



Statement of Purpose



Updated – April 2023

London Office - Room Nos 519, The Atrium, 1 Harefield Road, Uxbridge - UB8 1EX

Birmingham Office - Regus, 4200 - Waterside Centre, Solihull Parkway, Birmingham - B37 7YN

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Statement of Purpose

The Care Standards Act 2000 and the Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011 provide a guide by which standards of care and the provision of services within fostering are measured. Fostering Innovations will focus on outcomes for children placed with foster carers by applying these standards in every aspect of its business. This statement of purpose gives an outline of how the service is managed and its fitness to provide fostering services. It shows how the welfare of children is at the centre of all our activities and outlines the systems that have been set in place to support foster carers, and ensure the business is effectively run.

The evidence is clear that children and young people within the care system are disadvantaged in many ways, and often do not achieve their full potential. Fostering Innovations is committed to ensuring that the children/young people it supports are fully enabled to achieve the best outcomes possible and that the gap between them and children who are not looked after by the state is reduced, if not eliminated.

We will do this by recruiting, training and supporting carers of the highest quality and by working in a multi-agency way to help implement the child's care plan. We will seek to learn from changes in legislation and guidance and to pass on the lessons to staff and carers alike.

1.2 Description of Fostering Innovations

Fostering Innovations was established in September 2014 and operationalised in September 2016. We aim to provide fostering services to children and young people who are in need as outlined within the Children Act, 1989 and from the statutory guidance, regulations and National Minimum Standard of 2011. We have a clearly laid out vision, mission statement and business plan which explains how we intend to undertake and fulfil our business and practice ethos.

Fostering Innovations depends on foster families (single or partnered) to share their homes and offer a caring and safe environment for children and young people who are vulnerable and in need. In addition carers must have a sophisticated understanding of what it means to be looked after and be corporately parented.

1.3 Philosophy of Fostering Innovations

We chose the name Fostering Innovations as we feel it signifies creativity, positivity and hope for the future. No matter how much adversity a child has had to contend with, lives and future prospects can be turned around and enhanced. Young people who are 'looked after' will be involved in the planning and decision making regarding the care they receive from their foster carers through regular consultation on one to one basis as well as quarterly children's consultation meetings.

We'll continually update our children's guide based on the feedback from the children and foster carers. Fostering Innovations aims to be an inclusive agency that listens to people and wherever possible appropriately modifies its services to be more responsive to individual needs.

We aim to be respectful and professional in all our dealings and will value diversity in all its forms as strength. We will ensure that the values we want to promote are embedded within our policies and training so that everyone involved in the agency are able to provide the best possible support to young people. We will approve carers whom we feel will reflect the agency's ethos. The Directors will always meet any new carer, so that we have a personal knowledge of all carers and can maintain a good overview of the consistency and quality of the service.

1.4 Status of Fostering Innovations

Fostering Innovations is registered as a Limited company with companies House incorporated on 10th September 2014. The company registration number is 09211399. There are three Directors named Dharendra Kumar, Seema Kochhar and Karuna K Gupta.

We are members of London Care Services, WLA – West London Alliance, South Central IFA Consortium. We are also the preferred provider of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough County Council, West Midlands Alliance and South Central IFA Consortium.

1.5 Preferred Providers

We are registered with London Care Services and WLA – West London Alliance. We are also the preferred provider of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough County Council, West Midlands and South Central Framework.

2. Background to Fostering Innovations

2.1 Aspirations

It is the hope of the Directors that children and young people who are looked after by Fostering Innovations will experience a high quality of care. We hope that by listening to children and young people and offering a range of support services they will be better placed to face the challenges of life. Fostering Innovations has a combination of Staff from social work and managerial background and have extensive experience of working with young disadvantaged people and the agencies, which support them.

2.2 Vision

To ensure young people are happy and well cared for, foster carers feel valued, staff are motivated and stakeholders feel positive results have been achieved.

2.3 Mission Statement

To provide caring and supportive placements for children and young people which will enable them to achieve positive life outcomes.

We will achieve this by :

- Ensuring that the views of children and young people as well as foster carers are sought and considered in the services provided.
- Ensuring that the most competent foster carers are recruited and are well supported via training, one to one supervision, peer support, support groups and telephone support, including out of hours.
- Recruiting suitably qualified and trained staff.
- Building strong relationships with the Local Authorities who refer to and use the service.
- Ensuring all staff are up to date and knowledgeable regarding legislation and current good practice regarding fostering.
- Ensuring all our policies and procedures are clear and consistent and children and young people and foster carers receive accurate information about the work of the agency. All children receive a children and young people's welcome pack (children's guide to the service).
- Ensuring Fostering Innovations demonstrates a positive respect for difference and diversity

- Prioritising stable placements for children where this is consistent with the child's Care Plan
- Promoting contact arrangements for children and young people where consistent with the Care Plan
- Providing every child and young person placed with the agency with a savings account opened on their behalf with a £10 savings every week.
- Providing every child and young person, placed with the agency, with a starter pack , comprising of some essentials, to make them feel welcome in their new placement.
- Providing bespoke support and mentoring services to the children and young people based on their individual needs.
- Ensuring that we are transparent in our pricing and represent good value for money.

In addition, we will -

- Support flexible working and family friendly policies, which promote health and well-being amongst the staff team.
- Ensure that Fostering Innovations is a company that adopts energy saving, green policies.
- Ensure that the quality of service is not compromised during expansion.

2.4 Management Structure and Staffing

Fostering Innovations is managed by experienced and passionate social workers who have children at the heart of everything. The management team has remained the same and there has been no changes in its composition which offers stability and unified direction to the agency. It comprises of Dharendra Kumar, Placement and Recruitment Manager, Karuna Gupta, Responsible Individual, Seema Kochhar, Registered Manager and Tsungai Tawanda, Practice Manager. The management team is offered support and direction by an independent Agency Decision Maker, Vanessa Strang.

Psychologist - We have appointed a psychologist whose experience, skills and knowledge support the carers who are working with children with complex needs. She provides regular sessions to the carers to enable them to plan, think and explore different ways to support the children in the placement. Her role

also explore carer's limitations and strengths and support required to overcome issues.



Karuna Kaura Gupta - Responsible Individual

I qualified as a social worker in 2002. I have a Masters in Social Work (MSW) and a B.SC. (Hons.) in Home Science, Child Development. I am a qualified Practice Educator and a Best Interest Assessor.

I have over 20 years of social work experience in statutory and independent sectors. I have management as well as direct work experience with children and adults in the community, hospital, rehabilitation center and care homes. I have led team of professionals and delivered outcomes.

I am passionate about education and strongly believe in promoting educational outcomes of children and young people and ensure that every child is able to achieve their full potential.



Seema Kochhar – Registered Manager

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I qualified as a social worker in 2002 from University of Delhi , India. I have a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Masters degree in Social work. I am a qualified Practice Educator and undertaking NVQ5 in leadership and management.

I have experience of working in the development sector, including United Nations, on health, women and children's rights.

I have worked with children and families in the U.K. since 2007 and have specialised in fostering, kinship and adoption. I have over 10 years experience in managing social work teams in fostering and adoption which include recruitment and retention of foster carers, staff supervision and management, training and development.

I am passionate about children's rights to have a safe and nurturing childhood and protection from violence , abuse and neglect and for their voices to be heard.



Dhirendra Kumar –Placement and Recruitment Manager

I qualified as a Social worker in 2002. I have a Masters in Social Work from India and MSc in Project Planning and Management from U.K.

I have over 20 years of social work experience in Development, Statutory and Independent sectors. I have management and direct work experience with learning disability, older people services and children services.

I am passionate about promoting leadership and independence and strongly believe in providing equal opportunities to every child irrespective of their religion, gender, race, colour, disability and any other status.



Tsungai Tawanda – Practice Manager and Children’s Champion

I am a qualified social worker and have over 10 years work experience working with children and families in fostering, kinship, adoption as well as child protection. I have a special interest in working with vulnerable teenagers at risk of exploitation.

As a Children’s Champion, I meet the young person/ children in placement and listen to their wishes and feelings pertaining to their placement, future goals and aspiration.



Vanessa Strang – Agency Decision Maker

My professional qualifications include CQSW - Bristol 1989; Post Graduate Diploma Management - Birkbeck - University of London 2011; I am a fully trained adult psychotherapist.

I am a transformational leader with proven skills to work strategically at a senior level to deliver operational objectives across a children’s social care department and provide evidence of the positive impact on the lives of children and young people in need of care and protection. Expertise in leadership and management of care resources, care planning and delivering services for looked after

children and care leavers. I have over 30 years' experience of working in London Local authorities with excellent working knowledge of Government policy, legislation and contemporary challenges, e.g. CSE , youth violence vulnerable adolescents, children in transition, permanency. An individual with the necessary skills to lead and manage in different environments and political contexts.

My career objective is to use my proven social work practice, strategic skills, and knowledge to add value to a forward-thinking organization and provide effective leadership for all aspects of corporate parenting, demonstrating at every level a deep commitment to making sustained improvements for looked after children and care leavers.



Julia Brown - Panel Chair

I have worked for over 35 years in the field of adoption and fostering, which included managing local authority fostering and adoption teams for 15 years. During this time I sat on various fostering, and adoption and permanence panels, and part of my role was to act as professional adviser to the fostering panel.



Dr. Rina Bajaj - Psychologist

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I am a highly self-motivated, competent and experienced Counselling Psychologist, with over 15 years experience, who is able to thrive within the statutory, community, charity and private sectors. My clinical approach enables me to provide a holistic approach to supporting and engaging service users, stakeholders and staff members. In addition, I have varied experience of both Project Management and Operational Management, successfully being able to conceptualise and deliver projects to meet the desired outcomes and add significant value to services. Alongside this, I have extensive experience of conceptualising and delivering training to a range of audiences.



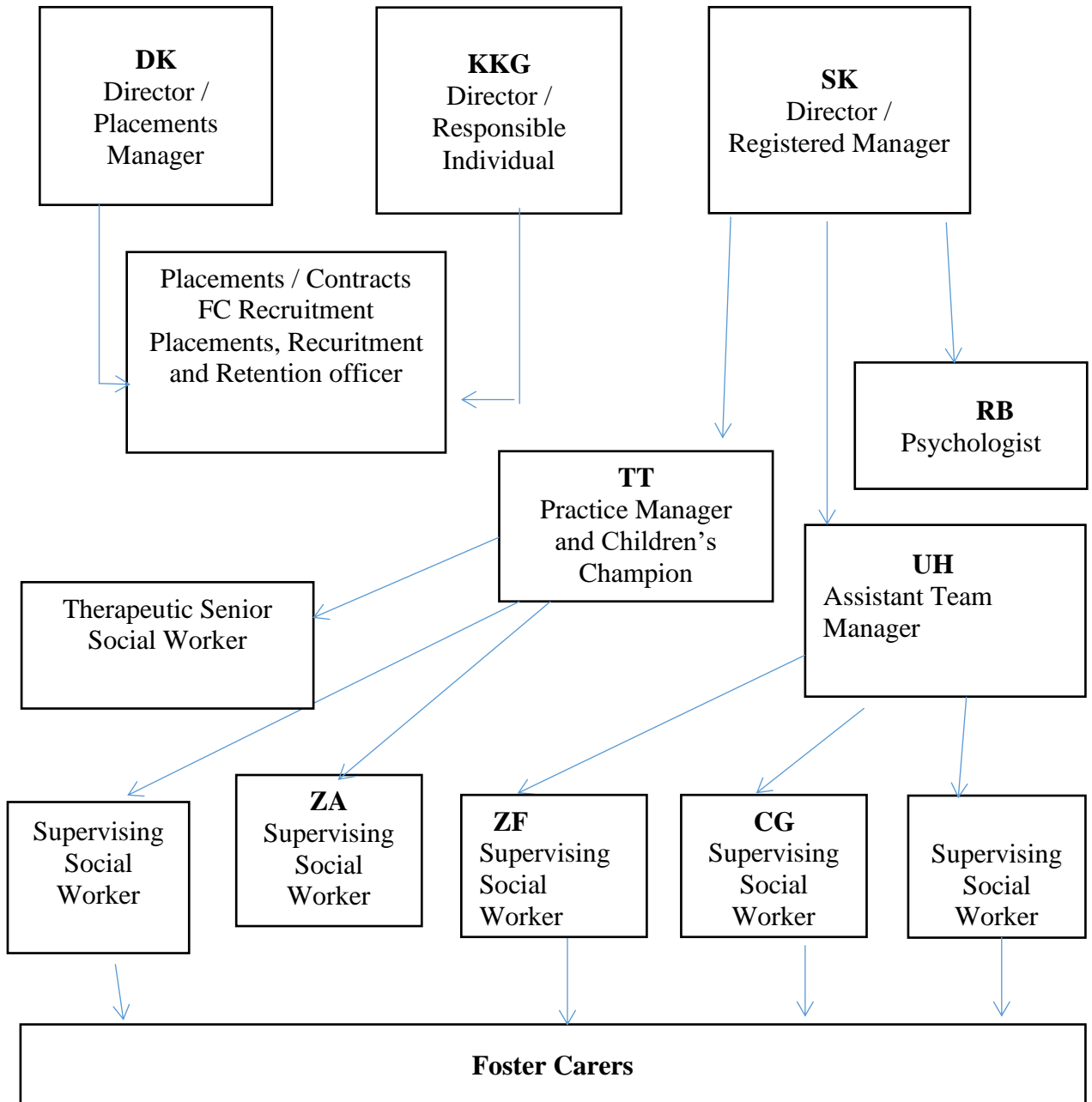
Urszula Helyer– Assistant Team Manager

I have worked in fostering settings since 2008 and specialise in supporting foster carers and looked after children. Supporting others is a passion of mine and I have always looked at ways in which I could work towards improving the lives of others.

I was a member of fostering panel for many years and took part in recruitment and placement teams. I have completed the Practice Educator Award Stage 1 and Stage 2 at Brunel University.

I am passionate about my work and am always trying to make a difference in the work I do whether it is with foster carers, young people or mentoring new social workers.

FOSTERING INNOVATIONS – STAFFING STRUCTURE



Sessional Workers

We also have a team of sessional workers who undertake assessments, supervision, family support work, mentoring and review for us.

1. Adam Zorgani
2. Beverly Parwaringira
3. Terry McDermott

2.5 Embracing diversity

Fostering Innovations has a diversity policy that applies to staff, foster carers and associated professionals. It covers all recognised legal frameworks and good practice. The policies adopted make it clear that it is not our intention to discriminate on grounds of race, disability, ethnicity, religion, language, sexuality, age or marital status. We also encourage carers and staff who were 'looked after themselves' as they have a unique insight into the specific needs of children and young people who are 'looked after'.

3. Standards of Care

3.1 Legislative background and care standards

The principles and standards of care are in keeping with the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004, the Children and Young Peoples Act 2008 as set out in the National Minimum Standards, Guidance and Regulations 2011. Foster carers must demonstrate their capabilities in providing safe care for children and young people who are placed in their care, and that they are able to understand and demonstrate their ability to ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is safeguarded and promoted.
- Due consideration is given to the child's wishes and feelings in light of age and understanding.
- The child's religious, racial origin, cultural and linguistic needs are promoted.

Carers are required to promote all the dimensions of the child's/young person's needs and promote their welfare in such areas as their education, health, emotional and behavioural development, identity, social presentation, family and social relationships and self care skills. If any child or young person who is placed with a foster carer alleges any form of abuse within the definition of the DoH (1999) Safeguarding principles, against a carer, sessional worker or member of staff, the allegation will be investigated in line with the Fostering Innovations safeguarding policy. This may lead to a number of outcomes which could include:-

- Moving the child/young person to an alternative placement.
- The foster carer(s) approval being reviewed by Panel with a view to de-registration if the complaint is upheld.
- Sessional worker or member of staff being subject to personnel procedures
- Offering the foster carer(s), sessional worker or member of staff further training and support.

- Setting tasks for the foster carer(s), sessional worker or member of staff to complete.

3.2 Services provided

In line with the aims of Fostering Innovations, a range of services will be provided to children/young people, foster carers and professional agencies. These are outlined below. Information about Fostering Innovations services is outlined in the following documents:-

- Information for prospective carers
- Children's Welcome Pack (children's guide) – New book printed for 0-11 yrs, 11-18 yrs old.
- Foster Carer's Handbook

Fostering Innovations will provide placements for all children/young people from birth to 21 years of age. We will provide emergency, short-term, long-term, permanent and bridging placements. Foster carers will be provided with a high level of training and support.

We'll ensure foster carers open bank account for the children/young people and make regular savings for each child. This money will be made available to children/young people when they cease to be cared for by foster carer from Fostering Innovations.

Fostering Innovations will provide a 24-hour emergency service. This out-of-hour's service will ensure that foster families can contact a named member of staff in an emergency for advice, support, guidance and information. The out of hours workers will have the Emergency duty teams contact details for all the Local Authorities that we will have children placed from.

3.3 Services to children/young people

Fostering Innovations will offer a range of services to children who are looked after by our foster carer(s), to ensure that children/young people's health, educational, psychological and emotional needs are met. The principle form of service provision is the recruitment of foster carers for children who are unable for whatever reason to live with their birth families or relatives. We will also provide support to the foster carers who may need assistance to manage challenging or difficult behaviour. We will have a family support service which will recruit appropriately vetted sessional workers who are supervised and offered access to a comprehensive training programme.

In recognition of children/young people's needs for identity and self-esteem Fostering Innovations will aim to offer same race placements. In cases where this is not possible Fostering Innovations will discuss with the local authority,

services that may support the child or young person's sense of self-worth and will also offer them full information on other areas in which available foster carers would be able to meet the child's needs.

The needs of children and young people are listened to and acted upon by the agency. We will have systems in place to ensure that young people are able to give feedback in a safe environment. Young people can contact the Complaints Manager directly if they have any concerns. Children and young people will also be offered opportunities to express their views at the foster carer's review and will be able to be involved in the agency in a number of ways ranging from designing the Christmas card to amending the Children's Guide.

We have also introduced our young people to be part of the interview process in the recruitment of staff at FI. Young people are given the opportunity to ask questions to establish how confident they are with working with children of their age and understand their ability to grasp issues that are important for them.

Support Group for Foster Children Looked After and Birth Children

We run regular support groups for foster children to listen to their wishes and feelings and to provide opportunities to young people to excel in life. We do these support group every 6-8 weeks.

We also introduced the support group for birth children as they are important part of fostering household and therefore it was important for us to understand how fostering was having an impact on them and understand what support they may need to cope better.

Support group for Unaccompanied Minors

We recognise that young people who arrive in UK from other countries and seek asylum may have experienced trauma, neglect and abuse. They may require ongoing support to settle in their new country with regard to their cultural, religious, language and other individual needs. We plan to run this group every 6-8 weeks.

Education mentor

Our education mentor works closely with foster carers and share resources, information and provide advice to the carers where children/ young people in placement are not performing well in certain subjects, needs additional support at home, or preparing for exams – GCSE/A levels etc.

4. Recruitment, Assessment, Approval and Support of Foster Carers

4.1 Initial enquires

Fostering Innovations will operate a duty system that responds to all enquires and requests from individuals and couples to be considered as foster carers.

The following actions will be taken:-

- An initial screening telephone interview.
- Basic information is sent about our fostering services to help people decide whether they wish to proceed.
- If they proceed a home visit is undertaken by the Placements and Recruitment team to explain the agency's processes and policies.
- Then an application is completed and a request is made for information about the applicant, their family and any other person involved. Criminal bureau, local authority and a range of other checks are undertaken.
- All applicants attend two days Skills to Foster course. This has been developed for the agency by an experienced external consultant. A follow-up day is provided to help them understand the practical role of fostering.
- Those who attend the course then decide whether they wish to proceed, and Fostering Innovations too gathers feedback after the course whether they wish to proceed with the prospective carer's application.

4.2 Assessment Procedures

Assessments will be carried out by social workers. Our social work assessments will follow the competency based assessment method. This means that applicants are asked to demonstrate their competence to become approved foster carers. Throughout the assessment information is gathered using the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) assessment form - Form F. The assessment, which consists of a series of interviews, takes place in the applicant's home, usually over a period of 6-8 sessions.

The assessment focuses on the individuals applying to become foster carers and their family. We will make a detailed assessment of their past experiences and help them to think about their reasons for applying to become foster carers.

Fostering Innovations will take up to four references, plus employee / landlord /school/health visitor/children and ex-partners references. At least two referees are visited in person.

Applicants do not have to be professionals. However, they need to have a willingness to care for children/young people between the ages of 0-21 years who cannot live with their family and are in need of alternative care. They must be able to demonstrate that they want and can make a difference to young people. They must be able to provide a room in their home to accommodate children or young people.

Throughout the assessment process applicants are advised and helped to gather information and evidence providing examples of their relevant experiences and skills. This contributes to the assessment process and informs the Form F which is presented to the Fostering Panel.

4.3 The Fostering Panel

Fostering Innovations Panel has a key role to play in the agency's decision-making process. They are governed by the regulations that are set out under the National Minimum Standards, Guidance and Regulations 2011. The panel is independent of Fostering Innovations and has a remit to make recommendations about the approval of foster carers to the Agency Decision Maker. The Panel also considers all reviews of foster carer's ongoing approval. Carers attend their first review and every third review after this. Other reviews are presented to Panel in the form of written reports.

A Panel List of members with a wide range of professional and personal experience is available to draw upon and an independent foster carer is also included in every Panel. Where there are complaints relating to foster families, the Fostering Panel will be consulted and may recommend to the Agency Decision Maker what action needs to be taken by the agency.

4.4 Reviewing Foster Carers

The first annual review is conducted within a year after approval and presented to the Fostering Innovations Panel. Based on this report they are able to make a recommendation about the foster carer's fitness to remain registered and any changes required to their approval. Carers are required to attend Panel for their first review and every third review after this. All other reviews are conducted by Fostering Innovations on an annual basis and the report submitted to a Panel.

4.5 Support to foster carers

High quality support and monitoring makes a significant difference to carers. Fostering Innovations offers the following types of support to foster carer/s:

- Supervision/Support meetings with a Fostering Innovations worker every 1- 4 weeks depending on need.
- The foster carer/s support group, which is held after every 6-8 weeks, often more frequently when carers request this.
- Telephone support via the Supervising social worker, support worker
- Emergency out of hours service which operates 24 hours a day and which provides information, advice and guidance.
- Mentoring support services to new foster carers

4.6 Training Services

Fostering Innovations will provide a range of training opportunities for foster carers and staff to ensure they remain up to date on legislation, issues and best practice. We will ensure that foster carers experience a range of in-house, on-line trainings and external training courses and can also attend national courses and seminars. Fostering Innovations wish to be seen and operate as a 'Learning Organisation' for staff and foster carers alike. We encourage and support carers with their learning and development, believing that this, in turn will mirror good adult role modelling for children.

We have developed our Training Program for 2023 which focuses on the challenges and issues around the young people in care, such as CSE, CCE, Drugs and Alcohol abuse etc. This year we will introduce NVQ 2 and NVQ 3 level training for carers who are interested to develop their skills and knowledge in looking after children.

Workshops : Our monthly workshops covers key areas of fostering that provides practical information, advice and discussions on issues that impact the carers to perform their role as foster carers.

5. Accountability

5.1) Making a complaint

The agency has its own internal complaints policy. This can be activated by phone, email or in person. Fostering Innovations like all independent fostering agencies is accountable to Ofsted. A Foster carers information pack and young people welcome pack will be sent to all carers and children, and provides information about how to make a complaint about the agency. There is a complaints policy and young people can make their complaint via e-mail as well as in written form, in person or on the phone. Within the Children's guide, looked after children and young people receive a leaflet detailing how to contact the agency. They will receive information about how to contact Ofsted in these packs along with the phone number.

Prospective foster carers will receive a leaflet about the Internal Review Mechanism and will be made aware of what the organisation does.