nurture children's self-esteem and positive identity on an individual basis by enabling and supporting participation in tailor made social activities and leisure pursuits. 5. Show emotional resilience, especially the ability to persevere through difficult placement situations and/or to learn from these for future placements. 6. Ability to act as a clear positive role model to children and birth family members. 	<p>Foster carer characteristics required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A minimum of three years fostering experience or transferrable related skills. Demonstrable experience and skills in working with or caring for challenging children/young people with advanced or complex needs. 2. Be clear in their commitment to work with children with complex needs and be confident that they possess the skills to positively manage challenging behaviour. 3. Be robust and resilient, the expectation being that placement stability and durability is crucial. In the event of a placement having to end prematurely this should be done in a considered and planned way. 4. Have the ability to empathise with children/young people, have developed skills in communicating with these youngsters and a capacity to form and sustain relationships. 5. To have the capacity to reflect on their work and take responsibility for their own training requirements 	<p>Foster carer characteristics required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A minimum of four years fostering experience or transferrable related caring in the main for children/young people with complex needs. It is desirable for prospective specialist carers to have also worked with children/young people with complex needs in another capacity e.g. youth work, teaching, nursing etc. 2. Demonstrable and evidenced experience, skills and a proven aptitude in working with or caring for children/young people who meet the specialist criteria and have highly complex needs and challenging behaviours or severe disabilities. 3. Carers must be absolutely clear and be able to demonstrate their commitment to work with vulnerable and complex groups of children and be confident that they possess the skills to positively manage extremes of challenging behaviour.

Pre-Accredited	Accredited	Advanced (Traditional Short Break Care – in purple text)	Specialist (Specialist Short Break Care – in purple text)
<p>can be affected by life experiences.</p> <p>12. Ability to demonstrate a caring attitude and offer a structured life experience, including setting of boundaries, for the child.</p> <p>13. Successfully complete a full fostering assessment and this to be approved by the agency.</p> <p>14. Communicate the needs of children in formal meetings.</p> <p>15. Ability to engage with professionals involved in the child's life.</p> <p>16. Promote and support contact with family members.</p>	<p>7. Show advocacy and negotiation skills in complex situations.</p>	<p>and their professional development.</p>	<p>4. Have a particular interest in working therapeutically with children/young people and be prepared at times to work under direction or instruction.</p> <p>5. To possess an advanced capacity to reflect upon their work and take responsibility for their own professional development and training.</p> <p>6. Specialist foster carers must have very developed skills and particular areas of expertise (although it is not expected that they will be highly skilled in all areas), such as meeting the needs of young people with severe physical or learning difficulties, caring for young people with significant mental health issues, caring for large sibling groups and/or supporting young parents etc.</p>
<p><u>Training and Learning Requirements</u> To remain approved at pre-accredited level, carers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete TSD Standards (six standards for Connected Person carers within eighteen months of approval, seven standards for all other foster carers within twelve months of approval). • Undertake a basic Personal Development Plan. • Take or be available for foster placements within agreed Guidance Matching Range and meet National Minimum Standards 1-13 (2011) to the satisfaction of 	<p><u>Training and Learning Requirements</u> <u>In addition to requirements in black</u> To progress to accredited, carers must demonstrate at annual review or assessment that they:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a minimum six months' experience as a foster carer. 2. Consideration may be given to progressing sooner in exceptional circumstances. 3. Have completed Skills To Foster Preparation Group. 4. Have completed and demonstrated Learning from Core Training Programme i.e. minimum seven 	<p><u>Training and Learning Requirements</u> <u>In addition to requirements in black and blue</u> To progress to advanced foster care, foster carers will complete an application form to be submitted to the 'Framework Panel'. Prospective applicants will need to have at least three years fostering experience, some of which must have involved caring for children with complex needs. Prospective advanced carers will be required to have completed all mandatory training requirements including having successfully completed a full Fostering Changes</p>	<p><u>Training and Learning Requirements</u> <u>In addition to requirements in black, blue and green</u> To progress to specialist foster care, foster carers will complete an application form to be submitted to 'Framework Panel'. Prospective applicants will need to have progressed through accredited and advanced fostering and have completed all mandatory training requirements. Applicants will be judged against the outlined duties of specialist foster carers and the specialist carer person specification.</p>

Pre-Accredited	Accredited	Advanced (Traditional Short Break Care – in purple text)	Specialist (Specialist Short Break Care – in purple text)
<p>supervising social worker, annual review chair and foster carer panel where applicable.</p> <p>To progress to Accredited : 1. See 2nd (blue) column.</p>	<p>Training Courses covering the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safeguarding Children 2. Impact of Abuse and Neglect on the Developing Child 3. Secure Base 1 & 2 4. Safer Caring and Allegations 5. Managing Challenging Behaviour 6. Understanding Identity and Contact 7. First Aid <p>Recognition of prior learning can apply to relevant areas (see below)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Successfully complete TSD Standards 6. Evidence a commitment to self-development via training and support, including mentoring from an experienced carer. 7. Undertake an annual personal development plan showing core learning completed and looking ahead to more specific training and learning needs. 8. Have met the requirements of this grade as evidenced through supervision and annual review. <p>For short break fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicating with Children with Disabilities 2. Safer Handling of Medicines 3. Moving and Handling of People 4. Bespoke training to meet any identified need of the individual child or carer, such as medication, procedures or use of equipment <p>To remain accredited, carers must:</p>	<p>course and Signs of Safety training. Completing any refresher training as required. Applicants will be judged against the outlined advanced carers duties and person specification.</p> <p>To remain advanced, carers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend 75% advanced fostering team days and support groups. • If progressed from accredited foster carer, must complete three training courses within twelve months of progression to accredited foster carer and three courses per year in subsequent years. If an advanced foster carer delivers some training to other foster carers, this can count towards one of the three learning events as outlined above. • Advanced foster carers will be subject to an annual appraisal which will be considered and incorporated within the carer's annual fostering review process. The appraisal will consider in detail whether the carer continues to meet the requirements of this grade. 	<p>Consideration may be given to progression sooner in an accelerated way in very exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>To remain specialist, carers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend 75% of specialist fostering team days and support groups. • Meet all professional development targets and identified training courses set at their annual appraisal. Specialist carers are expected to complete each year a core set of relevant identified training courses. If a specialist foster carer delivers some training to other foster carers, this can count towards the identified annual training courses as outlined above. • Successfully complete an annual appraisal which will determine if the carer continues to meet the requirements of the specialist specification. This appraisal will be incorporated within the carer's annual fostering review process.

Pre-Accredited	Accredited	Advanced (Traditional Short Break Care – in purple text)	Specialist (Specialist Short Break Care – in purple text)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If progressed from pre-accredited foster carer, must complete three training courses within twelve months of progression to accredited foster carer and three courses per year in subsequent years. Continue to meet the requirements of this grade to the satisfaction of the Chair of their annual review, and foster carer panel where applicable. Continue to take or be available for foster placements. 		

Commissioning of an advanced or specialist placement must be based upon the comprehensive assessment of the child or young persons need. Mainly this will be for children over the age of 10 years; however there may be a rare occasion for a young child needing an advanced or specialist placement based on the complexity of their needs and the challenges caring for them will present. (For these cases a decision by the Head of Children and Young people’s Resources/Assistant Director will be required). Matching of needs with individual carers will be dependent upon the availability, experience, training and skills of the foster carers. Factors that commissioners may need to consider when making these decisions could involve the:

- Need for carers to be available full time
- Number and type of previous care placements
- Behavioural challenges likely to be presented by the young person
- Need for a very developed therapeutic fostering approach

The list presented below is not exhaustive but is intended to help commissioners by identifying factors/issues that might be prominent for placement in either the advanced or specialist scheme. Children who come into care will all experience some aspects of trauma, separation and loss; therefore some of the behaviours below are expected. It is envisaged that the behaviour is seen as extreme, persistent and prolonged. To meet the requirements for advanced or specialist foster care then a child or young person would need to be suffering or exhibiting from a number of issues/factors.

		<u>Placement issues/factors that the children/young people placed with</u>	<u>Placement issues that the children/young people placed with</u>
--	--	----------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------

		<p><u>advanced carers may routinely suffer from or exhibit (at an extremely high level)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emotional and/or mental health difficulties requiring CAMHS intervention. 2. Attachment or anxiety disorders. 3. Challenging behaviour, including verbal/physical aggression. 4. School difficulties leading to exclusions. 5. Diagnosed Learning Disability. 6. Offending and or anti-social behaviour problems. 7. Mother and baby placements. 8. Eating disorders/self-harming behaviours. 9. Children/young people who have experienced previous placement disruptions. 10. Emergency/assessment placements for teenagers. 11. Inappropriate age related excessive emotional soiling/enuresis. 12. Permanent placements for children with complex needs. <p>For short break (traditional short break care) fostering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disabled children with an assessed significant need requiring overnight short breaks. 	<p><u>specialist carers may routinely suffer from or exhibit (at an extremely high level)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Profoundly challenging behaviour. 2. Multiple placements /unplanned endings. 3. Drug/alcohol dependency. 4. Serious mental health disorders. 5. Persistent offending/remand. 6. Currently placed or at risk of being placed in residential care. 7. Severe physical or learning disability. Complex health needs/issues. 8. Physical or sexual threat to peers which precludes being placed with other looked after children. 9. Severe anxiety, mental health, attachment disorders. 10. Inappropriate, severe risk taking sexualised behaviour. 11. Specialist short term intensive assessment placement. 12. Treatment, task centred placements.
--	--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Recognition of prior learning is defined as: Methods of assessing prior learning are varied and include: evaluation of prior experience gained through volunteer work; previous paid or unpaid employment or standardised exams or observation of actual workplace behaviour. The essential element of RPL is that it is an assessment of evidence provided by an individual to support their claim for competence against a given set of standards or learning outcomes.