



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

2020/21

(A Children's Guide is available to this Statement of Purpose and should be given to children when they commence their foster placement)



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1. Introduction

Perpetual Fostering was established in 2005 and is part of the Perpetual Care Group, a leading provider of social care services.

The Perpetual care Group provides;

- Fostering Services for children and young people, children with disabilities, young people who are stepping down from residential services and parent and child placements
- Adult Mental Health Residential Services

Our statement of purpose has been developed to meet the requirements of the following legislation;

- The Care Standards Act 2000,
- The Fostering Services Regulations 2011/2013,
- The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011 (England and Wales)
- The Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Children Act 1989

Our statement is available to all members of staff, foster carers, children and birth parents and is also available on our fostering website. A copy of this statement is also lodged with Ofsted.

The information contained will be regularly updated and will be amended annually.



2. National Legislative and Policy Framework

Our Fostering Service is run in accordance with the principles outlined in the:

- Children Act 1989
- Children and Young persons Act 2008
- Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011/2013.
- Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (2011)
- Children Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services (2011)
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010
- The Disability and Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Working Together To Safeguard Children 2018

We also strive to follow the best practices outlined in;

Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care 2007.



3. Aims and Objectives

The main aim of Perpetual Fostering is to provide safe, high quality foster care placements for children and young people that value, support and encourage them to grow and develop as individuals.

As well as promoting their health and general well-being the service is committed to ensuring that foster carers are encouraged to help children and young people to reach their maximum educational ability.

Together with our Foster Carers we provide;

- Children and young people with high quality foster care.
- A safe, secure and nurturing environment.
- The opportunity for children to enjoy their childhood and benefit from good parenting and education.
- A wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills, thus leading to a successful adult life.

Together we ensure that our services are outcome focused making sure that all;

- Children's interests are represented
- Children are safeguarded
- Children's welfare is best supported and protected in stable, safe and secure placements
- Children's emotional and physical health is promoted
- Children's educational attainment is promoted.
- Children are encouraged to make a positive contributions.



4. Services and Facilities

Perpetual Fostering offers the following services:

- Emergency placements
- Short term fostering placements for children for whom the plan is reunification with their immediate or extended family.
- Respite/ Short term breaks for children with complex health needs
- Foster Care for those children for whom adoptive or long term/permanent placements are being sought
- Long term foster care for those children for whom permanence via fostering is an option.
- Staying Put arrangements
- Placements for parents and children
- Placements for young people who are in need of a plan for semi independence
- Step Down/ Wrap Around Services for Children and Young People moving from residential care into a fostering placement.

5. Principles & Standards of Care

At Perpetual Fostering we maintain our high standards of care through our robust quality assurance framework and regular reviews of our services provision. This is further supported by our full compliance with the Fostering Services Regulations (England 2011/2013) and National Minimum Standards (England 2011) and the open, honest and transparent partnerships that we develop with our foster carers and our partners.

- We regularly seek feedback from our foster carers, birth children, children and young people, our partner agencies and we use this to develop our service further.
- Our foster carers have continuing training in line with DfE Training Support and Development Standards and receive high quality supervision and support from qualified social workers. Our foster carers are further supported within their role by the provision of access to 24 hour telephone support seven days a week, 365 days a year.
- We also provide our foster carers with quarterly support groups, peer mentoring and the opportunity to attend social activities for themselves and the whole fostering household, thus supporting a real sense of community within our agency.
- We visit children in placement both on an announced and unannounced basis
- We do not permit corporal punishment under any circumstances. We provide our foster carers with guidance and training on the use of, and written recording of any sanctions and the implementation of de-escalating situations.
- Our foster carers will keep daily written records for each child and young person.
- Our foster carers and staff have a duty and responsibility to maintain vigilance around confidentiality and to comply with the agencies confidentiality policy and procedures.
- All assessments are completed by qualified and experienced staff, with applicants actively participating.
- All foster carers have attended Skills to Foster Training.
- Foster carers will have continuing training and personal development, including an induction programme, TSD Standards Workbooks, QCF (or equivalent).
- We will ensure each foster carer and foster home complies with all Health and Safety and Risk Assessment requirements.
- Foster carers work within the Terms of the Placement Agreement and to an agreed Care Plan.
- Every foster carer has an annual review, based upon their performance for the year and this is presented to our fostering panel.
- Every child that moves into a placement has their progress reviewed within the first six months by our agency to ensure that outcomes are being promoted and achieved.
- Children and young peoples academic achievement and school attendance is robustly monitored and supported.

The fostering service aims to provide high quality care for fostered children, which protects them from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation and places children with carers who provide a safe, healthy and nurturing environment to promote best outcomes for their future.

5. Principles & Standards of Care (continued)

Perpetual Fostering aims to ensure that any person(s) working for the fostering service are suitable to work with children/ young people and safeguard and promote their welfare. This is achieved through robust recruitment and employment processes.

All social worker staff and managers are recruited in accordance with Perpetual Fostering's recruitment, selection and vetting policies, which follow good practice in safeguarding children/young people. Disclosure & Barring Service checks will be undertaken prior to appointment and subsequently every three years.

All social worker staff in the fostering service are qualified to work with children/young people, their families and foster carers and have an understanding of foster care. All social workers are required to be registered with HCPC.

Staff who are not qualified in social work do not carry out assessments of applicant foster carers, and carry out their function under direct supervision of qualified social work staff.

All staff will receive regular professional supervision and job consultation by appropriately qualified and experienced staff and are provided with opportunities for ongoing training in child care and in respect of fostering issues.

The approval of all foster carers is in accordance with the requirements of the Fostering Service Regulations (2011/2013) and the National Minimum Standards. Disclosure & Barring Service checks will be undertaken prior to approval of any foster carer and subsequently every three years.

Foster carers receive monthly supervision and annual reviews are undertaken by their supervising social worker. Any incident/situation of concern is presented to the fostering panel for consideration of the approval status of the foster carer.

The whistle blowing policy is made known to all foster carers and staff and other relevant policy and procedures where they have a concern about other professionals or children in their care, i.e. child protection policy, LADO procedures.

Membership of the fostering panel is dependent on the satisfactory outcome of appropriate checks and fitness to carry out the role of panel.

The fostering panel ensures that the assessment of foster carer applicants comply with the requirements of the Fostering Regulations (2011/2013).

The fostering panel accesses expertise in child health and education issues. The panel makes independent recommendations regarding approvals, terms of approval, continuing approval and termination of approval of foster carers.

The matching policy and procedures are robust and clear to promote good and safe practice in this area and placement longevity.

Foster Carers are:

- Provided with clear information in respect of permissible and non-permissible forms of control, discipline and sanctions. The foster carer agreement is explicit that no child should be subject to corporal punishment or humiliating treatment. In certain circumstances measures may be taken to prevent a child from harming themselves or others. Risk assessments will be undertaken where restraint or risk taking behaviour is a concern.
- Required to provide warm and adequately furnished homes maintained to a good standard of hygiene and to provide each child with his/her own bedroom and private space. Foster carers homes are inspected at least annually to ensure compliance. Planned and unplanned visits are undertaken by the fostering service and carers are also seen monthly; this includes the children and young people's bedroom.
- Supported by Perpetual Fostering in the provision of an environment free of avoidable hazards that might expose the child to risk of injury or harm.
- Receive training on safe care and health and safety issues and receive full information about any child placed with them in order to ensure protection of the child, any other children in the household and other family members.



6. Valuing Diversity

We respect every individual irrespective of their gender, religion, ethnic origin, language, culture, disability and sexuality. We ensure that children and young people live in an environment which promotes equality and diversity.

We acknowledge that racism can be unconscious or unintentional, as an anti-racist organisation we vow to purposefully identify, discuss and challenge issues of racism and the impact they have on our agency and community.

- We aim to ensure that each child is carefully matched with the most suitable carer capable of meeting his/her assessed needs in terms of culture, religion, ethnic origin, gender, disability, language and sexuality and alongside their global needs.
- We place children with carers of matching racial and cultural heritage wherever possible. Where this is not possible, we work with the child, their birth family, the foster carers and our partner agencies to ensure that every opportunity is created and embraced to support the individual child's ethnicity and culture
- We facilitate the provision for children with complex health needs, of services and support including equipment and adaptations, which enable them to access as wide a range of activities as possible to maximise their potential to lead as full a life as possible that is inclusive sociably and educationally.
- We assist and encourage foster carers and we provide anti-racist and valuing diversity training, which promotes their ability to promote a child's confidence, self-worth, identity and their wishes and feelings..



7. Promoting Contact

Perpetual Fostering takes its duty to promote contact between children and family and friends seriously in accordance with the agencies contact policy. Contact contributes to the development of the child's sense of identity, self worth and self-esteem and can go a long way in helping placements become stable and meaningful to children and young people.

We ensure that foster carers promote agreed contact with the child/young person's family unless this is considered not to be in the child's/ young person's best interest.

We take into account the contact needs of the child/young person in determining contact needs and arrangements. We provide training to enable foster carers to help a child maintain appropriate contacts and facilitate contact. We contribute and attend the statutory reviews wherein contact arrangements are agreed, established, maintained and monitored.

We ensure financial support is provided to carers who incur costs in facilitating contact between a fostered child and their family or friends. We ensure that foster carers understand the importance of recording the impact of contact arrangements upon children in their care.

8. Recruitment, Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers

a) Recruitment of foster carers

Perpetual Fostering is committed to recruiting foster carers who can meet the needs of children and young people through the provision of high quality care.

The Fostering Service has a recruitment strategy, which is overseen by the Chief Executive and The Registered Manager. Recruitment campaigns aim to provide both a realistic and positive portrayal of foster care; the campaigns are designed to generate relevant and quality responses. General recruitment activity is undertaken on a rolling programme throughout the year through the local press and media, through leafleting campaigns and through the promotion of articles about fostering in the local press. Our website permanently advertises for new foster carers. Recruitment materials are updated regularly and high quality display materials have been purchased. Targeted campaigns are conducted in addition to general recruitment activity, these are triggered when there is an identified need for carers to meet children with specific needs. Recruitment activity and pre-approval training are planned to occur so as to reduce delay between the first contact from an applicant carer and approval. Training takes the form of a three day preparatory training course with materials supplied from the Fostering Network and presented by an experienced trainer. Generally training courses are held as and when required and are designed to give a realistic portrayal of foster care as “Skills to Foster”. At Perpetual Fostering we are continually developing our recruitment strategy and consult with existing foster carers and Partner Agencies. The recruitment of carers is carried out in accordance with the Fostering Regulation (2011/2013) and the National Minimum Fostering Standards.

b) Initial Enquiries and Screening Process

The fostering team operates a duty system whereby a member of the team will respond to enquiries from potential applicants within 1 working day.

Once an expression of interest is received from a prospective carer and basic information is completed through our screening process, it is then passed to the Fostering Service Registered Manager to make a decision about the progression of the applicant. If successful it is then allocated to a Qualified Social Worker who will make arrangements to visit the prospective carer in their home for an Initial ‘Screening’ Visit.

During the initial home visit, the qualified social worker provides more detail of the nature of the fostering task, including the required competencies, skills and aptitudes of foster carers and of the assessment process and time scales. This means that the decision of applicants to proceed is well informed and appropriate. This visit is a two way discussion and information gathering process by both the potential foster carer and the agency.

The outcome and recommendations of the qualified social worker of the initial screening visit is considered by the Registered Manager and suitable candidates will then be invited to attend a three day training programme called ‘Skills to Foster’. They are also assigned a qualified social worker to undertake a comprehensive and robust assessment.

8. Recruitment, Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers

c) Assessment Process

The assessment process consists of a number of components and requires the consent of applicants for checks to be undertaken on themselves and any members of the household over 18 years with the Disclosure and Barring Service, probation service, the Department of Health and other social services departments.

Applicants are required to provide at least two personal referees who will provide written references and be available for interview as part of the assessment process. Applicants are required to have a full medical examination by their GP which will be made available to the agency medical advisor for their comments. (STAGE 1)

Assessments of applicants' child care experience, skills and competencies, their social, professional and environment background are conducted by a qualified supervising social worker, over a period of time. The assessment is quality assured and supervised by the Registered Manager. The assessing social worker visits the applicant's home a minimum of 8 occasions, over a set period with the occasional need for further visits, to meet and collect information about all members of the household. The information gained forms the basis of an assessment report compiled in accordance with the Form F format published by the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF 2014). All assessments are carried out using a competence based assessment.

(STAGE 2)

Applicants are required to undertake preparation training prior to assessment. This training covers the responsibilities of foster carers and is based on 'Skills to Foster' materials provided by 'The Fostering Network'. All applicant carers receive the training manual to support the course. Family and friends of applicants who are likely to have direct involvement or regular contact with a prospective foster placement can attend the preparatory training if they wish.

A second social worker home visit is undertaken following the completion of a Form F Assessment. This is to ensure the quality of the assessment and also ensures feedback is received from applicants on the assessment process.

The assessment report is shared with applicants including references at the discretion of the referee. The assessment in its entirety is presented to the Perpetual Fostering panel and the attendance of applicants is required by Perpetual Fostering.

8. Recruitment, Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers

d) Fostering Panel and Approval of Foster Carers

The fostering panel is established by Perpetual Fostering in accordance with the requirements of Fostering Regulations (2011) and National Minimum Standards. The Fostering Panel aims to:

Provide a body of experienced and skilled personnel, suitable to work with children and perform its functions ethically and efficiently in accordance with the requirements of the Fostering Regulations (2011) and the National Minimum Standards.

Provide expertise in child and foster care, child health, education issues, child protection and to make independent recommendations regarding approvals, terms of approval, continuing approval and termination of approval of foster carers.

Ensure that the assessment of foster carer applicants comply with the requirements of the Fostering Regulations (2011/2013).

Advise and support Perpetual Fostering in the provision of a range of foster carers which promotes the placement of looked after children in families who can meet their assessed needs in terms of culture, religion, ethnic origin, gender, disability, language, sexuality and the placement of siblings together.

Consider all foster carer applicants equally and with equal rigour, irrespective of their age, race, gender, disability or sexuality and be consistent with the needs of the children requiring foster care. Provide advice on the training and support needs of foster carers and their families in order that they can carry out their role effectively and improve their competence and skills.

Ensure the safety and protection of foster children from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation and the provision of nurturing and loving environments which promote the fostered child's sense of worth, self-esteem and emotional well being.

e) The Functions and Processes of the Fostering Panel

Prior to appointment all fostering panel members are subject to statutory checks, including references and DBS checks, to ensure their suitability to work within the children's service and they are required to sign a confidentiality agreement. Termination of membership of the panel will be effected in writing at any time in the event that a panel member is no longer considered a suitable member. The Fostering Panel is fully up to date with profiles and photos and the agency will advertise for relevant professionals to sit on the panel to ensure its core membership standards.

The fostering panel sits on a regular basis usually bi monthly, with the dates being set at the beginning of each year. Additional 'emergency' panels are convened if necessary. The attendance of prospective foster carers is required and approved carers is encouraged and facilitated by Perpetual Fostering. Panel papers are distributed to panel members via the agency electronic portal, in good time. At the conclusion of the panel any papers are retained by the panel administrator and he/she undertakes their destruction by placing in the confidential waste.

The panels decision making is based on the principal of majority voting. In the event that panel's decision is not unanimous the minutes will record any opposing views to those of the majority and they will be drawn to the specific attention of the agency decision-maker. In circumstances where the decision is tied and the panel cannot through any other means reach a majority consensus, then the chair's vote will prevail and the situation will be drawn for the specific attention of the agency decision-maker.

8. Recruitment, Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers

e) The Functions and Processes of the Fostering Panel (continued)

Written records of proceedings from all fostering panel meetings will be maintained and the reasons for its recommendations are signed and dated by the chair or vice chair of the panel. The minutes of fostering panel meeting and recommendations are provided to the agency decision-maker and outcome letters of his/her decision forwarded to applicants/carers within 7 working days of the agency decision maker. Copies of the outcome letters are placed on the foster carer/applicant's secure electronic file. One copy of the minutes of the fostering panel are stored securely by the panel administrator. All others are destroyed by placing in confidential waste. Perpetual Fostering's decision sheet is placed in the carer file.

f) Training

Perpetual Fostering believes that a comprehensive training programme for its staff and carers, is the key to their personal and professional development. Training provides people with the necessary skills and knowledge necessary in providing a high quality service. It is also key to safeguarding children, Foster Carers and their families, by informing carers of how to care for children safely.

Training is an opportunity for, even experienced, foster carers to acquire new skills and an opportunity for group support and discussion. Perpetual Fostering has a clear training strategy, covering pre-approval training to potential applicants.

A comprehensive rolling programme of training is available; this training meets the on-going professional development of foster carers throughout their fostering career. The training programme is set each year by the Training Co-ordinator and Registered Manager. All foster carers are supported in completing their TSD Standards Work Book by their supervising social worker.

Foster carers are eligible for sponsorship by Perpetual Fostering to study for the QCF3 in Caring for Children and Young People on evidencing skills. All Carers have a professional training and development portfolios and a training plan agreed within supervision that is performance managed continually.

The training provided in house includes training in respect of:

- Safeguarding Children and Young People
- Attachment and Loss
- First Aid
- Record Keeping
- Medication
- Transition (Moving on)
- Child Development
- Dealing with Allegations
- Education
- ADHD / ASD
- Communicating & Listening to Children/ YP
- Culture & Religion
- Drugs, Alcohol & Substance Awareness
- Equality & Diversity
- HIV/AIDS Awareness
- Mental Health Awareness
- Managing Challenging Behaviours
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Promoting Contact
- Recognising Sexual Abuse
- Self Harm and Suicide
- Staying Put
- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI)
- Valuing and Promoting Identity
- Missing from Home



8. Recruitment, Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers

g) Support

It is recognised that appropriate support for foster carers and their families is vitally important to successful placements. Identifying and arranging the necessary level of support occurs either at the matching stage or in the case of an emergency placement at the placement planning meeting. Support needs are monitored by the foster carers' supervising social worker during the course of the placement.

All foster carers are allocated a named supervising social worker when approved who provides foster carers with information and advice through telephone contact and home visits on request. Home visits are undertaken at least at monthly or weekly intervals if there is a child in placement (dependent on how long the child has been in placement for). The supervising social worker also provides regular supervision for carers, including when no child is placed with them. The named supervising social worker also undertakes annual appraisals of foster carers and identifies their individual training needs and personal/ professional development plans.

Perpetual Fostering social workers will ensure that foster carers know, understand and comply with TSD Standards for Foster Carers and with the company's policies and procedures and will advise in respect of practical problems such as finance or equipment.

The supervising social worker will enable foster carers to promote educational achievement and the good health of their fostered children and inform them of support systems and the means of accessing additional support services for children in their care.

The primary responsibility of the child's LA social worker is to the child in placement. He/she will visit the child in accordance with statutory requirements, regularly see the child alone, monitor the child's care plan and ensure all involved are active in its implementation. The child's social worker will provide the carer with full information on the child and his/her background and support the foster carer by advising them or referring for additional support from other resources.

8. Recruitment, Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers

h) The Review of Foster Care Approval

A foster carer's approval will be reviewed at least annually. A review will be convened whenever there is a significant change in the foster carer's household, in their circumstances, or if allegations are made against them that are investigated. The main aims of the review are to determine whether approval should be renewed and whether changes should be made to the terms of their approval status.

Reviews of foster carers will be undertaken by their supervising social worker in the foster carers home and involve, as far as possible, discussion with all members in the foster carers' household including children in placement, and placing Local Authorities.

The review provides the opportunity for both Perpetual Fostering and foster carer(s) to reflect on the past year and plan for the future. The review process will include updates of statutory and medical checks as necessary (every three years), completion of the Health and Safety checklist, safe care/ risk assessment policies and require foster carers to re-sign the foster carer agreement.

The review will include a discussion with foster carers and their family's and will consider any placements made in the preceding year and the value and relevance of training undertaken and the support provided. The supervising social worker will, where appropriate, seek feedback from a child/ young person who has been in the foster home in the preceding year and also from the child/young person's social worker and other professionals in the team around the child. The review will consider the appropriateness of existing terms of approval, training, development, skills and experience.

The review will consider the progress of children in their care and any complaints or allegations received in the previous year and the outcome, the record of any exemptions and all placements made in the review period.

The supervising social worker will prepare a written report and share this with the foster carers to ensure accuracy. The review will fully record the views of foster carers in respect of the support and training they have received and which they require in the future. This report will be submitted to the Registered Manager. The review report will also be submitted to the fostering panel. The foster carer will receive a written invitation to attend the fostering panel and where necessary attendance will be facilitated by the fostering team.

In the case of a first foster carer review the panel will consider the original assessment, the review report provided by the supervising social worker and discuss any issues arising with the foster carer and the social worker. The panel will make recommendations in respect of ongoing approval and as to terms and conditions of approval.

Reviews will be triggered whenever there is a significant change in the circumstances of foster carers and the fostering panel will consider this review.



8. Recruitment, Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers

h) The Review of Foster Care Approval (continued)

Recommendations of the fostering panel will be on the basis of a majority. In the event that panel members are not unanimous in their recommendations, this will be recorded in the panel minutes. If the panel is tied and unable to reach a decision, the chair of the panel will make the decision. This will be recorded in the panel minutes. Foster carers will be informed of the panel's recommendation on the same day. These recommendations will be forwarded to the agency decision-maker, and Perpetual Fostering's decision forwarded to foster carers within seven days of the Agency Decision Maker's decision.

Disagreement with agency decisions regarding the approval or re approval of foster carers.

In the event that a prospective or existing foster carer does not agree with the recommendations at the panel, this will be recorded in the panel minutes.

The foster carer will be invited to submit an appeal in writing to the agency decision-maker within 28 days of written receipt of the agency's decision. If no such representations are received the agency decision will stand.

Alternatively, the Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) is a review process which prospective or existing foster carers can use when they do not agree with the decision sent to them by the Fostering Service Provider. The review process is then conducted by a review panel independent of Perpetual Fostering.

Minutes of the IRM panel will be provided to the prospective or approved foster carer and Perpetual Fostering within 12 working days and the Agency Decision Maker will be required to reach a Final Decision, taking into account the IRM recommendations.

In the event that the applicant or existing foster carer remains dissatisfied with the decision of Perpetual Fostering, he/she may use the IRM formal complaints procedure and/or may choose to seek legal advice.

Further information and training is provided surrounding the role of the Independent Review Mechanism to prospective and existing foster carers.



9. Status and Constitution

Perpetual Fostering is an Independent Fostering Agency and is part of Perpetual Care Group. Perpetual Fostering is a private limited company registered under the Companies Act 1985 (Company Registration No: 5304989)

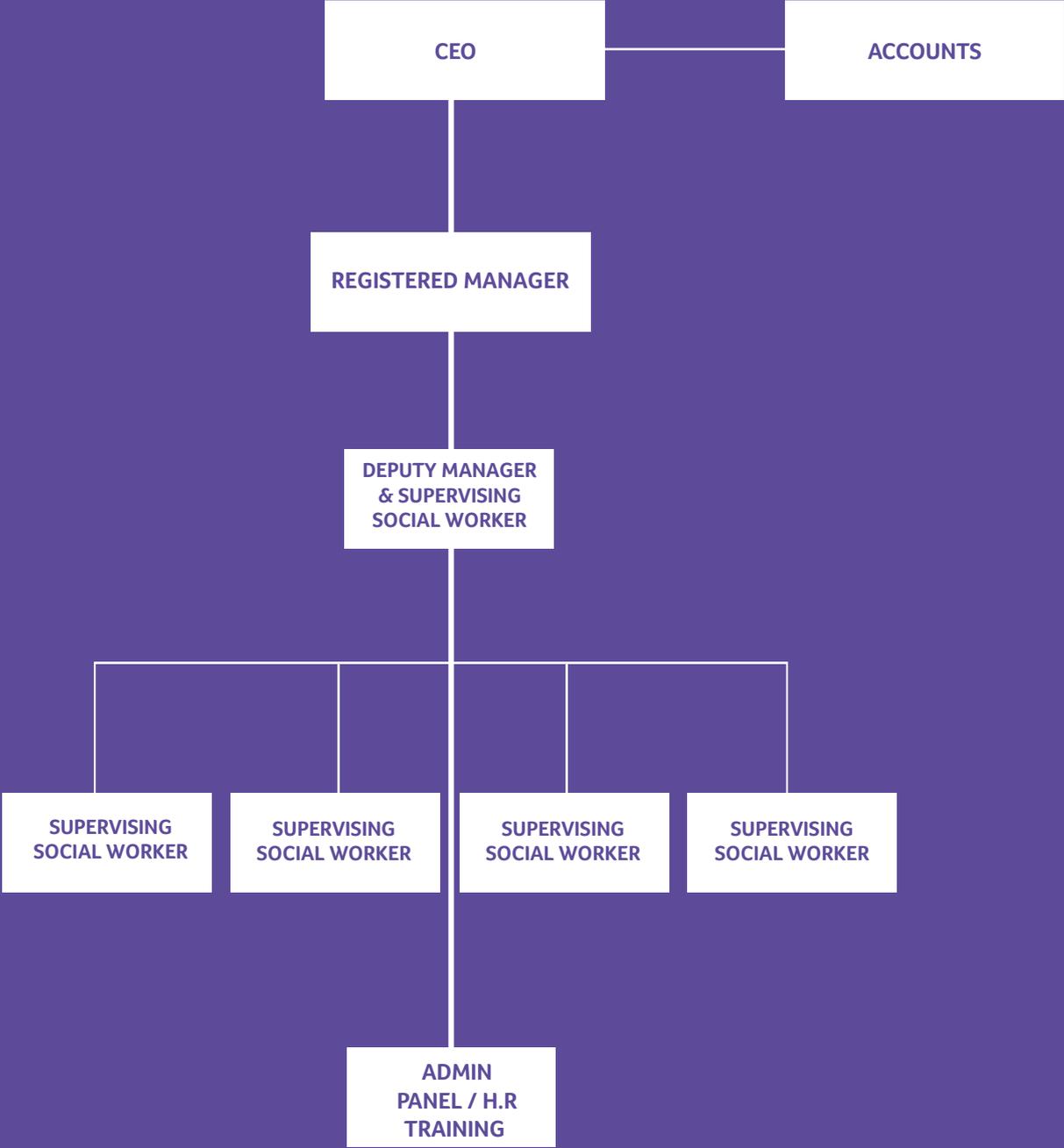
Perpetual Care Group was established in 1997 and incorporates:

- Perpetual (Bolton) Ltd
- Xecol Ltd
- Perpetual Fostering Ltd

In accordance with the Companies Act 1985 and 1989 Perpetual Fostering has produced a memorandum and articles of association. The directors of the company are Mr. Tahir Khan & Mrs. Mina Khan who are responsible for ensuring:

- The financial management of Perpetual Fostering
- Ensuring that the company meets with all legislative requirements
- Managing the strategic direction of Perpetual Fostering
- Overseeing the Registered Manager

10. Management Structure





11. Our Staff

Tahir Khan (Director)

is the CEO and Responsible Individual for Perpetual Fostering. He obtained a Post Graduate Diploma in Management Studies from the University of Teeside in 1990 and he holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration from the Manchester Business School. Tahir has a large amount of experience in supporting managers and being a responsible person for a registered agency with the CQC, he was formerly the chair person for MhIST and holds his NVQ 4 in management.

Mina Khan (Director)

is a qualified Pharmacist and holds a BSc Pharmacy and MR Pharms.

Lisa Witter (Registered Manager)

is the Registered Manager. Lisa is a qualified social worker and has a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management. Lisa has 25 years experience of working in childcare and social care settings, including children and young person's residential, children with additional needs, safeguarding, fostering and adoption work. Lisa joined Perpetual Fostering in 2013 and has been Registered Manager since 2016.

The Deputy Manager and Social Work Team

comprises of Qualified Social Workers, who are all registered with Social Work England. The Team have a broad range of skills, experience and knowledge. All staff receive monthly supervision and annual appraisals, they are supported to ensure they continue their professional development and also mentor social work students to qualification.

The Administrator

is skilled in the use of IT Software, and has a broad range of admin experience, being responsible for general admin tasks, panel administration, HR matters and coordinating training.

Number of Foster Carers

As of July 2020 there are 17 fostering households approved by the agency, currently providing 18 fostering placements and one parent and child placement and two staying Put arrangements.



12. Perpetual Fostering Financial Position

Perpetual Care Group has operated since 1997 and operates a group of four residential establishments. The company follows tight fiscal policies which have enabled growth year on year since inception. The companies are financially viable and have a policy of continued reinvestments of all surplus funds.





13. Complaints

At Perpetual Fostering a key focus is that the appropriate information and support systems are always in place. We have a comprehensive complaints procedure which is made available to all staff who work for Perpetual Fostering, to foster carers and all those involved in the placement of a child. Emphasis is placed on resolving complaints at an early stage where possible.

- Children/young people are provided with information about their right to complain, the complaints procedure and their right to access an independent visitor in situations where they have no contact with their birth family.
- Children are provided with an age appropriate Children's Guide when they are placed in foster care.
- Complaints about the quality of care provided by foster carers are investigated through Perpetual Fostering's complaints and child protection procedures. Complaints and their outcome will be recorded, monitored and evaluated by the fostering service.

Allegations of abuse made against foster carers are investigated in accordance with the LCSB child protection procedures; these contain specific procedures for dealing with such allegations. The agency will also consult Working Together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2018 to inform their practice and decisions.

For a copy of our Complaints Procedure or to make a complaint, please contact our Registered Fostering Services Manager on **01204 364 666**.

14. Perpetual Fostering Statement of Purpose (Addendum in relation to Covid 19)

This Addendum Statement of Purpose (Covid 19) should be read in partnership with Perpetual Fostering Statement of Purpose (2020/21).

This addendum Statement of Purpose sets out how Perpetual Fostering have adapted and responded to the delivery of our services in the context of minimising the spread of infection within our community during the covid-19 pandemic.

This revision sets out the way in which we have and will be providing business continuity during the covid-19 pandemic.

The agency had already inbuilt scope, latitude, structure, and ability to adapt easily and swiftly to ensure the continued optimum support is provided to our foster carers and children and young people.

The measures we have implemented have been sustained and transparent and shared with Local Authority's and we have been satisfied that despite the difficulties presented we have risen to the challenge and shown ourselves to be not only professional, resilient and persevering but we have infused our work with compassion and understanding.

Staffing

There are no changes to the management structures. Perpetual Fostering have implemented working from home where possible and the Government Furlough Scheme to minimise the risk and spread of Covid 19.

Despite the challenges, the agency had in built scope and capacity to manage and this and has shown that the reserves we hold in staffing capacity, low caseloads and resources has held us in good stead.

Hence, during the pandemic eighteen fostering households are being supported by three supervising social workers and Form F assessments are being undertaken by the Deputy Manager.

Home Visits

Visits to foster carers will take place where it is assessed as a "priority need" to support foster carers, the child and / or to implement safeguarding procedures or prevent placement breakdown.

The need for visits to children and carers will be determined against a risk criterion to respond to any immediate problems and support to prevent risks escalating and ultimately prevent placement breakdown.

Any face to face visits that are considered necessary will be undertaken by staff who will to adhere to strict hygiene standards and wear personal protective equipment in line with public health guidance to protect members of fostering households and staff from risk of infection.

Keeping in touch

We keep in touch with foster carers, at least weekly, by phone or video call, so we can continue to check in with foster carers and everyone in their household and provide any support that may be needed in a timely manner.

We are able to help foster carers if they are unwell or are self-isolating and need assistance to get essentials for the family such as shopping and medicines if foster carers don't have support in their local network to do this.

Doorstep/garden visits

Where local guidelines allow, the SSW will undertake doorstep visits to foster carers and children and young people, enabling face to face garden visits where appropriate.

Other professional visits

We are recording when other professionals visit and ensure the sharing of information, thus limiting the number of professional visits to homes but enabling joined up monitoring of placements

Supervision

Foster Carer Formal Supervision will continue at a mutually convenient time with the allocated supervising social worker by video link. This is an opportunity for meaningful and supportive conversations.

We monitor local lockdown guidelines and review where appropriate for face to face supervisions to be held.

Unannounced visits

Prior to the lockdown the agency implemented two unannounced visits per year, this has increased to at least quarterly and will be conducted via video link.

Duty worker

A duty social worker is available each day should a foster carer not be able to get in touch with their allocated supervising worker. The Out of Hours Duty Team will continue to operate out of hours, and they can be contacted for urgent out of hours support

Learning and development of Foster Carers

We recognise that foster carers continue to need training as an important part of the role as a foster carer. Foster carers are encouraged to continue to develop skills in line with individual learning and development plans.

All mandatory and developmental training will continue to be delivered by SSW monthly, online training will remain available and group training, where appropriate will be undertaken by video link.

We facilitate virtual foster carer support groups using video conferencing to help foster carers keep in touch with each other.

Independent Support

All Approved Foster carers have membership of Foster Talk. Membership provides foster carers with unlimited access to support, 24 Hour Legal Advice Line , Arrest & Interview Assistance, Tax/Accountancy/Benefits Support Line, General Fostering Advice Helpline ,24 Hour Counselling Support Line , 24 Hour Medical/First Aid Advice ,Education Support Helpline, Personal Finance Advice – Mortgages, Pensions, Savings etc., Quarterly Foster Talk Magazine, Monthly “Smalltalk” e-newsletter, Downloadable fostering information including guidance around providing education at home.

Recruitment and Assessment of New Foster Carers

We realise that it is important to progress fostering applications during this time of crisis to ensure that there is sufficiency of foster carers for children and young people.

Perpetual Fostering have continued to recruit, prepare, and assess new fostering applicants and continue to welcome enquiries from people who are motivated to care for a child through foster care.

We are continuing to prepare applicants for the fostering role through changing our preparation training so that face to face training has been replaced with workbooks, online learning, and six video conference training opportunities.

We are continuing to assess new applicants through creative social work solutions combining written, video assessment and visits to progress assessments of suitability to foster.

Statutory checks

National guidelines will be followed in relation to statutory checks to satisfy fostering regulations.

Fostering Panel

Panels continue to be independently chaired by the Panel Chair or Vice Chair and the panels have been quorate and held via video link. We continue to take all annual reviews to panel. Foster carers can self-report medical information if the GP is unable to complete a medical and this presented to AMA. Decisions about recommendations for approval and qualifying determinations being made are done on a case by case basis, considering all the factors in relation to the review. Where medical self-declarations are being used, then a full medical report by the GP must be obtained as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Sufficiency of Placements:

During the covid-19 Pandemic, there is likely to be a reduction in foster carers who are available to provide foster placements due to being in a shielding category or from carers unwell due to the covid pandemic.

Perpetual Fostering will continue to offer new foster placements to children who need a foster placement during the covid-19 crisis. Children will be matched to appropriate carers who are able to meet their assessed needs.

All possible precautions to reduce infection for children and carers will be made when introducing children to new foster placements.

Family time

Perpetual Fostering are committed to supporting Local Authorities to ensure children and young people continue to have family time.

In accordance with local guidelines, risk assessments and care plans this will be facilitated either face to face or via telephone and video links where appropriate.

Education

We support the government guidelines and Local Authority care plans in ensuring our children receive the best education throughout this pandemic. Where it becomes necessary for children to remain at home, foster carers comply with home education plans and support children and young people to continue to learn.

Childrens Guide

All children have been provided with copies of the Children's Guide and reminded about how they can access a Children and Young people's advocate, Independent Advice, Mediation and Support.

Quality Assurance Service User Feedback

The views of children and young people are important to us. Children who are looked after by us will be asked to feedback during placement, however in addition to this the agency has sought the views of children specifically in relation to managing the pandemic. Feedback is sought from foster carers and focuses on their experience of supervision and support and again during the pandemic this has been further gathered at regular junctures to ensure the support we provide is sufficient to need. This feedback is discussed with the carers supervising social worker and collated to look at learning and development for the service.

Staff feedback has been gathered about the level of support and personal risk assessments developed.

Arrangements for Reviewing this Statement of Purpose

This Addendum Statement of Purpose (Covid 19) will be revised in line with national and local guidance no later than 31-12-2020.



Other support available to all foster carers:

Out of Hours Service

The out of hours service is staffed by qualified social workers who provide an out of hours service and are available 24 hours a day, at weekends and during national holidays. During office hours the Head Office number is also available for assistance. The out of hours service staff communicate any out of hours contact to child care social workers, supervising social workers and The Registered Manager, by 9.30am on the next working day in order that follow up support is forthcoming.

Foster Talk

At the point of approval foster carers are subscribed to Foster Talk. This membership provides them with additional support in the form of a help line and independent representation in the event of complaints or allegations.

The Foster Carers Handbook

All Foster Carers have a handbook which gives factual information which they need to know about the service. This includes safe caring issues, the role of social workers, and procedures in a condensed format. This will be updated annually to accommodate best practice and service improvement.

Training

Perpetual Fostering will provide training relevant to the fostering task that is mandatory and provides core training for all approved carers.



Contact Details:

For further information contact Lisa Witter (Registered Manager), our Supervising Social Workers or our Administration Team at the Perpetual Fostering Head Office.

Address:

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Tel: 0845 130 4748

Fax: (01204) 394 850

Web: www.perpetualfostering.co.uk

Email: info@perpetualfostering.co.uk

Inspection and registration of the Fostering Service

Inspection and registration of the Fostering Service is carried out by Ofsted who can be contacted at the following address:

Address:

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231