

Foster Carer Bulletin 17th December 2021

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What's happening...



A time to say a huge thanks...

We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge heartfelt thank you as we come to the end of another year.

We are very grateful to all our carers for your ongoing support for the children and young people in your care. And for your enthusiastic support of fostering in general.

We appreciate your dedication despite the challenges presented by coronavirus. You have adapted with good grace to the associated different ways of working and living. You continue to be amazing throughout these challenging times.

We hope that you all enjoy a peaceful Christmas and a happy New Year.

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Childrens services...

Latest updates ...

There has been a recent change at the head of children's services. Adele Ellis recently left her post as director of children's services.

This was due to personal considerations, which made it difficult for her to continue. I'm sure you will join us in wishing Adele all the very best for the future.

Strategic Lead, Darren Knibbs stepped in to cover many of the director functions following Adele's departure.

Tina Knight has been covering the post since the 6th December, as Darren had to take time out for surgery. Tina is an experienced service delivery manager in child protection and family support. . We will confirm final interim arrangements for cover of the director post in the New Year.

The Fostering Service

You said, we are doing...

Survey results

Thank you so much to everyone who completed the foster carer survey.

Your honest feedback is valuable in helping us to further develop the support we provide to you.



Fees and allowances

We have now undertaken benchmarking of fees and allowances across our region. We are keen to ensure we are responding to your feedback in this area.

We have put forward a proposal that is being taken to Cabinet in the New Year. The proposal is for an increase in fees and allowances effective from 1 April 2022.

The proposal seeks to increase fees at levels 1, 2 and 3 alongside an increase in the allowances for all age groups.

Support with housing

We are also working with our colleagues in housing. This is to enable us to support with accommodation needs, carers who could provide a home to more children.

Carers who could welcome one or more extra children into their home, if they had the room. Or a child with a disability if they had the appropriate space and facilities.

Further team developments...

We are also very excited to let you know about some other changes that will be taking place from 1 April 2022.

We want to ensure that we have a comprehensive wrap around support package for all foster carers.

Mainstream fostering

- A second part-time consultant therapist. This will strengthen the support all carers already have from Lynn Williams.
- A full time family support worker to work alongside Lisa and Jenny.
- A second placements officer to work alongside Tracy.
- The Mockingbird Programme will continue beyond the pilot period.
- Two extra supervising social workers across Dan's and Kelly's teams over the next two years. This will ensure we provide all our mainstream foster carers with the level of support they need.
- Panel coordinator post that will be separate to the business support officer role.

Family and Friends

- There will be a permanent team manager with responsibility for all assessments. There will also be a second team manager. This role will be responsible for providing support to connected carers, special guardians and to private fostering.
- Improved information and leaflets for new applicants during the assessment stage.
- Two more social workers to join the family and friends team. This is to ensure that all connected carers have the support they need and that we complete assessments within timescales.
- A full time support worker for connected carers and special guardians when required. This role will also undertake SGO reviews.

There will be further updates on some other benefits we hope to be able to offer to our foster carers.

Final word...

Once again, with huge thanks to you all for the amazing care that you continue to give in your own home in these unusual times keeping our children safe and cared for.

Stay safe and continue being kind.

The fostering team



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