

**Statement of Purpose**

**Updated: March 2023**



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***This document can be made available in alternate formats and/or languages. Please contact True Fostering on 03301333331 to request this.***

# Section 1. Introduction

This Statement of Purpose sets out the purpose of True Fostering, what True wants to achieve and how it will do this. It is reviewed by Foster Parents, the Children in the service, and Staff. It is updated by the Registered Manager.

It has been developed in accordance with appropriate regulations and standards.

A copy of the Statement of Purpose is made available upon request to:

* Ofsted
* Any person working for the purposes of the fostering service
* Any child (subject to their age and understanding) placed with a True Foster Parent
* Any parent of a child in our care
* Other Stakeholders

It is also available to anyone wishing to download it from our website at www.truefostering.com/statement-of-purpose/

The Statement of Purpose is reviewed at least annually, but more frequently as and when circumstances or information changes.

Once updated, copies will be provided to all necessary people and organisations.

## About Us

True Fostering is a limited company, registration number 10888454 founded in 2017.

The registered office is:

True Fostering

**76-78 Parsonage Street, Dursley, GL11 4AA**

Telephone: 03301333331

Email: info@truefostering.com

The Managing Director is Sarah Naish

The Responsible Individual is Alison Douglas

The Registered Manager is Gareth Griffiths

The Agency Decision Maker is Alison Douglas

Based in Gloucestershire, True Fostering has Foster Families across four regions – East Midlands, West Midlands, East Anglia and the South West. The highly skilled team are home-based, and will recruit according to the needs of the families and their locations.

True fostering is compliant with legislation, regulatory requirements, and good practice guidance as per the following legislature:

* Children Act 1989
* United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
* National Minimum Standards 2011
* The Care Standards Act 2000
* Children and Young Persons Act 2008
* Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
* The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
* National Minimum Fostering Standards 2011
* Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013
* Children and Families Act 2014

### Ofsted

True Fostering will be inspected by Ofsted in accordance with the Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011 and the Fostering Services National Minimum Standards 2011. The contact details for Ofsted are as follows:

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

26-32 Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

True Fostering is also a member of the following organisations:

* The Fostering Network
* National Association of Fostering Providers
* National Association of Therapeutic Parents.

## Mission Statement

True Fostering is a Truly Therapeutic Fostering Agency, with children at the centre of everything it does. The Agency is dedicated to delivering the True model to the children in our care and their foster parents.

Therapeutic

Re-parenting

Underpinned by

Empathy and Experience

Children should have an enjoyable childhood, with excellent parenting and educational opportunities, and have access to a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills and talents, to become well-rounded, happy, and successful, adults. To facilitate this, **True Fostering aims to create a partnership, working with all associates of the agency, which includes approved Foster Parents, Staff, and importantly the Children and Young People in their care. True Fostering works work together with mutual respect and a shared understanding of Therapeutic Parenting, Attachment Theory, Development Trauma Theory and Compassion Fatigue. It is the True Fostering belief that this is essential for supporting Children and Young People to recover from their early experiences and achieve their best life.**

**True Fostering will provide safe, secure, and stable environments which enable Children and Young People to reach their full potential.**

## Aims and Objectives

The key aims of True Fostering are to:

* Positively affect the lives of our Children and Young People.
* Provide a service tailored to the needs of Children, Young People and Foster Families, with Therapeutic Parenting at the heart of what we offer.
* Identify anticipated challenges based upon the child’s known trauma.
* Work proactively with each Foster Family to help them to overcome these challenges through Therapeutic Parenting.
* Exceed The National Minimum Standards (2011) for Fostering Services and comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory frameworks.
* Work in partnership with local authorities and other organisations to provide a robust, responsive, and proactive approach to safeguarding.
* Involve Foster Parents in the development of the agency, training, recruitment and sharing the agency ideals. True Fostering recognises the value of including Foster Parents in all aspects of the service.
* Build a resilient team with a range of backgrounds, skills and experiences.
* Actively recruit Foster Families who can facilitate siblings. We recognise the importance of, and support keeping siblings and significant others together.
* Provide high levels of support and training to Foster Parents and staff.
* Establish and maintain good relationships with all our associates, through a climate of cooperation, courtesy, and consideration for others.
* Match Children and Young People to Foster Families that are best able to meet their individual needs, considering the wishes and feelings of Children and Young People.
* Provide a matching process which is appropriate to the needs and considerate of the:
	+ Age
	+ Gender
	+ Sexuality
	+ Ability and Disability
	+ Religion
	+ Culture

And other complex needs of the Children and Young People and their prospective Foster Families.

* Encourage appropriate birth family contact,(family time) with location considered in each match.
* Facilitate and encourage school attendance and academic achievement, in-line with Department for Education and Skills guidance.
* Develop working partnerships with Birth Parents, Foster Parents and other professionals to assist Children and Young People to thrive in all aspects of their life.
* Deliver the True Model of Therapeutic Parenting.

## The True Model

True Fostering aims to create an authentic partnership between the agency, Therapeutic Foster Parents, and supporting professionals, to work together with mutual respect and understanding.

The agency has put Therapeutic Parenting at the heart of the service, by implementing the T.R.U.E© model in order to achieve the best long-term outcomes for children and families.

In 2010 Sarah Naish (MD for True Fostering) developed and implemented the ‘T.R.U.E’ model of Therapeutic Parenting and embedded this practice within True Fostering.

The T.R.U.E model of therapeutic parenting compliments the P.A.C.E (Dan Hughes’ ‘Building the Bonds of Attachment’, 2006) model and the PARENTS model (Sarah Naish – ‘The A-Z of Therapeutic Parenting’, 2018). The TRUE model also ensures affective and effective empathy is extended and available to the therapeutic parent, thereby lessening the effects of compassion fatigue, and improving stability for children and young people.

Therapeutic

Re-parenting

Underpinned by

Empathy and Experience

The True model provides a robust and highly skilled Therapeutic Team, committed to promoting the Model. Each family has their own designated team made up of:

* Empathic Listener (EL)
* Child Support Worker (CSW)
* Therapeutic social worker (TSW)
* Attachment Therapist (AT)

### Empathic Listener (EL)

The Empathic Listener is available to the Foster Parent from the assessment stage and will develop positive, supportive relationships. This must be someone who has had DIRECT, personal experience of being a therapeutic parent themselves, preferably over several years, and is familiar with the behaviours and challenges associated with developmental trauma. Specialist mentoring with an empathic ethos, rather than a problem solving one, enable the therapeutic parent to stay out of compassion fatigue, think clearly and maintain their own levels of empathy for the child. Using the Trauma Tracker©, their main role is to understand trauma triggers for young people whilst building an empathic relationship with the Foster Parent. They develop individual Trauma Trackers© for young people in order to pre-empt difficulties that will arise. Empathic Listeners will have a minimum of weekly contact with their allocated families. They ensure that the team are informed of any challenges or difficulties.

The Empathic Listener receives supervision from the Attachment Therapist.

### Child Support Worker (CSW)

The Child Support Worker will usually be a person with a background in childcare. They may be trained in life story work, Theraplay, and must also have attended training in the impact of developmental trauma on behaviour, therapeutic parenting techniques, managing violent behaviour and compassion fatigue.

The role of the CSW is to support the therapeutic parent on a practical level. This might be through transporting the child to school or family visits. It may also include babysitting, or just being an extra pair of hands at busy times of the day. The CSW carries a vital role by ensuring they represent the child accurately and remain child focussed. This is particularly useful at times where professionals may make assumptions about how the child is feeling. The CSW maintains their relationship with the child and provides consistency. This helps to alleviate the effects of high levels of change in local authority social workers. A CSW will always visit or phone the child when they go for a short break to another Therapeutic Foster Parent. The CSW also communicates concerns directly to the Empathic Listener where it is felt that the therapeutic parents are showing signs of compassion fatigue or other stress. The CSW builds individual relationships with each child enabling them to give personalised and thorough support. The CSW works directly with the Child or Young Person to build a relationship which gives them a current understanding of the child’s needs and wishes.

A CSW arranges participation events and Space days (forums). They obtain the young person’s feedback as a contribution to the Foster Parents annual review and provide support to the foster family as deemed necessary, e.g., Transporting to family time.

The CSW liaises closely with the therapeutic team.

They are directly accountable to the allocated Therapeutic social worker, who will offer monthly supervision.

### Therapeutic Social Worker (TSW)

The Therapeutic Social Worked is responsible for ensuring True Fostering meets all the statutory duties and obligations. They oversee the standards and quality of care offered to children and young people.

The TSW is fully trained in Therapeutic Parenting techniques, developmental trauma and associated behaviours, and the impact on the therapeutic parent. The TSW must be able to judge when empathic listening is required before the implementation of strategies to manage behaviour. The TSW will be able to support the therapeutic parents in the implementation of these strategies, hold them accountable, and ensure that the child’s welfare, emotional progress and attachment is held in central view by the therapeutic team.

The TSW is directly accountable to the Registered Manager and will have monthly supervision.

### Attachment Therapist (AT)

The Attachment Therapist offers one-to-one consultations for advice and support, whenever required by the Foster Families. **The AT also** hosts the monthly Therapeutic Reparenting Groups (TRG), also known as The True Group. The AT is involved with the referral and matching stage and will consider the attachment needs of any child referred to the agency and anticipated behaviours.

The AT is directly accountable to the Registered Manager and Managing Director and supervises the Head of Family Stability.

### Head of Family Stability

The Head of Family Stability has responsibility for the day to day therapeutic interventions and manages the empathic listeners. They are professionally qualified and have practical experience of successfully parenting children from trauma through therapeutic parenting.

## The current Head of Family Stability has a senior background in education, is an adoptive parent, and author of “[**The Complete Guide to Therapeutic Parenting: A Helpful Guide to the Theory, Research and What It Means for Everyday Life**](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Complete-Guide-Therapeutic-Parenting-Research/dp/B08MQSJRQT/ref%3Dsr_1_2?crid=1NTH9MLV50M3H&keywords=jane+mitchell&qid=1674478112&sprefix=jane+mitchell%2Caps%2C86&sr=8-2)”. She is also a trainer and keynote speaker in therapeutic parenting.

## Agency Structure

See Appendix 1. Organisational Structure

### Management

The service is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Registered Manager. The Registered Manager is supervised and managed by the Operations Director.

The Registered Manager and the Team Manager manage all staff between them.

The Children’s Support Worker is supervised by Therapeutic Social Worker for that region.

The Empathic Listeners are supervised by the Attachment Therapist.

The agency has an administration team, managed by the Office Manager.

### The Team

Based in Gloucestershire, True Fostering mainly operates across four regions – East Midlands, West Midlands, East Anglia and the South West. This requires the team to be home-based to be able to be in direct contact with Foster Families. True Fostering recruits according to the needs of those families and their locations.

It is a diverse team with extensive knowledge and experience. All staff members have relevant qualifications, verified, and matched to their roles. All Social Workers are registered with the Social Workers regulator, Social Work England. In addition, all staff (and foster parents) joining the agency since 2022 are required to complete the Level 2 (CACHE accredited) Award in Therapeutic Fostering. This includes the administration and support team. This ethos ensures that everyone joining the team are working in the same way and have a comprehensive understanding of developmental trauma and therapeutic parenting. The course is extensive and has 6 modules and usually takes around 6 months to complete. The training was devised to give a practical understanding of the DDP / PACE model and how to apply this in a fostering household.

Pre-employment checks are undertaken in accordance with Safer Recruitment guidelines. All reference checks are followed up with a verification telephone call. The agency undertakes Social Media and Local Authority Checks for all staff.

As part of the recruitment process, The Agency conducts Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks on all members of staff. Staff are also registered on the DBS Update Service and DBS certificates checked annually.

Supporting staff is imperative to the sustainability of the True Model. Staff retention is important to providing continuity for the Foster Families and Children and Young People. Therefore, staff wellbeing and happiness is vital. All staff receive regular support, supervision, and training, and have low and protected caseloads. The Agency holds both monthly in-person team meetings and weekly virtual catch-ups, and endeavours to maintain a friendly, supportive, yet professional relationship between staff members.

## Monitoring and Quality Standards

True Fostering will comply fully with all relevant childcare legislation, Fostering Regulations and National Minimum Standards (2011) for England.

True Fostering firmly believes that communication is crucial to keeping Children and Young People, Foster Families, and Staff safe and well, and cultivates good communication as a method of monitoring the quality of the service provided. The agency recognises the importance of keeping written records for all Children and Young People in their care. The frequency will depend upon the Children and Young People’s care plan and will be agreed with the relevant Local Authority. Records will be completed by Foster Parents and inserted directly into the digital Family File.

Foster Parents are supervised by Therapeutic Social Workers. Supervision takes place monthly. Where there is sufficient stability, supervision can take place by TEAMS but there must be a minimum of 6 face to face supervisions per year. In addition all Children and Young People have a robust Therapeutic Team around them. This includes a child’s support worker who is directly available to the Children and Young People. Foster Parents will receive regular support from Empathic Listeners and are expected to attend monthly support groups led by the Attachment Therapist.

Fostering assessments are completed by qualified and experienced assessors. Therapeutic Parenting skills and knowledge will be prominent in assessments using the specific Therapeutic Fostering Assessment that has been created by Sarah Naish and now implemented within the agency.

All Foster homes will fulfil all health and safety requirements. This includes a requirement for household safe caring plans. All of which are reviewed, at a minimum, annually. Each Child and Young Person will have a bespoke safe care policy which recognises their individual needs.

Foster Parents are expected to work within individual care plans.

True Fostering is committed to ensuring a quality service to Children and Young People. True Fostering has a range of quality assurance processes that seek to improve outcomes for Children, Young People, Foster Parents and Staff. Quality assurance is a primary concern, both to ensure statutory requirements and good practice standards are met, and to ensure the provision of a service that the Children and Young People deserve.

Quality of Service

A range of information is gathered to inform the management team about the quality and effectiveness of the service.

The main methods used are:

* The board of directors meet monthly with the Operations Manager/Registered Manager to review services
* Regular database reports seeking service activity, including Assessment and Child Checklists, Current children/young people (including placement stability), Placement Endings, Significant Events and Critical Incidents
* Regular audits of case files in relation to the following:
	+ - Children
		- Foster Parents
		- Personnel (staff and central list members)
* Monitoring by each individual
* Ofsted Registration of Regulation 35 Schedule
* Quarterly NMS 25 reporting, by each individual Ofsted Registration, on management and outcomes
* Weekly reports by the Office Manager on numbers of Children cared for and any Family movements
* Monthly Team meetings
* Monthly managers’ meetings to review services and strategic planning
* Monitoring referrals to assess the need for our service.

True Fostering is monitored through provision of formal supervision for all staff and Foster Parents. Quality and standards of care are monitored in supervision records and uploaded to the relevant Family files.

All Foster Parents have an identified Therapeutic Social Worker (TSW). TSWs are responsible for ensuring that the care offered to our Children is of the best standard. The Therapeutic Social Worker visits the Foster Home regularly to monitor the standards of care provided. The TSW assists the Foster Parent to work within the Child’s Care Plan and will identify any training needs.

Unannounced visits offer another monitoring mechanism for the care provided to our Children and Young People. True Fostering’s unannounced visits policy states that at least one unannounced visit must be undertaken each year.

**In line with The Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011, Review of Quality of Care Regulation 35 and in accordance with National Minimum Standards for Fostering Service 2011 25.7 a-c. The Registered Manager provides a monthly report to the board of directors (the report will be available to inspectors at any time of request). The Registered Manager and Office Manager attends a monthly board meeting.**

## Complaints and Outcomes

All complaints will be managed in accordance with agency policy and procedures. A copy of this is made available to the Foster Parents via the Carer’s App and the Local Authority Social Worker. The Children’s Guide, which also contains complaint information will be discussed with them by the CSW. All complaints will be viewed by the registered manager and the outcome given to the young person face-to-face. The Child or Young Person will have a full explanation as to how the complaint was dealt with and the reason for the outcome.

True Fostering Supports Children and Young People with their right to make a complaint about any aspect of their care. It promotes the importance of helping Young People to understand why the complaints procedure exists and how to use it, should they ever feel it necessary to do so. Staff and Foster Parents work with the Children and Young People in their care to empower them to make complaints whenever they feel their needs are not being met. Staff and Foster Parents also work to ensure that anyone who makes a complaint does not feel stigmatised or guilty in any way. It is appreciated that making a complaint about a Foster Parent might be a difficult for a Child or Young Person, so the Agency ensures that the CSW has a trusting relationship that can make this easier.

If a child or young person needs to make a complaint, help is offered by a member of staff. It is acknowledged, however, that a young person may need help from someone outside of the staff group and therefore, young people are helped to involve a child advocacy service when appropriate. If required, an interpreter will be made available.

For a copy of the Complaints Procedure please telephone the office directly on 03301 333 331.

Complaints can be made directly in writing to the Registered Manager, Gareth Griffiths, at the following administrative address:

True Fostering Limited

 2 Alexandra Gate,
 Ffordd Pengam,

 Cardiff. CF24 2TU

Alternatively, you can email garethg@truefostering.com

Ofsted is the organisation responsible for ensuring that our agency complies with the current regulations, standards and best practice guidance. Complaints can be made directly to Ofsted, the contact details are as follows:

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

26-32 Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

0300 123 1231

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Ofsted Whistle-blower Hotline: 0300 123 3155

# Section 2. Service Provision

## Recruitment of Foster Parents

Foster Parent recruitment is a key priority for True Fostering. In order to better provide our service to as many Children and Young People as possible, we are continually recruiting new Foster Parents.

Our recruitment strategy is to provide a choice of families in order to meet the individual needs of all Children and Young People. We recognise stability is best achieved when the child’s needs are matched with Foster Parents who have the relevant skills and experience.

We seek to recruit Foster Parents from all walks of life and diverse communities. Applicants are welcomed from all sectors of the community, regardless of relationship status, employment situation, class, gender, sexuality, culture, ethnicity, or religion.

True Fostering’s recruitment strategy will include advertisement on social media and using internet adverts along with word-of-mouth recommendations.

## Assessment of Foster Parents

Prospective applicants can make contact via telephone or through our website. An initial screening will be conducted, and a decision will be made to either proceed or decline. If the decision has been made to decline, then clear reasons will be given. If the decision has been made to proceed, then an initial home visit will be arranged.

During the home visit, detailed discussions take place about the applicants’ suitability to foster and the benefits and implications of being a Foster Parent. The applicant will be expected to give a tour of their home.

Applicants will be advised if at this stage, they are not deemed suitable to foster

If agreed to proceed, an Assessing Social Worker will be allocated to complete their assessment.

The assessment is divided into two stages:

Stage 1 of the assessment is about of the assessment is about expectations and motivations to foster. This is also when statutory checks are carried out. These include:

* Enhanced DBS check for all adults living in the home
* Local Authority checks
* Current or previous fostering organisation references
* School / Health Visitor reports (on own child, if appropriate)
* Medical reports
* Current employment references
* References from all previous employment involving children and vulnerable adults
* Personal references (minimum of 2) who will also be visited by a social worker
* Overseas check (where appropriate)
* Health & Safety inspection on home environment
* Ex-partner references (especially where children were involved).

Stage 2 of the assessment is a more detailed assessment of a person’s suitability to provide quality care for children. The applicants’ skills and abilities, circumstances and foster capacity will be fully explored and documented in an assessment. The report will highlight the applicant’s strengths, limitations and any areas for additional monitoring and support. The assessment process and report will consider the recommended terms of approval and numbers of children.

As part of the assessment and preparation process, applicants will need to complete training in Therapeutic Parenting as part of their mandatory training. We expect to complete assessments within an 8week period due to the Therapeutic Fostering Assessment being focused.

The Assessing Social Worker will complete the written report which is shared with the applicants. Applicants are expected to check the report for accuracy, they can add any comments and must sign the report. The completed assessment report is submitted to the Fostering Panel for their consideration and recommendation.

All assessments go through a QA process prior to being presented to the Fostering Panel.

True aims to have the assessment completed within three months.

## The Fostering Panel

In accordance with Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011- (regulation 23) True Fostering maintains a central list of individuals who form our Fostering Panel. The Panel meets at regular virtual meetings to discuss applications for approval and to recommend a person is suitable to act as a Foster Parent.

Fostering Panel members are diverse in their skills and experiences and are knowledgeable in Therapeutic Parenting. The Panel includes several skilled Therapeutic Parents and former children from care.

Foster Parent applications and reviews are managed as follows:

#### Applications

All applications of prospective Foster Parents are virtually presented to the Fostering Panel by the assessing Social Worker. Prospective foster parents are expected to attend the virtual panel meeting. They will be supported by office staff to set up video calling.

#### First Review

Foster Parents undergo a first review within 12 months of approval. As well as the Therapeutic social worker Report, feedback for reviews will be collated from several sources. This includes the Children and Young People they are caring for, Education Professionals, Children’s Social Worker, Child Support Worker, Empathic Listener and Attachment Therapist. All approved First reviews are presented to the Fostering Panel by the allocated Therapeutic social worker. Foster Parents are expected to attend.

#### Annual Reviews

Thereafter, reviews are undertaken within 12 months of the last review. Annual reviews are undertaken/Chaired by the Independent reviewing Officer.

Following three years of approval, reviews in the fourth year and taken back to panel

#### Exceptional Reviews & Deregistration

Foster Parents will be subject to early reviews if there are major changes of circumstances, any identified care concerns, or they have been the subject of an allegation. Any recommendation for deregistration will be presented to the Fostering Panel.

# Section 3. Supporting Children and Young People

True Fostering is uniquely positioned as fortunate to have as its key staff, some of the most forward thinking and dynamic experts in therapeutic parenting in the UK. Experts in the field of Compassion Fatigue and Developmental Trauma, True Fostering works proactively to limit the impact of these conditions on fostering families.

True Fostering replaces outdated methods of working, and instead introduced joined up, seamless processes. This innovative practice starts with the Therapeutic Fostering Assessment (TFA) for applicants which incorporates all training, Continuing Professional Development and qualifications, as well as providing an easily accessible, straightforward assessment which truly reflects the Fostering Family’s expectations, motivation and training needs.

True Fostering also uses Trauma Tracker© which identifies potential problems which may arise, why this might happen, and puts a plan in place to prevent instability and unnecessary moves. True’s ground-breaking Developmental Trauma and Behaviour Assessment and Action tool© also provides a robust supportive intervention to enable Therapeutic Foster Parents and supporting professionals to work together to interrupt unhelpful and entrenched behaviour patterns which may otherwise cause family breakdown and unplanned moves.

Where appropriate, Foster Parents will continue to promote family time with birth families. Foster parents will not be expected to transport the young people *to* family time as it is deemed to possibly jeopardise their relationship with the young person, However, this is to be considered on an individual basis of need/circumstance depending on the relationship the young person has with birth family/significant others and their past experiences.

## Training

True Fostering is committed to the ongoing learning and training of Foster Parents and Staff, Including offering a variety of training opportunities, through online training, webinars and face to face training. True Fostering provides a comprehensive training programme with an annual schedule of forthcoming training,

Foster Parents have a documented Personal Development Plan (PDP) and are expected to undertake learning and development to support their ongoing approval. All foster parents have access to face-to-face training in the monthly mandatory Therapeutic Support Groups as well as access to an online training centre.

We ensure that all Staff and Foster Parents undertake mandatory training within the first 6 months of working for the agency. Mandatory training includes:

* Level 2 Award in Therapeutic Fostering. (started during assessment)
* Safeguarding
* First Aid

Following completion of the Level 2 Award, foster parents have the option to complete the Diploma in Therapeutic Fostering.

Training is available for all household members, including birth Children.

## Support

Helping traumatised Children and Young People to heal is a long process, Our Foster Parents receive fees that exceed those recommended by The Fostering Network to reflect the high level of service and support provided both to True Foster Parents and the Children and Young People.

True Fostering provides highly supported Therapeutic Families to Children with complex needs, including attachment difficulties and developmental trauma. Children need adults around them who are resilient and committed. All members of the Therapeutic Team, including Foster Parents must embrace and practice Therapeutic Parenting to support Children to recover from their trauma. True Fostering provides the specialist training and support this requires.

**True Foster Parents and Staff are familiar with Dyadic Development Psychotherapy (DDP) and are expected to adopt the Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy (PACE) approach in their parenting upon which the Level 2 training is based. This approach is backed up by staff and in support groups, interactions with the empathic listener and sessions with the Attachment Therapist. Training in both of these is available.**

Each Foster Family has an assigned team around them.

True Fostering hosts monthly Professional Therapeutic Development Groups (support groups) for Foster Parents and Staff. The group is facilitated by Sarah Dillon, Attachment Therapist. There is an expectation that foster parents & staff attend the monthly group. Fostering families respond well and benefit from these interventions. For most, it is the reason they joined the agency. Groups are a space for foster parents and staff to develop knowledge of Therapeutic Parenting and develop strategies and solutions to manage behaviours. The group sessions contain core training for half the session and a Q&A / discussion for the remainder. Foster Parents also have access to individual consultations with Sarah Dillon, which can be video or telephone consultations.

All True Foster Parents are Registered with The Fostering Network and the National Association of Therapeutic Parents. True Foster Parents are encouraged to join **Listening Circles** facilitated by The National Association of Therapeutic Parents; these provide peer support from others who are parenting traumatised Children.

Our Behaviour Policy is influenced by **‘A-Z of Therapeutic Parenting’** the best-selling book for Foster and Adoptive Parents (*Sarah Naish, 2018, Jessica Kingsley, London)* True Fostering supplies each Foster Parent with the book as part of the induction programme.

True Fostering is committed to providing stability and long-term care to Children and Young People, True Fostering considers research of the prevalence of Compassion Fatigue amongst Foster Parents as a result of them caring for traumatised Children. Compassion Fatigue is the leading cause of family disruption, which often leads to Children being moved on. With the ethos of the agency and the quality of support we provide we can identify early signs of Compassion Fatigue. This insight and overview assist with offering greater stability to our Foster Families and the Children they care for.

True Fostering also facilitates a Facebook Group, which allows Foster Parents to share support, encouragement, and advice. This is closely monitored to maintain confidentiality and harmony.

It is recognised that newly approved Foster Parents may need a higher level of contact in the initial stages of caring for a child or if they are looking after several Children or Children with complex needs or challenging behaviours. Support can be increased as assessed need determine. The agency is developing a buddy scheme for additional support to new foster parents.

The Therapeutic Social Worker is a key support to Foster Parents, they are required to develop professional supportive relationship with the Foster Parents to enable them in their role.

A 24-hour Out of Hours (OOH) support and advice service is provided to the families who foster. On a rota basis, Social Workers and Senior Management provide the OOH service which is available by telephoning 03301 333 3301.

True Fostering acknowledges that without a secure attachment it is extremely difficult for children and young people to focus on education or to care about their health or their own safety. The Secure Attachment is therefore the overriding priority when a child first comes to live with a Therapeutic Foster Parent. However, Foster Families will of course be encouraging and supporting children in all aspects of their development and through their own recordings and those of the True Fostering staff team, the agency will monitor progress in the following areas:

* Education
* Health - Emotional and Physical
* Social Skills
* Family relationships
* Hobbies / interests / sports

Foster Parents will promote contact with the families of the children in its care unless this is not possible due to safeguarding factors or increased levels of trauma. Where problems of this nature arise, these issues will be conveyed promptly to the local authority social worker and if appropriate, the Safeguarding Lead.

## Matching Children and Young People

True Fostering When a referral is received, full information is taken about the needs of the Child or Young Person. Full consideration is given to all appropriate Foster Parents that are available. We match Children and Young People with Foster Parents who are trained and skilled to meet their needs. Amongst other matching considerations, ethnicity, culture and religion are primary factors. We seek the most suitable Foster Family for Children and Young People and document any shortcomings and how we can support these. True Fostering has a robust matching process in order to ensure robust matching with our Foster Families. Initially discussion takes place with the allocated TSW and if deemed appropriate, discussion takes place with the foster family. Foster Parents are given all available information about the Child, both written and verbal. If this is positive, the Agency’s Attachment Therapist reviews information about the child and with knowledge of the family formally signs off on the match. In addition, the AT gives an overview of how best the child can be supported in the household, taking into consideration the child’s background trauma and the family’s skills and vulnerabilities. This may include additional monitoring, support and training. If a foster child or children are already placed within the family, then the agreement of the placing social worker is also sought.

When a match has been agreed for a new child, the agency completes a ‘Trauma Tracker’ which documents the child’s ACES and significant events from in utero. This including all moves with corresponding dates, police and social services intervention, changes of school, relationships starting and ending etc. This key document is used to inform likely presentation of the child, their emotions and behaviours, and the strategies which will work best in parenting them. This will become a base line over which to chart progress and could be considered a therapeutic care plan.

We will not allow a Child or Young Person to move into a Foster Family without obtaining the relevant documentation in advance.

## Quality Assurance

## Foster Parent Annual Reviews

Foster Parents approval is reviewed on an 12month basis. This is a formal meeting and considers evidence of their continued suitability and capacity as approved Foster Parents and if the terms are appropriate. Reviews also give opportunity to recognise good work and positive achievements for all members of the Fostering Family. Reviews consider any training needs and areas for development and improvement which will be documented in a review report.

As part of the review process, feedback is sought to inform the assessment and the Foster Parents of ongoing suitability. All Children who are or have been living in the home in the preceding year will be supported and encouraged to provide feedback. The Child Support Worker (CSW) are also enabled to contribute their views of the foster family. The agency will make all efforts to seek feedback from any professionals, agencies and individuals who can inform the review process.

All Foster Parent’s first annual reviews will be presented to the Fostering Panel.

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a primary consideration for all who are associated with True Fostering. All Staff, both employed and self employed, Panel Members and Foster Parents are required to complete Safeguarding Training as part of their induction.

We believe that the greatest way to keep children and young people safe is to listen and take seriously what they say. We are committed to ensuring every child feels that we are their advocates and approachable. On arrival at their new home, all children are given an age-appropriate copy of our Children’s Guide. The Children’s Guide includes information about who a child can contact to discuss any concerns or safeguarding issues. The CSW will discuss this with them and ensure they understand.

Foster Parents are given clear guidance about safer caring. This is reinforced through mandatory training on safer caring, and ensuring all Foster Families have a Safe Caring Plan. Plans will be reviewed at the start of any caring arrangement and considered during Foster Parent Supervision. The child/young person has a tailored Safe Care Plan issued, specific to their individual needs. We are committed to increasing and updating knowledge of how to safeguard children, through the ongoing development of training which is informed by changing trends and needs.

When recruiting, both staff and Foster Parents, we operate robust safe recruitment practices. All Staff and Foster Parents are subject to Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and required to sign up to the government’s checking service, enabling True to check a DBS Certificate at any time.

During the first stage of the Foster Parent assessment applicants are subject to Local Authority checks. Individuals who make any application to True Fostering will be required to provide evidence of relevant training and their motivation to work with vulnerable children will be explored.

At the start of any care arrangement, Therapeutic social workers are responsible for coordinating the completion of a series of risk assessments. The purpose of the risk assessment is not merely to identify risks, but to document how risks should be managed. Risk assessments are updated accordingly as risks change or arise.

Clear procedures help to manage critical incidents, dealing with complaints, allegations and standards of care concerns. The Registered Manager provides regular reports to the board of directors, reports highlight all such concerns, including their outcome. Following allegations and standards of care issues, Foster Parents on going approval will be reviewed and presented to the Fostering Panel.

Safeguarding issues will be dealt with immediately and in line with our Safeguarding Policy, which is available to all Foster Parents via the Carers App and staff in the shared drive.

## Children’s Guide

True Fostering has two Children’s Guides provided to Children and Young People (one for Children aged 10 and under, and one for Young People aged 11 and over) upon placement. The Children’s Guides contain information about being cared for by True Fostering and what to do if Children are unhappy and their rights to make a complaint. The Children’s Guide is reviewed annually.

## Listening to Children and Young People

True Fostering is committed to keeping Children and Young People at the centre of everything the Agency does. Listening to their views is fundamental so True Fostering provides opportunities for children to give their views about their Foster Family experience. This is both formally and informally.

Children’s views are considered and inform agency decisions, policies, and procedures. Foster Parents are encouraged to record Children and Young People’s wishes and feelings within their daily recordings.

Where Children make a complaint or an allegation, these will always be taken seriously, and matters will always be fully investigated.

True Fostering will liaise with the local authority to provide an advocate from the commissioned service for a Child or Young Person when appropriate.

## Confidentiality and Security

True Fostering considers confidentiality and the security of the often-sensitive data held of paramount importance. All Staff and Foster Parents will maintain vigilance around confidentiality. Training in the General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act (2018) is mandatory for both Staff and Foster Parents.

## Digital Data

True Fostering aspires to be paper-free. Both from an environmental point of view, but mostly for the security of the sensitive and confidential information held. Therefore, this data is stored electronically. All efforts are made to ensure that data is encrypted end to end; laptops are encrypted with hardware security keys, passwords and two-factor authentication wherever possible. We take every precaution possible to ensure that sensitive data is only made available to authorised staff and the Security Policy and policies of those providing IT services, is regularly reviewed.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1. Organisational Structure



## Appendix 2. Terminology

True Fostering encourages an ethos which is child-centric. This is reflected in the service provided and particularly the language that we use. As such **True Fostering uses alternative terminology and challenges the use of terms which may cause distress or confusion. Some frequently used examples are as follows:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Commonly used term | True Fostering term |
| **Placement or Service User** | **Child or Young Person** |
| **Foster Carer or Carer** | **Foster Parent** |
| **Respite** | **Short break, planned sleepover, or holiday** |
| **Contact** | **Family time / seeing other family** |
| **LAC / CLA** | **Child or Young Person with Foster Family** |
| **Placement Breakdown** | **Family Breakdown** |
| **Cases or Placements** | **Families** |