



Fostering

National Statement of Purpose & Function

September 2019



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1) INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the way Progress Children's Services operates as an independent fostering organisation in England. The statement of purpose will outline the aim and objectives, the services and facilities we provide and how Progress monitors outcomes for young people we work with.

Progress' statement of purpose is available to any person upon request and via our website. We have children's guides which are provided to all children and young people placed within the fostering service.

Our statement of purpose has been developed to meet the requirements of:

Care Standards Act 2000

Fostering Service Regulations (England 2011)

National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (2011).

2) PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT



Progress Care Solutions is an Independent Fostering Agency. We aim to achieve positive outcomes for Looked after Children and young people. Our success is based on our commitment to promoting best practice and ensuring quality care for all the children and young people placed in our service.

The agency is an organisation providing a diverse range of quality foster care placements. We provide specialist placements for children with disabilities and for children with additional needs.

Our carers are highly competent and trained to care for children and young people who are looked after by local authorities. We aim to provide children and young people to achieve and thrive in their placements and celebrate success through staff, foster carer and young people alike.

2.1) OUR VISION:

Our vision is to help more children and young people to achieve their personal best by being a high-quality provider of fostering services that ensures children and young people have positive experiences and make progress.

2.2) OUR VALUES

CARE- We provide the ultimate in-service provision and go out of our way to create the environments and life experiences they want and need

TRUST- We see life through the eyes, ears and feelings of those that we support; treating them with the dignity they deserve

RESPECT- We do what we promise and can be trusted to put in place all necessary measures to provide a safe, healthy and developmental environment

PROGRESS- We constantly help our children and young adults to enrich their lives through the attainment of significant developments and achievements

3) AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Progress Children's Services is committed to providing safe, person centred and individualised care to the children and young people we care for. To enable children and young people to achieve their personal best.

We work in partnership with local authorities and external agencies to ensure that foster carers and children are supported to achieve their own success. To achieve this, we ensure staff and foster carers are valued and promote their development.

3.1) OUR OBJECTIVES:

- Provide high quality care in a family environment for children and young people placed in our care.
- To offer foster homes where children feel they belong and have positive experiences and make progress.
- Consult with children and young people in our service to ensure that they are seen and heard with the service.
- Provide a commitment to the ongoing learning and training of foster carers, which includes Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care.

To ensure that foster carers are prepared and supported to promote children and young people's progress in relation to health, education, emotional and social wellbeing.

- Recruit foster carers who have the potential to meet the needs of the children and young people referred to this agency.

- To ensure that foster carers promote contact where appropriate for the foster child.
- Respect and promote children and young person's sexual orientation, racial, cultural, religious and linguistic needs.
- To provide foster homes that guide and teach young people how to keep themselves safe.
- To have foster carers that support young people into independence, at a pace and style that the young person can absorb.
- A priority to ensure that children and young people are matched appropriately with foster carers who can meet their needs.
- To take a collaborative approach to care planning with the responsible authority, supporting the development of an up-to-date and child-focused care plan for each child, ensuring a clear pathway to permanence is achieved as quickly as possible.
- To ensure that legislation, guidance and best practice are followed across the service.

4) STATUS & CONSTITUTION

Progress Children's Services is an Independent Fostering Agency It is a registered and inspected fostering agency under the Care Standards Act 2000 and Fostering Services Regulations 2011.

The fostering service has been part of Progress Care Solutions since August 2003. The fostering organisation has grown organically since this time and operates within Midlands area.

It is a registered limited company registered under the Companies Act 1985 (Head Office Company Number: 4014026). The company's memorandum and articles of association are available for inspection at our Head Office.

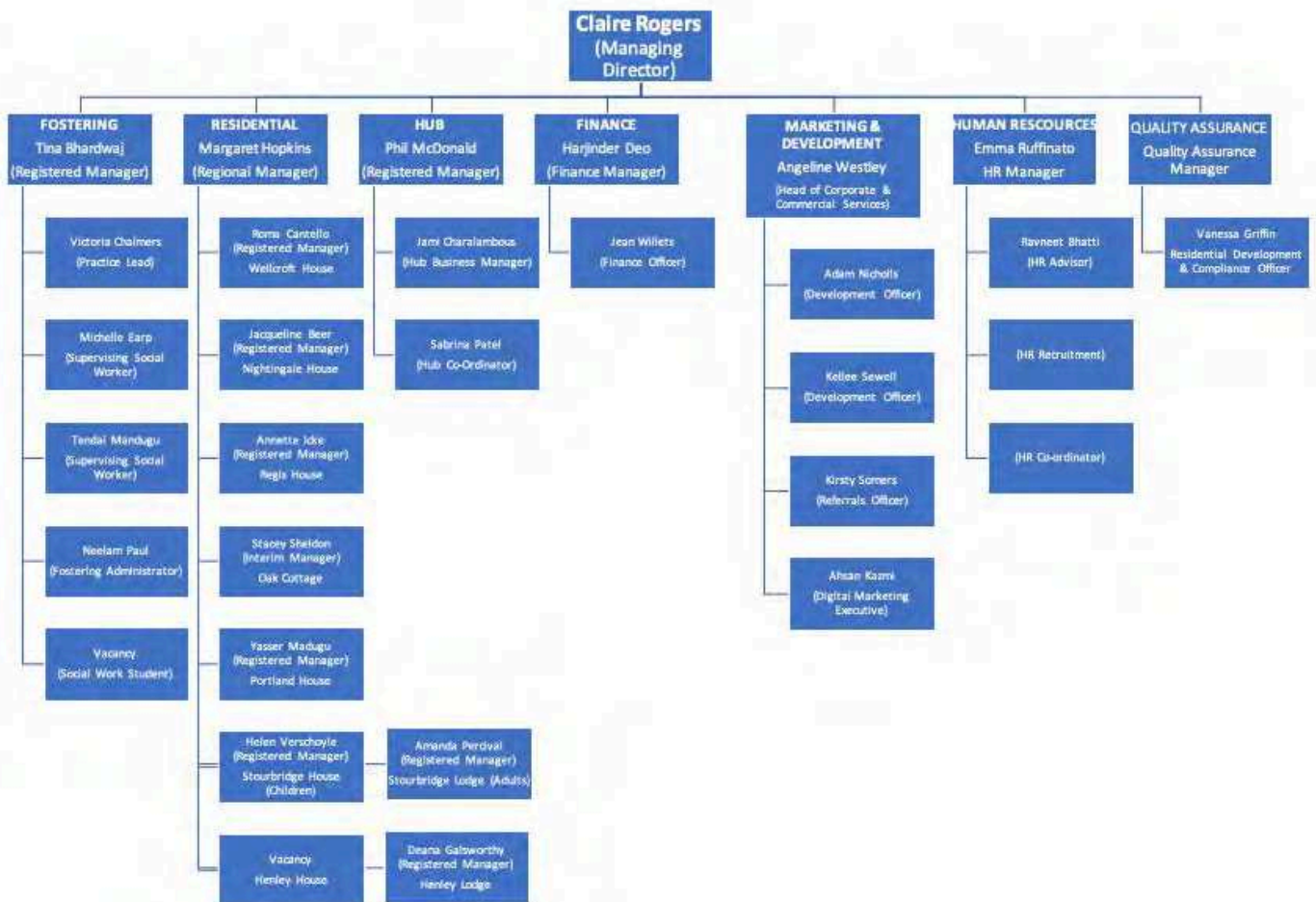
The Chief Executive Officers are Mr Rajinder Dhanoa and Mrs. Balwinder Dhanoa and our Head office is based at Progress House, 127 Millfields Road, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV4 6JG.

The Chief Executive Officers and the Managing Director meet with a non-executive board on a quarterly basis to contribute to the strategic development and analyse the performance of the service.

4.1) The Progress Care Solutions management structure is as follows:

- Bal Dhanoa, Chief Executive Officer
- Raj Dhanoa, Chief Executive for Finance
- Claire Haynes, Managing Director
- Phil Owen, Head of Quality and Compliance
- Emma Ruffinato, Human Resources Manager
- Harjinder Deo, Finance Manager
- Phil McDonald Hub Manager

- Angeline Westley, Head of Corporate and Commercial Services
- Tina Bhardwaj, Operations and Registered Fostering Manager



4.2) THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETS MONTHLY TO REVIEW:

- The agency's vision and value base
- The strategic direction and goals for the agency and how these can be achieved
- The agency's organisational structure
- The agency's policies and procedures
- The agency's strategic and regional business plans
- Major financial expenditure decisions
- Marketing strategy
- Management Structure of Progress Children's Services

4.3) FOSTERING TEAM STAFFING:

Each member of the fostering team receives regular reflective supervision, which also supports to monitor compliance, success and development. All

social workers, including the registered manager hold a social work qualification and are registered with the HCPC.

Register Manager and Operations Manager - with over 12 years' experience in independent fostering, with management qualifications and the designated safeguarding officer for the fostering service. They are responsible for the service's development for children and young people. They supervise the practice lead and administration staff.

Administration staff: Our administration team cover all aspects of the fostering service and work alongside all team members. They provide support to the fostering team and are also responsible for completing panel minutes to a high standard.

Social workers: Progress social workers are experienced social workers, having worked in statutory childcare. They are responsible for visiting foster carer households regularly, attending meetings, spending time with children and young people in placement as appropriate and undertaking all aspects of the fostering role. All social workers facilitate foster carer support meetings.



Practice Lead: The practice lead is an experienced social worker who has been with the organisation for over two years. The practice lead manages and supports the team with day to day practice. They maintain a small caseload and provide supervision to social workers and support staff within the team.

Student placements: The Registered Manager is a qualified Practice Educator at level two. The organisation enjoy having students on placement and strongly support students being given opportunities to learn and progress. It also enhances the team, as students can bring fresh knowledge and enthusiasm.

Independent Social Workers: The agency utilises appropriately recruited independent social workers that have the necessary skills and training to undertake the requirements for fostering assessments. We utilise an Independent Reviewing Officer to chair meetings for annual reviews that are not sent to panel, in line with our policy and procedures. Our independents are also used to carry out independent reviews when necessary whereby the agency feel that independent scrutiny is required.

Recruitment: The fostering team works alongside the HR team to ensure that all relevant checks inline with safer recruitment are undertaken and completed.

5) STANDARDS OF CARE AND SERVICE PROVISION:

The agency strives to assist children and young people achieve their personal best and reach their full potential. The agency strives to achieve good development of staff and foster carers through training and support, but also

in providing clear expectations for all to enable clear, effective and transparent working. The agency build good relationships with local authorities and operate to work in partnership to achieve common goals and objectives. Through all of our work and practice, we adhere to the requirements of the fostering service regulations and national minimum standards.

5.1) SAFEGUARDING

The fostering service takes it's safeguarding responsibilities for the children and young people we care for at the utmost importance. The fostering service has a thorough and robust safeguarding policy to ensure expectations and processes are clear for all parties. All safeguarding incidents are monitored by the operations and registered manager and the team ensure to reflect on incidents and episodes to ensure that practice learning is taken for staff and foster carers alike.

5.2) POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND HANDBOOKS

The agency provides comprehensive policies and procedures, which are updated regularly to incorporate legislative requirements and best practice guidance. The fostering handbook is provided to all foster carers to outline the requirements and expectations further to the policies and procedures.

5.3) FOSTER CARERS CHARTER

The agency adheres to and shares the principles of the foster carers charter and mirrors the expectations set out within this. Ensuring that there is a mutual respect and working relationship established between foster carers and the agency to keep children safe and ensuring the agency provide the support to achieve this.

5.4) FOSTER CARER AGREEMENT

Foster carer agreements are provided to each Foster Carer approved with the agency. Within this detail the requirements the mutual requirements and responsibilities for foster carers and the agency.

In addition all foster carers are required to sign their foster carer agreements, as well as confidentiality agreements. Placement of looked after children will not be made until the fostering service have received such items.

5.5) REVIEWS

In line with regulations, all foster carers initial reviews are presented to our panel. In addition the policies and procedures outline the requirement of foster carers to attend panel, including allegations, change of circumstances and in some instances, variation of approvals. Decisions to present a review to panel are undertaken by the operations and registered fostering manager.

When reviews are not required by legislation or policy to be presented to panel, these reviews are provided to the Independent Reviewing Officer who meets with foster carers privately to provide quality assurance on the service and later their supervising social workers to discuss any matters arisen during the review period and provided agreed actions.

5.6) RECRUITMENT



The agency work with the business development team to ensure that we capture the interest of appropriate enquiries who can meet the needs of the children and young people referred to this service. We ensure we adhere to the requirements of the fostering regulations and national minimum standards to recruit foster carers for this service.

Initial visits are completed by social workers, including registered manager and practice lead to ensure that applicants are suitable from such initial stages. Following receipt of application to become a foster carer, the agency completes relevant checks and information gathering to fairly assess and analysis the information provided.

Applicants who reach complete stage 2 of the assessment process are all presented to panel and are considered by the agency decision maker. All applicants are then assessed in line with the BAAF guidance by qualified, trained and experienced social workers. This agency utilises independent social workers to assist with this.

The agency strives to ensure a transparent assessment process, ensuring that any contradictions are raised and discussed as soon as practically possible. In addition, applicants are informed of their rights to complaint through stage 1 and the Independent Review Mechanism in Stage 2 of the assessment process. On average, assessments are completed within 4 to 6 months.

All applicants must attend Skills to Foster as part of the assessment process.

5.7) PANEL

The panel meet on an approximate bi-monthly basis to convene in such matters of approvals, annual reviews and other specific reviews that the operations and registered manager require to be presented to panel. Panel members have varying experience in health, education, social work and experience of being in care. They are independent to the fostering service and provide a key role in the quality assurance mechanism of the agency.

5.8) MATCHING

All placements made with progress fostering service are done so with an appropriate matching assessment being completed to ensure that children and young people's needs are suitably met by the proposed foster carer. Any developmental or support needs are suitably highlighted and acted upon to ensure that children and young people are able to develop and progress within their placement.

5.9) QUALITY ASSURANCE

Our quality assurance ensures we comply with internal and external measures set out within the National Minimum Standards; however, we persistently strive to exceed them and develop new ways of working.

At Progress Children's Services, we relentlessly aim to provide the highest level of care for children placed with us; alongside excellent service delivery for foster carers and all our working partners.

5.10) PARTICIPATION

The voice of the children and young people placed within the fostering service are significant to the service we provide. We take several opportunities throughout the year to hear the voice of those children, as well as those children living within fostering household.

This includes visits with the supervising social worker, consultation forms, social events and the voice of progress, which provides activities and consultation directly or anonymously to gather views and improve the service we provide.

5.11) TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Progress is committed to enhancing the learning and development of all of its approved foster carers and staff alike. The agency has a mandatory training list which should be completed by all approved foster carers and staff within prescribed timescales. In addition to this, specialist training is provided to meet the needs of children, young people and the fostering service. This training can include parent and child training, Epilepsy training, manual handling and many more to ensure foster carers and staff can support children and young people appropriately.

Within the first year of approval, all foster carers must complete their Training, Support, Development workbook and attend the foster carer induction.

5.10) TYPES OF PLACEMENTS

Progress Care Solutions offers a wide range of placements for children and young people of all ages with approved foster carers. All placements are matched to ensure an appropriate link between the needs of the children and young people and the skills and experiences of the foster carers to meet these needs. Some carers have experience of and or training in specialised areas including the impact of early childhood trauma such as abuse, neglect and disrupted attachments and managing challenging behaviour.



All placements are negotiated through the child or young person's placing authority, either through an individual placement contract, or as part of a wider contract of service provision commissioned by the placing authority.

- **Short Term Placements:** Progress foster carers undertake task-centred work with children and young people and their families where placement duration and outcomes are pre-determined. Foster carers work with children/young people and their families towards reunification or prepare a child/young person for joining a permanent family/adoption or for moving into supported accommodation or independent living.
- **Long Term Permanent Placements:** Many of our foster carers have an interest in providing placements for children, young people and sibling groups on a long term and permanent basis. Such placements usually continue throughout the remainder of a child/young person's care experience until they are prepared for and achieve independence.
- **Emergency/same day placements:** Appropriately approved foster carers can accept short notice and emergency placements for children and young people. Progress will initiate a follow-up process after any emergency placement, to ensure that all information in relation to the child and the intended outcomes of the placement are identified and agreed.
- **Parent & Baby Placements:** Placements are available for a parent and their child, where foster carers can provide support to a parent in developing their parenting skills. Due to the specific nature of their role, additional training is required for those foster carers wishing to provide parent and child placements. In such circumstances, foster carers receive additional support. We also provide placements where carers participate in the assessment process working alongside the Local Authority.

- **Solo Placements:** Progress foster carers are available to take children and young people whose needs are more complex, therefore requiring a higher level of support and supervision, and precluding the placement of any other child or young person within the foster home.
- **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Young People:** Progress foster carers can accept children and young people who are deemed to be unaccompanied asylum seekers and where their residency status within the UK is yet to be determined and continual care following this.
- **Speciality Disability Placements:** Where a young person has a disability that requires a higher level of supervision, support or care to manage complex health tasks, Progress offers an experienced, specialist fostering service.

6) FOSTER CARERS SUPPORT:

Progress Care Solutions values the work foster carers do and the contributions they make to looked after children's lives. It is vitally important to provide appropriate levels of support to foster care families to ensure a successful placement.

Progress Care Solutions provides a creative and flexible package of support to foster carers and the children and young people in their care. Progress works in partnership with other relevant agencies who contribute to the care provided to looked-after children and young people.

Progress Care Solutions provides the following support to all our foster carers:

- Regular supervision and support from a qualified and suitably experienced supervising social worker.
- Frequent visits and weekly telephone calls from the supervising social worker.
- Support Workers to work alongside foster carer, children and young people on placement.
- Support groups to enable foster carers to meet. Support groups enable foster carers to share their experiences and offer mutual learning. Foster carers are encouraged to take responsibility for becoming actively involved in these.
- 14 nights' respite care per annum; 21 for those with specialist disability placements.
- Organised activities for children and young people in placement.
- Access to out of hours' support service, 7 days per week, 365 days per year.
- Access to specialist support for those caring for children and young people on specialist disability placements.

- Access to a comprehensive foster care handbook and detailed foster care policies and procedures that are reviewed regularly and updated as needed.
- Annual membership that funded for each fostering household by Progress Children's Services and offers advice including financial advice/discounts, insurance, legal assistance and educational online support. From fostering Network.

6.1) THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROGRESS SUPERVISING SOCIAL WORKERS INCLUDE:

- Regular supervision visits to every foster carer to ensure that the child's needs are being met and the care plan is being adhered to
- Frequent contact with foster carers and children in placement through support visits and weekly telephone calls
- Providing guidance and advice to the foster carer in relation to their care of the children and young people
- Actively involved in identifying and placement matching with Progress foster carers
- Participate in the out of hours support services to foster carers
- Liaise with other professionals who may be involved in the care of the child or young person and contribute to formal care plans
- Identify and help respond to foster carers' training needs
- Contribute to the recruitment training and assessments of Progress foster carers using the Coram BAAF assessment format
- Facilitate preparation training for prospective applicants
- Maintain careful records of all matters relating to the foster carer and the child/young person placed.

7) SUPPORT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children and young people receive a children's guide when coming into placement with the fostering service.

All children and young people receive a memory box to ensure that their time in with the foster carers is recorded in a child friendly way.

To be visited by the supervising social worker, understanding the differentiation between the supervising social worker and local authority role.



Encouraged and provided with the appropriate platform to provide their feedback on the care they receive.

Encouragement and opportunity to attend progress social events and participation evenings/days.

Encouragement to utilise hobby or interests and develop independent skills.

Supervising Social Workers have suitable knowledge of services within the local area of which the child resides, for example advocacy services, groups, which may support the children or young people's aspirations or developmental needs.

Where applicable, support with permanency and life journey work.

8) CONTACT DETAILS:

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September, 2019

9) Version control

Version Control	Details of changes:	Date	Made by
March 2010			
September 2010	Amendments to staffing information made. Statistics remain relevant for current financial year – April – March 2011	Sept 2010	P.Taylor – Fostering Administrator
December 2011	Amendments to staffing information made and Statistics.	Dec 2011	P.Taylor – Fostering Administrator
January 2012	Review and amendments	Feb 2012	C Haynes & K O’Shea
November 2012	Review and updated	November 2012	Alison Corkingdale Kim O’Shea
January 2014	Review and updated	January 2014	Kim O’Shea P.Taylor – Fostering Administrator Claire Haynes
September 2014	Review and updated	September 2014	Kim O’Shea P.Taylor – Fostering Administrator
October 2014	Review and updated	October 2014	Kim O’Shea P.Taylor – Fostering Administrator
July 2015	Review and updated	July 2015	Kim O’Shea P.Taylor – Fostering Administrator
July 2016	Reviewed and Updated	July 2016	Vicky Lynch Fostering Manager
March 2017	Reviewed and Updated	March 2017	Tina Bhardwaj Fostering Manager
September 2019	Reviewed and Updated	September 2019	Tina Bhardwaj Fostering Manager