



**CHILDREN & ENTERPRISE
DIRECTORATE**

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Fostering Service

POLICY INFORMATION SHEET

Name of Document	Statement of Purpose (Fostering Service)
Reference Number	CIC/FS/31
Service area	Fostering Service, Children in Care Division, Children & Family Services Department
Target Audience	All Staff in Halton Borough Children and Families Services
Forum Policy/Procedure/Strategy was approved	Children and Families Services Senior Leadership Team
Date policy was approved	
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Superseded document(s)	Fostering Statement of Purpose April 2012
Responsible officer(s)	Divisional Manager, Children in Care
Any other relevant information	

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1. INTRODUCTION

Halton Borough Council provides a full range of services for children in need through the Children and Enterprise Directorate. This includes the Foster Care Service, which aims to provide the highest standard of care for the Council's Children in Care. The Foster Care Service is supported by all Council services and partner agencies.

This Statement of Purpose sets out the aims and objectives, principles and processes of the Foster Care Service. It provides a range of information, which is intended for a wide audience including:

- Halton Borough Council staff
- Elected Members
- Children and young people in the care of Halton Borough Council
- Foster Carers and Prospective Foster Carers
- Friend, Family and Connected Carers
- Halton Borough Council Fostering Panel Members
- Corporate Parent
- Halton Children's Trust and partner agencies

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To make a positive and lasting difference to the lives of children and young people in the care of Halton Borough Council.

The needs, wishes and safety of children in care are at the centre of Halton's Foster Care Service. We believe that all children and young people needing substitute care have the right to live within a safe, supportive and nurturing family environment, which meets their needs and enables them to realise their full potential.

The Foster Care Service operates within the corporate vision and values of Halton Borough Council and the Children and Young Peoples Plan which encompasses the child focused standards 1 to 12 of the NMS Fostering Services 2011

The Foster Care Service will strive to:

- Provide the highest quality of care for children in the care of Halton Borough Council through the provision of approved foster carers who can offer a safe, caring and supportive environment to children and young people.
- Promote an atmosphere of partnership and co-operation so that all those involved in the care of a child or young person are working together to promote their best interests and to meet their needs in respect of education, health, welfare, identity, ethnicity, culture and emotional wellbeing.

- Recruit, assess, train, support and supervise a wide range of foster carers who can meet the diverse needs of children and young people who need foster placements. This includes carers who provide task centred placements, long term placements, short breaks for disabled children and carers who can provide day care.
- Assess, train, support and supervise friends, family and connected persons as carers who are specifically approved to care for a child who is a member of their extended family, or who is otherwise already known to them
- Provide support to carers in fulfilling their role as 'responsible parents'; in exercising 'Delegated Authority' and in their role as a member of the 'team around the child' in care planning.
- Provide a high quality service to approved foster carers through the provision of a range of support services and training programmes.

3. PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS OF CARE

It is recognised that a child's needs are best met in the setting of a nurturing family. The complexity of the child/young persons' family background is taken into account when making a placement in order to ensure an appropriate match. The main priority is the child's welfare, their individual needs and provision of a personalised response.

Our philosophy is to show positive regard each child in care should be provided with care that respects, recognises, supports and celebrates their identity and provides care and support to enable each child to maximise their potential and equip them for adult life. A child should have their wishes and feelings listened to and taken into account within the care they receive and the plans made in relation to their care.

Children and young people are placed in foster care for a wide range of reasons. The Foster Care Service recognises the need to offer consistently high standards of care in a variety of settings.

4. HALTON FOSTERING SERVICE

The Foster Care Service forms part of a range of services to children in care and is a key component of this integrated service. The Foster Care Service is responsible to the Divisional Manager for Children in Care.

The Foster Care Service currently comprises a Principal Manager, a Practice Manager, and Supervising Social Workers, one with particular responsibility for Friends, Family and Connected Carers, and the equivalent of two Assessing Social Workers who support the recruitment and assessment of applicants wishing to become Foster Carers for Halton. All these staff are qualified Social Workers who have a wide knowledge base and experience within childcare and management. All Social Workers are encouraged to attend relevant ongoing training to continually develop their skills and knowledge, including post qualifying awards.

Two Support Workers roles are also part of the team are part of the Team and work with Supervising Social Workers, carers and children to promote placement stability. Both workers also provide support to the recruitment and training for all carers.

The Foster Care Service has access to corporate marketing support as well as administration officers from Halton's Shared Service Resources, the latter based within the Team. One of these officers undertakes the role of Panel Administrator and supports the Fostering Service with the administration of the Fostering Panel.

5. THE FOSTER CARE SERVICE VALUES

To make a positive and lasting difference to the lives of children and young people in care.

To be Child Focused

- Keep children and young people in foster care, healthy and safe from harm
- Be positive about children and put them first
- Promote and encourage carers competence and ability
- Challenge discrimination and promote anti-discriminatory practice
- Ensure children's views are heard
- Support young people in making a smooth transition towards adult life.

Care for Foster Carers

- Value working with carers as partners
- Support carers to give their best and meet required standards
- Recruit as many carers as possible to meet the diverse needs of children in care
- Ensure we provide support for foster carers and their own children
- Provide access to support 365 days per year and 24 hours per day

Work as a Team

- Embrace a multi-disciplinary approach to work
- Be receptive to feedback and act up on it
- Focus energy where it adds best value
- Go the extra mile in pursuit of excellent care
- Value and support each other

Lead by Example

- Act with integrity
- Listen and act professionally

- Be receptive to new ideas
- Communicate effectively
- Be creative and flexible in seeking solutions
- Expect excellent performance at all times
- Strive to exceed targets
- Enjoy what we do

Work in Partnership

- Work with a range of partners to ensure a good standard of care

6. WE ARE COMMITTED TO

- The achievement of positive outcomes for all children in care by offering high quality foster care placements which meet the overall welfare and social needs of all children and young people.
- Encouraging team and personal development for both staff and foster carers.
- Anti-discriminatory policies, which promote equal opportunities for all and value diversity of both children in care and carers regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, age, religious beliefs, disability or marital status.
- Promote equality of access to recruitment of carers with due regard to reducing inequalities on the basis of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sex or sexual orientation.
- Promoting fostering in a way that does not discriminate unfairly against anyone.

We are supported by the Local Authority's Policies and Procedures, which acknowledge and recognise the contribution that can be made by family and friends as carers.

7. FAMILY, FRIENDS AND CONNECTED CARERS

This is defined as a child living away from the parental home with family, friends or connected people as carers. The child placed with a relative, friend or connected person would otherwise be living with stranger foster carers, or living in residential care. These placements are initiated by the Local Authority and are subject to approval, regulation, training requirements, support, and supervision, as for all children in care.

Family, Friends and Connected Carers are approved under the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations (England) 20101 and the Fostering Regulations. Approval is for named child/children and is subject to review on an annual basis. The Local Authority has the same obligations towards Family, Friends and Connected Carers as for all foster carers.

Children in Family, Friends and Connected persons placements are children in care and therefore the Local Authority has the same responsibilities, requirements and duties towards them as to all Children in Care.

Approved Family, Friends and Connected Carers are eligible to receive a Fostering Allowance at the rate paid to all approved carers. The criteria for payments are specified in the Foster Care Allowance Payment Guide.

Family, Friends and Connected Carers are expected to undertake relevant training to support them and enhance placement stability. Training is provided on a general basis and within the 'Family and Friends Plus' Support Group setting.

8. RECRUITMENT AND ASSESSMENT OF FOSTER CARERS

As at 31.03.2014 there were 78 approved foster carers who can look after children and young people on a short-term or longer term basis. It is anticipated that this number will increase by 10% by 01.04.2015. There are 7 Family, Friends, and Connected Carers included in this figure. The numbers given relate to approved family units, not individuals.

The Foster Care Service has responsibility for the recruitment of new Foster Carers to meet the placement needs for Halton children. A comprehensive three year Recruitment Strategy is produced and progress against the plan is reported on and targets reviewed on a six monthly basis. The Recruitment Strategy is made available to all relevant professionals and agencies.

The Foster Care Service has performance systems in place which produce detailed information about the use of the service. Evaluation of the information helps to identify shortfalls and likely demands on the service. Recruitment targets are then set and updated annually. Targets are aimed at recruiting an excess of carers in order to provide placement choice for children and young people. Details of children and young people likely to need placements, recruitment targets, priorities and recruitment activities are regularly monitored.

Foster carers are recruited by various methods including regular advertising campaigns through the local press, radio and community resources. Enquirers receive an information pack within 48 hours of their enquiry. Interested people are subsequently contacted or visited in their home. If appropriate they are invited to attend an Introduction to Fostering event, prior to being invited to attend the three-day Skills To Foster Preparation Training after which, if deemed suitable, a full Assessment will be undertaken. Introduction To Fostering events are held monthly and Skills To Foster Training is held five - six times per year as per demand. Completed Skills based Assessment Reports are considered by the Fostering Panel.

Thorough assessments of applicants' suitability and skills are undertaken in accordance with current legislation and guidance, including the Fostering Service Regulations 2011; National Minimum Standards and The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) and fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013.

The overall aim of the recruitment campaigns is to increase placement choice to enable the Fostering Team to place children with foster carers who can meet their particular individual needs.

Halton Borough Council's Fostering Service aims to treat all potential carers consistently, fairly and inclusively whilst ensuring they have the capacity to meet the needs of children needing a foster placement.

All preparation and assessment processes are organised and facilitated in order to encourage the attendance of Prospective Carers. Flexible options in terms of times, dates and venues are made available.

Assessment of Family Friends and Connected persons may follow a temporary approval route (outlined in regulation 24 Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010) while a full assessment will be completed and presented to panel within a 16 week period for full approval as a foster carer for a named child.

9. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Halton Borough Council will not automatically exclude people on any grounds except for those specified by Regulations. Consideration will be given to every enquirer regardless of ethnicity, marital status, gender, religion, sexuality, language, or employment status.

Halton Borough Council will pay particular attention to the following:

- An individual must be over 21 years of age to be considered to foster. There is no upper age limit
- Couples applying to foster must demonstrate that there is stability in their relationship. This requirement applies whether the couple concerned are married, have entered into a civil partnership, or are two people (whether different or same sex) living as partners. The main consideration is that the relationship is stable and has the strength to withstand the complexities and demands of the fostering role.
- Applicants must be in good health and have the stamina to care for any child placed with them.
- Applicants must have sufficient physical space within their home to provide a bedroom for the child in their care. The home must also comply with Halton's Health & Safety standards.
- Where applicants have pets in the home, a Pet Questionnaire/Assessment will be completed to ensure the pets are managed appropriately and that they do not present a risk to children.
- Applicants who smoke cannot care for children under five years of age. A non-smoking environment is preferred for all fostered children. This is an area carefully scrutinised by the Foster Care Service and the Fostering Panel.
- Where a Disclosure & Barring Service check of the applicant indicates offences, the agency Lead Signatory will request further information from

the Foster Care Service. A decision will then be made as to whether the assessment should continue, or whether the offences are of such a nature that they would exclude the applicant from further consideration.

10. SERVICES PROVIDED BY HALTON FOSTER CARE SERVICE

The Foster Care Service is an integral section of the Children and Families Services and offers a comprehensive service to children in care, operational teams, approved and prospective foster carers and Family, Friends and Connected Carers.

The Service aims to provide appropriate placements for Halton's children in care therefore there is a range of foster placements as below:

- i) Task Centred placements on a planned basis for children of all ages.
- ii) Long-Term placements for children and young people who cannot return to their birth family and when adoption is not appropriate.
- iii) Emergency and Out of Hours placements for children of all ages needing immediate care.
- iv) Family, Friends and Connected Carers to enable children and young people to remain with members of their birth family, family friends or connected people when unable to live with birth parents.
- v) Foster Carers Support facilities to support Foster Carers who need to attend meetings, training events or hospital appointments and who cannot cover this within their own support network.

All placements of children and young people are made and monitored in accordance with the Fostering Service Regulations and will include:

- The provision of a qualified Social Worker to undertake assessments of prospective Foster Carer applications.
- All Foster Carers are properly approved, reviewed and have a signed 'Foster Carer Agreement'.
- A designated Supervising Social Worker for each approved Foster Carer who will visit the Carer on a regular basis to supervise and offer support, advice and guidance.
- A Foster Carer Handbook of guidance for approved carers.
- The provision of essential equipment such as beds, bedding, wardrobes, chest of drawers, and car seats to approved carers.
- A duty system each weekday to respond to queries about fostering from the public, and to arrange foster placements for children who need to be accommodated.
- Children are considered for matching on the receipt of a completed and authorised placement request form from the child's social worker. Any specific risks are identified within this request and the means of managing this risk for the child and carer.

- In the event of crises arising outside normal office hours the Emergency Duty Team is available to Carers and newly approved carers are linked to a mentor .
- Financial support to approved foster carers as detailed in the Foster Care Allowance Payment Guidance.
- Access to advice regarding the health, educational and emotional needs of children and young people via the Medical Adviser, the designated nurse for Children in Care, the Education Support Team, the child's Social Worker, Community Support Worker, the Go4ward project (support for emotional wellbeing) and CAMHS for Children in Care. For children from other areas this support will be outlined in their care and placement planning.
- All placements are made using documentation, which includes a Placement Plan; Agreement of Day to Day arrangements; Care Plan and Delegated Authority Form. These are prepared with the relevant parties, either before or at the point of placement. In an emergency Placement Plan and Delegated Authority Form are completed at the point of placement, with remaining documentation completed within five days.
- A Mentor Scheme linking newly approved Foster Carers to an experienced Carer who has undertaken training in regards to the mentoring role. This is supported by regular support meetings for the mentor group
- There is a wide range of post-approval training for Foster Carers delivered on a regular rolling programme including Core Training events which all Halton Borough Council Foster Carers are expected to attend and satisfactorily complete.
- All Foster Carers are expected to satisfactorily complete the Children's Training Support and Development Standards for Foster Care within their first year as Foster Carers (Family and Friends Foster Carers are expected to complete within 18 months of approval).
- All Foster Carers receive regular information updates to keep them informed of new developments in service provision, new legislation, or Directorate Procedures.
- There are a number of support groups available to support carers and their families:
 - An active Foster Carer Support Group
 - Men who Foster support group
 - Children who Foster group
 - Family and Friends Plus support group
 - One regular workshop for under 5's offer specific sessions on emerging issues for carers of these age groups.
 - There are additional flash training events which respond to emerging themes for the current children in care cohort.
- Social events and award ceremonies are arranged for approved Foster Carers and their families to express Halton Borough Council's appreciation of their contribution to the service.
- Annual Reviews of Foster Carers are undertaken at a Review Meeting. Carers, children, Supervising Social Worker, Independent Review Managers(IRM) and Child Care Social Worker all contribute to the Review

meeting. The review meeting is chaired by the Divisional Manager for Children in Care with attendance from the foster care principal manager and an IRM. The recommendations from the Annual Review meeting go to the Agency Decision Maker for consideration of approval. Similarly all documentation for the probationary reviews are collated and a review is undertaken by the supervising social worker and the foster care principal manager; the report being presented to Fostering panel with recommendations to the Agency Decision maker

- Procedures for the investigation and resolution of complaints and allegations about Foster Carers are in place.
- Access to independent support for a Foster Carer who is subject to an allegation is offered to Carers where an allegation of abuse has been made.

11. SERVICES TO DISABLED CHILDREN

The Foster Care Service is able to organise planned short-breaks for disabled children. Some Foster Carers are able to care for disabled children on a permanent basis. Carers for disabled children receive appropriate equipment and may in some circumstances receive help to fund adaptations to their home, as will carers of non-disabled children as appropriate.

12. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS

The Foster Care Service is committed to listening to the views and wishes of Children in Care to ensure the fostering service is working towards meeting their changing needs.

Information from children is sought from a variety of sources:

- When matching children with carers their views and wishes are sought regarding the placement and their care
- Foster Care social workers attend Children in Care Reviews where appropriate
- Integrated working by fostering and child care teams and sharing information is ongoing
- End of Placement Reports are encouraged from children
- Supervising social workers from the Foster Care Service speak to children during visits to foster carers and gain their views
- Consultation documents from Children in Care inform the Foster Carer Annual Review
- Foster Care Service receive information from the Children in Care Council
- Halton Borough Councils Children's Pledge is discussed with foster carers
- Information is gained from foster carers about children's wishes and views
- Views of parents whose children are in foster care are discussed with the Foster Care Service

The Foster Care Service values the views of Children in Care and also the views of their families. These views are taken into account when reviewing the work and development of the service.

13. MATCHING FOR LONG-TERM PLACEMENTS

When a child's Care Plan identifies that they need a long-term foster placement, a Matching Grid is undertaken by the Child's Social Worker and the Supervising Social Worker and a Matching Meeting to consider the family/families interested or appropriate to offer a long-term foster placement for the child. The meeting considers the Foster Carers assessment report, detailing information about the carer, and the Child Permanence Report/Child's Profile and Care Plan for the child/young person.

If they wish, children can make written representation to the Fostering Panel.

The case will be presented to the Fostering Panel who will take into account all the information and reports presented and if necessary will ask further questions and seek clarification. The Fostering Panel will consider the proposed placement and make a recommendation as to whether the child should be placed with the Carer on a long term basis.

The Fostering Panel recommendation and all paperwork will be put before the Agency Decision Maker for consideration. When a decision is made all parties will be notified verbally within two days and in writing within seven days.

14. INCLUSION

Halton Borough Council is strongly committed to equality of opportunity and the Foster Care Service works to ensure this approach is incorporated into all aspects of the service to Children in Care.

All foster carers and prospective carers are recruited, assessed, supported and supervised on the basis of their skills and qualities and the needs of the service regardless of race, class, marital status, religion, sexual orientation, employment status or disability.

In order to promote the welfare of the children in foster care, all foster carers are expected to undertake training to increase their knowledge and skills in managing issues regarding child protection, disability, culture, religion, identity, sexuality, safer care and behaviour.

Foster Carers are continuously challenged to gain a true understanding of their role and work in the context of diversity. They are required to recognise that children and young people come to them with their own histories and identities which are important to them and their families. The Foster Care Service believes that maturing successfully into an adult depends on a secure sense of personal identity rooted in a heritage which is recognised and valued.

15. HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL FOSTERING PANEL

Halton's Fostering Panel sits on the second Tuesday of each month at Warrington Road Children's Centre. The Fostering Panel considers all matters relating to fostering, friends, family and connected persons care and permanence through foster care.

Halton's central list currently has 12 members of the Fostering Panel inclusive of the panel chair. A quorum is formed when five members are present and must include the independent chair and a social worker.

The Minutes of the Fostering Panel are taken and distributed by the Panel Administrator.

The Central List comprises of the following members:

- Independent Panel Chair
- Independent Vice Chair
- Elected Member
- Three experienced Social Workers
- Four Independent Members (inclusive of a foster carer)
- Medical Advisor
- Adult with personal experience of the Care System (vacant position)
- Education Representative (Second Vice Chair)

The Agency Decision Maker role in Halton is held by the Operational Director of the Children and Families Directorate and in her absence the Divisional Manager of Children's Safeguarding.

A Panel Advisor is appointed to give advice to the Panel Chair and Fostering Panel.

The role and function of the Fostering Panel is to make recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker in respect of the following:

- The approval of new Foster Carers and Family, Friends and Connected Carers, including the terms of the approval e.g. the type of placement, or whether the approval relates to a named child, if there has been an exemption to the usual fostering limit,
- The termination of registration of Foster Carers who are no longer suitable to act as approved Foster Carers.
- Monitor the reasons for resignation of foster carers
- To consider reviews where the Carers' approval status needs to change significantly.
- To consider the issues and the approval status where there has been a serious allegation made against a Carer.

- To offer guidance or advice on specific issues relating to the assessment of potential foster carers.
- To monitor compliance with the National Minimum Standards and Regulations in Foster Care.

Panel has a quality assurance function in which it may consider practice issues which informs service development.

Emergency Panel Meetings may be convened between monthly Panel Meetings in order to avoid delay for children in care.

16. QUALITY ASSURANCE

A joint quality assurance report is completed on a six monthly basis the chair of the Fostering Panels section is discussed at Fostering Panel Quality Assurance Meetings. The meetings are attended by the Agency Decision Maker, Divisional Manager Children in Care, the Fostering Panel Chair and the Principal Manager of the Foster Care Service. The Foster Care Service performance reports are shared with panel and are inclusive of any quality assurance issues that have emerged in the previous six months. Quality assurance is considered in relation to each item presented at panel. The joint six monthly reports are presented to Senior Leadership Team and the Operational Leadership Team.

17. PANEL DECISION AND APPEALS

Applicants are informed verbally of the Agency Decision Makers decision within two days and this is confirmed in writing within seven days. If approved the carers are allocated a supervising social worker within seven days of the Agency Decision Makers decision and a fostering agreement is completed.

Applicants who are not approved, foster carers who's approval has been proposed to be terminated are all given a 'qualifying determination' with the opportunity to submit written representation within 28 days of the notice. The Panel Chair also offers to meet with applicants, or foster carers to discuss any issues. If the Panel does not receive any representation within this period Halton Borough Council via the Agency Decision Maker will implement the decision.

Representations which are made within 28 days will be referred to the next Panel for further consideration, taking into account any new information. The Panel's recommendation will then be put before the Agency Decision Maker who will write to the parties involved with a decision.

18. INDEPENDENT REVIEW MECHANISM

A procedure to review cases where foster carers have their approval to foster removed has been introduced. The Independent Review Mechanism is managed by British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) on behalf of the Department for Education (DFE). It offers foster carers in England who have had their approval removed/refused or changed the opportunity to have these decisions reviewed, and a fresh recommendation made to their

fostering service. If during the course of a prospective carer's assessment, information comes to light that they would not meet the requirements to become a foster carer, they will be counselled out. However if the carers disagree with this judgement they can have their information presented to panel and have recourse to the IRM if the recommendation is not to continue with their approval.

The Fostering Service in Halton supports the Independent Review Mechanism as this is seen as part of a wider package of measures to improve the approval process for foster carers.

19 COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS

Wherever possible, complaints are dealt with informally. Where appropriate, in the first instance, any complaint by, or against a Foster Carer will be dealt with on a problem-solving basis. There is a written procedure given to all Foster Carers and is part of the Fostering Handbook.

The Council has both corporate and Children and Enterprise Directorate Complaints Procedures that operate if no resolution can be achieved at the problem solving stage.

The complaints procedure for children and young people is included in Halton's Children's Guide to Fostering. In addition there is leaflet designed for children and young people which advises them what to do if they have a complaint.

Where a complaint against a Foster Carer constitutes a Child Protection / Safeguarding allegation, this is dealt with under Safeguarding Procedures and would involve the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

For Halton the Advice and Mediation Service is provided by the Fostering Networks Advice & Mediation Worker for the North West. This worker is available and offered as support to foster carers when allegations have been made against foster carers.

20. CONTACT POINTS FOR COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

Halton Borough Council Fostering Team Midwood House Midwood Street Widnes WA8 6BH Telephone No. 0151 511 7229	Halton Borough Council Customer Care Manager Policy and Performance Runcorn Town Hall Runcorn WA7 5TD. Telephone No. 0151 511 8624
OFSTED Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD Telephone No 0300 123 1231	

APPENDIX 1: FOSTERING SERVICE STAFFING STRUCTURE

<p>Jo Morris Principal Manager</p> <p>Qualifications B.Soc Sc (Hons) Social Policy, Dip SW, pgDip SW, Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for health and Social care and children and young people services</p> <p>Experience Jo's experience in LA has spanned 20 years. Jo has worked in a children's social care since qualifying a social worker in 1994. Much of Jo's experience has been, as worker and manager, in duty and assessment and family support; training; LSCB business manager; Jo has experience of working the voluntary sector prior to her LA work</p>	<p>Sarah Flanagan Part-time Practice Lead</p> <p>Qualifications Diploma in Social Work MA in Social Policy and Social Work Post Qualifying Child Care Award</p> <p>Experience Sarah qualified as a Social Worker in 2000 and has worked in a variety of fieldwork teams within Children's Services. This has included working in children and families teams, specifically working with disabled children and also working in the Referral and Assessment (Child Protection) Team. Sarah has worked in the Adoption and Fostering Service since 2007.</p>	<p>VACANCY Part-time Practice Lead</p>
<p><u>Alison Egan</u> Supervising Social Worker</p> <p>Qualifications Nursery Nurse Examination Board Diploma in Social Work PQ1</p> <p>Experience Alison has worked within a children's setting for 26 years. She has been a qualified Social Worker for 15 years and has extensive experience of working with children and families. Alison has worked in the Adoption & Fostering Service since 2002.</p>	<p><u>Sue Taggart</u> Supervising Social Worker</p> <p>Qualifications Certificate in Social Services</p> <p>Experience Sue has worked in a child care setting for 30 years. This has included working in Children's Fieldwork Teams. Sue has been a qualified Social Worker since 1984. Sue has had experience of Residential work prior to starting in the department. Sue has worked in the Adoption & Fostering Service since 1992.</p>	<p><u>Elaine Fitzmaurice</u> Supervising Social Worker, Kinship</p> <p>Qualifications Nursery Nurse Examination Board Diploma in Social Work</p> <p>Experience Elaine has worked in a child care setting for 24 years. This has included working in children and families teams. She has been a qualified Social Worker since 2001. Elaine has worked in the Adoption & Fostering Service and participated in the out of hours rota for the Emergency Duty Team since 2002</p>

<p><u>Caroline Hendry-Jones</u> Assessing Social Worker</p> <p>Qualifications BA (Hons) Business Studies, LD Nursing Diploma, BA (Hons) in Social Work</p> <p>Experience Worked in health and social care since 1996 including children's residential care and hospital settings. Since 2004 worked in various adult teams including learning disability, PSD, older people and CHC. Caroline moved across to fostering 2012 as an assessing social worker covering recruitment, training, duty and undertaking fostering assessments and some SGO experience.</p>	<p><u>Karen Griffiths</u> Part-time Supervising Social Worker</p> <p>Qualifications BA Sociology/English, MA Applied Social Studies/CQSW</p> <p>Experience Qualified as a Social Worker in 1985. Karen worked in a Child Care setting for 27 years. This includes Residential work and work in Field Work Teams. For the last 20 years Karen has worked in Adoption and Fostering Teams. This has included Court Work, supervising Foster Carers, supporting Adopters, training both Adopters and Foster Carers.</p>	<p><u>Lystra Landon</u> Part-time Social Worker</p> <p>Qualifications Bsc (Hons) Psychology: Dipsw in Social Work: MA in Social Work</p> <p>Experience Lystra qualified as a social work in 2000 and has 10 years' experience having worked in 'After Adoption' June 2000 to April 2007, joining Halton Borough Council Child Care Team 3 before moving to the fostering team in November 2010, Prior to qualification Lystra worked for 11 years in a variety of social settings, including children's residential care.</p>
<p><u>Samantha Walsh</u> Assessing Social Worker</p> <p>Qualifications B.Soc. Sc (Hons) Social Policy/ MA in Social Work/Diploma in Social Work</p> <p>Experience Sam qualified as a social worker in 2007 and since then has worked in a number of Local Authorities settings in Warrington and Halton including child protection; older people services and hospital social worker. Sam has worked with adults with learning disabilities and children leaving care. Sam joined the team in October 2011.</p>		

<p><u>Linda Deacon</u> Family Support Assistant Qualifications NVQ3 Social Care CYP Experience Linda has worked for Halton Borough Council for 9½ years. She has worked with several teams including Child Care Team 3, IST and now Fostering. Linda has gained a range of knowledge about the services provided in this time. Previous to joining the Authority, Linda worked in Education as a Classroom Assistant and then as a Deputy Supervisor in a Pre-School.</p>	<p>Family Support Assistant (vacant) Qualifications Experience</p>	
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APPENDIX 2: SUPPORT STAFF FROM THE RESOURCE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

<p><u>. Joanne Miller</u> Senior Administration Officer/ Fostering Panel Administrator Qualifications 10 GCSEs, 4 A Levels, BA (Hons) Film and Visual Media Experience Joanne joined the Authority in January 2006 and worked for 4 years within Children's Centres and Learning Centres. In 2010, Joanne joined the Administration Team supporting the Adoption and Fostering Service</p>	<p><u>Melanie Skelton</u> Administration Officer / Adoption Panel Administrator Qualifications HND Textiles and Surface Pattern BDES in Ceramics Relevant Training BAAF Panel Administrator Workshop Experience Melanie has worked for the Authority since June 1994 in various different settings. In August 2004 she was a Team Support Officer for Children's Residential Services before joining the Adoption and Fostering Service in July 2008</p>	
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APPENDIX 3: CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES STRUCTURE
CHILDREN & ENTERPRISE DIRECTORATE

