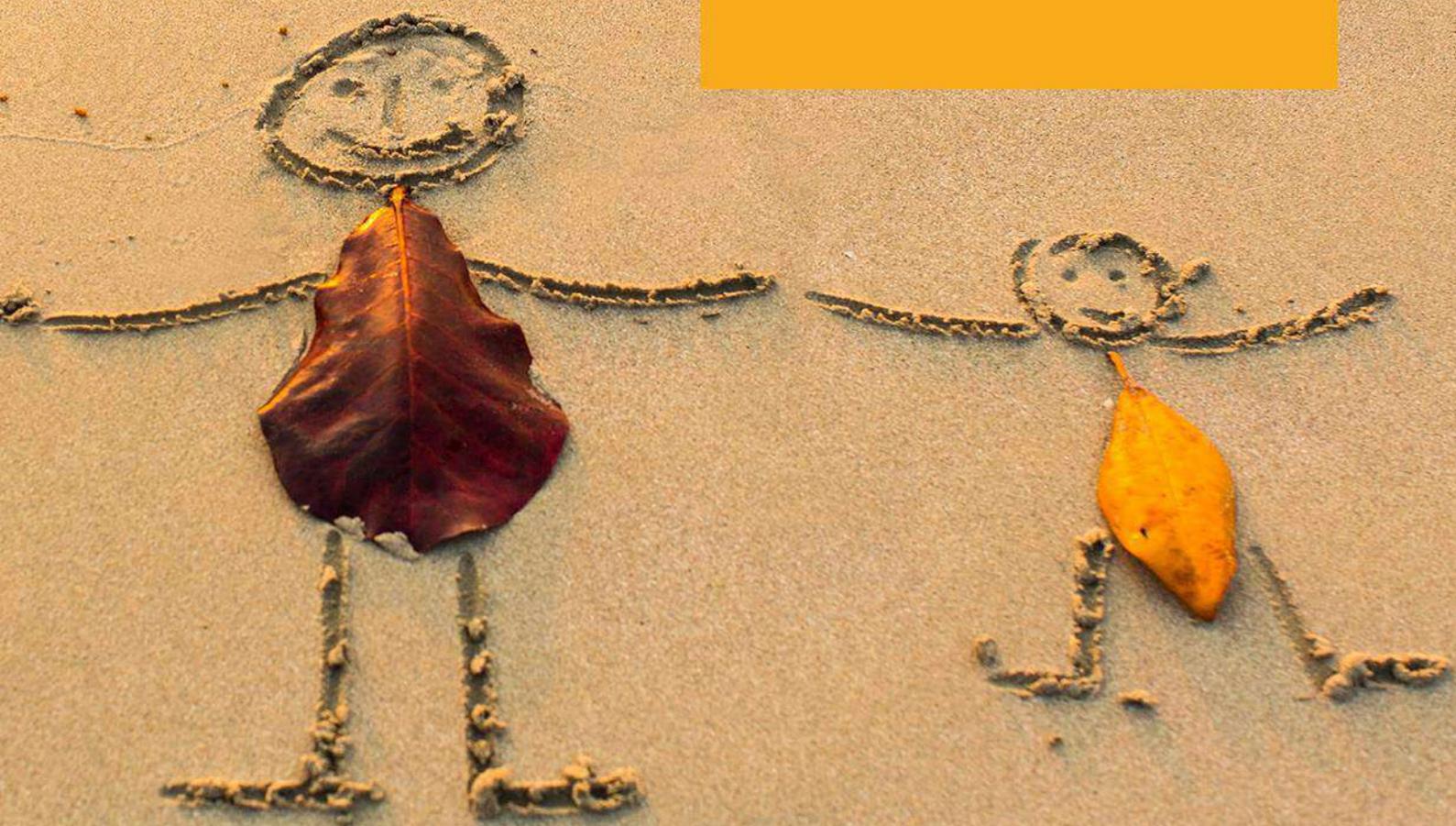


Suffolk Fostering & Adoption

**Suffolk County
Council**

**Fostering
Statement of Purpose**

2017 – 2018



The Fostering Service Statement of Purpose 2017/18

What is a Statement of Purpose?

The Statement of Purpose is the means of providing information about Suffolk County Council's Fostering Service in accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and the Fostering Services Regulations (2011).

The Statement of Purpose is a source of information for prospective foster carers, foster carers registered with Suffolk County Council, Fostering Services staff and all other colleagues or professionals working within Suffolk County Council and partnership agencies. A booklet entitled *A Children and Young People's Guide to Foster Care* is provided for all children and young people being cared for by the Fostering Service. A children's guide is also available for children under 8 years old.

The Office for the Standards in Children's Services & Skills (Ofsted) has the responsibility to regularly inspect the Fostering Service within to ensure that we achieve the aims and objectives as set out in the Statement of Purpose. Our most recent inspection report can be located at www.ofsted.gov.uk. Ofsted can be contacted directly by telephone 08456 404045 or by email at enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or in writing to:

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate, Store Street
MANCHESTER M1 2WD

Further information about the service can be obtained from:

Robina Khan Head of Adoption & Fostering
Suffolk County Council
Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich, IP1 2BX
robina.khan@suffolk.gov.uk

For all enquiries about becoming a foster or Link carer, call 01473 264800 or email: fosterandadopt@suffolk.gov.uk

Why foster for Suffolk County Council?

By becoming part of the Suffolk County Council Fostering Service you will be contributing to the provision of high quality placements, which give best value to Suffolk communities. We will provide support from our highly experienced team of staff, access to a wide range of training to develop your knowledge and expertise and a tiered payment scheme which reflects the complexity of the children who need placements and the skills you offer. We will treat you with the respect that you deserve as a professional foster carer.

Fostering is extremely rewarding. As a foster carer **you can make a real difference to a child's life**, providing them with the nurturing home life they need to give them every chance of a happy childhood and to succeed in life. It's a big commitment to become a foster carer, but is extremely worthwhile. The rewards are enormous – some of our carers have been fostering for over 30 years!

The Fostering Service Vision

The Suffolk Fostering Service vision is;

To enable all children and young people in Suffolk to aspire to, and achieve their full potential, giving them the basis for a successful life as active members of their community.

The service encourages working together, to create an innovative fostering service, which provides safe and nurturing family-based care for children and young people who are unable to live within their own families. The Service continually strives to provide high quality care for children and young people, so they are able to achieve better outcomes in adult life.

The Aims & Objectives of the Fostering Service

The Suffolk County Council Fostering Service is part of the overarching corporate parenting service, which is responsible for all of Suffolk's children in care. The Fostering service aims to achieve continuous improvements and deliver the best possible outcomes for the widest range of children looked after by our foster carers. This includes the development of the **Suffolk Signs of Safety and Wellbeing** approach to practice in all aspects of service delivery to children, families and foster carers.

The Service is committed to ensuring that anti-discriminatory practice informs all aspects of our work with children, colleagues, foster carers and birth family, and that placement resources provide equal opportunities of access to all

children and young people, irrespective of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, age, gender, sexuality or disability.

The vision statement reflects key priorities of the *Suffolk Family 2020 Strategy*. This strategy is a shared vision across partner agencies that will improve outcomes for children, young people and support for parents and carers over the next year. The priorities have been informed by the views of children and young people, and by the feedback from parents and carers.

For more information about Children and Young People's Services in Suffolk please visit [our website](#).

The Suffolk Fostering Service aims & objectives are set out in a service plan and are linked to the *Family 2020 Strategy* which can be found [here](#)

Emotional Wellbeing & Health Lifestyle

- To promote healthy lifestyle choices for all foster carers linked to the health and development of children and young people.
- Smoke free households for all Suffolk children in foster care.

Ensuring Safety

- To actively recruit, assess and prepare prospective foster carers that reflect the diversity of the local community and who will provide high quality, safe and flexible family care for a wide range of children including disabled children requiring a short break service (Link).
- To ensure good quality decision making in relation to foster carer registration through efficient, effective management of the Fostering Panel.
- To review annually foster carer registration in line with the national minimum of standards and regulations.
- To provide a responsive fostering service that best matches the demands for foster placements with available resources.
- To provide fostering placements that are stable, nurturing and supportive for the child or young person and which will promote and value their culture, ethnicity, and identity.
- To take full regard of the child or young person's individual needs, however complex, alongside their expressed wishes and feelings when seeking to match with placement provision.
- To provide a comprehensive foster carer support service during office hours and an out of hours call service to provide support and assistance during the evening and at weekends.

- To provide regular supervision, post approval training and other opportunities for foster carer self-development in line with competencies, skills and knowledge regarding the day-to-day task.
- To work in close partnership with the Safeguarding Service to monitor placement stability and ensure effective response to any allegations made against foster carers.

Achieving Full Potential for Children & Young People

- To work in close partnership with the Suffolk Virtual School and the Suffolk Children in Care Health Team to ensure foster carers are able to promote the best educational and health outcomes for children in their care.
- To promote the best outcomes for children in placement and foster carers through care planning and promoting carers use of delegated authority.

Support & Learning Opportunities

- To provide an extensive range of learning & development opportunities through the Suffolk County Council CPD online www.suffolkcpd.co.uk including online training (Kate Cairns Associates), one or two day programmes (Theraplay, brain based parenting, first aid, safeguarding and e-safety) and more in-depth programmes including KEEP and Solihull.
- Dedicated family support practitioners to support and enable foster carers with Theraplay and parenting techniques.
- To provide a range of foster carer support groups across the county to encourage peer support and development opportunities.
- To recognise and support the role played by the carers' own children and their wider family in the task of foster care.
- To work closely with the social worker for the child, to ensure good effective communication with the carer regarding the care plan and contact arrangements as set out in the foster carer agreement.
- To support the role played by the Children's Participation Workers in obtaining the wishes and views of children and young people fostered by Suffolk County Council.
- To work in close partnership with the Suffolk Foster Care Association and support them to extend their membership to a wider group of foster carers and to contribute to the overall development of the Fostering Service. For more information regarding the SFCA please visit [their website](#).

Finance

- To provide fostering allowances in line with government recommended rates. In addition to the allowance carers can receive a fee in line with Suffolk's Tier Alignment Scheme. All carers are aligned to a Tier level, and

most receive a corresponding fee, in recognition of their skills and experience and the complexity of the placement they are able to offer.

- For full details of Suffolk's fees and allowances, please visit <https://www.fosterandadopt.suffolk.gov.uk/fostering/fees-and-allowances>.

Leaving Care

- To work in close partnership with Suffolk County Council's Leaving Care service to ensure that foster carers are able to fully support the young people in their care, as they make the transition to further or higher education or employment and independent living where appropriate.

How we monitor and evaluate our services

Suffolk Fostering Service strives to constantly improve and develop with the key aim to improve outcomes for children and families. High priority is placed on monitoring and evaluation of the service and gaining service user feedback to use in service development.

Monitoring of the fostering service

- The performance of the service is monitored and analysed in the Annual Report
- The Fostering Private Fostering Panel performs a quality assurance function to uphold best practice. An Annual Panel Report is produced
- Staff at all levels are provided with regular supervision by line manager and consultation is also available for very complex cases.
- The Corporate Parenting Management Group receives quarterly reports on the performance of the fostering service.
- The Children and Young Peoples Quality Assurance and Performance Board provide regular monitoring and scrutiny
- The professional adviser provides support, advice and quality assurance to the Fostering panel. The adviser manages the Panel arrangements. Facilitates panels training needs and supports the Independent Panel Chair.
- Monthly audits are undertaken to ascertain the quality of social work practice and service delivery, and inform fostering service improvements.
- There is regular monitoring by the Permanence Consultation and Referral Meeting of the progress of children prior to placement to include scrutiny of family finding activity of permanent placements.
- Analysis of disruptions which take place, through a disruption meeting.
- A member of the fostering service monitors the permanence tracker and the planning for all children in care.

The child's statutory review along with the function of the Independent Reviewing Officer has a quality assurance role.

Feedback from service users

Suffolk Fostering Service aims to gain feedback from applicants throughout their approval process and from carers and children during their fostering career. This includes:

- Feedback requested by fostering panel on the views of applicants on the assessment process.
- Questionnaires following the preparation course for prospective carers.
- The statutory children in care review ensures that the child and birth parent's views are fully explored.
- The** agency places high priority on direct work with children and provide the opportunity for them to explore their feelings and give their views.
- Chat to Change- our older children in Care Council are a self-governing group of young people who are in care or leaving care who meet to discuss what's good about being in care, what's not so good and what could be better. They discuss many issues and work closely with the corporate parenting board to ensure their views co-produce services
- Brighter Futures links with groups of children and young people who are in care to ensure they are able to have their say in all matters affecting their lives. Our children and Young People have recently given their views about what makes a good foster carer.
- Feedback relating to the experience of coming to permanence panel for all attendees.
- Evaluation forms are completed with foster carers before and after sessions given to model and encourage the use of Theraplay based strategies.
- Feedback from child's social worker, child, IRO and carers at least annually for each carers review
- A new weekly "Inside Fostering" e-newsletter.
- Response to foster carers survey 'You said, We Did'
- Feedback collated from carers attending training courses and shared through joint meetings with workforce development/training providers to develop training programme and individual courses
- Online questionnaires sent out, and forums held with foster carers to consult on key changes of policy and service developments, and general carer satisfaction.

- The views of foster carers are gathered during regular supervisions with an allocated Fostering Social Worker, and fed through to Practice Managers/Consultant Social Workers.
- We are improving the foster carers feedback sheet on the initial stages of placement so that managers can identify shortfalls and address this promptly.
- We are working closely with Suffolk Foster Care Association holding regular meetings and consultation sessions to gain feedback, working in partnership on issues and jointly organising events such as a conference for foster carers.

The feedback from the above sources is analysed and it is used for service improvement and development

We have processes for making, maintaining, monitoring and reviewing contact plans for each fostered child.

Principles & Standards of Care

The Fostering Service seeks to deliver an excellent service for the children, young people, foster carers and their families that complies with the relevant legislation, regulations and good practice guidance regarding children in foster care. The Fostering Service is committed to the best outcomes for children in care and the service works in close partnership with all Suffolk County Council services with responsibility for children in care.

Numbers of Children/Young People in Care & Details of Carer Approval

At the end of 2016/17 there were 369 households approved as mainstream, Family & Friends, and Short Break Link foster carers.

At the end of March 2017, 395 children which was 47% of Suffolk's 834 children in care were placed with in-house foster carers.

Foster Care Placements

The Fostering Service provides a range of fostering options for children in the care of Suffolk County Council. The services offered are to meet a diverse range of needs, circumstances and backgrounds of children who are not able to live with their own families. There are circumstances where a relative or a friend of the child in care may also be assessed as a foster carer and this service is referred to as Family and Friends foster carer (Kinship care).

1. Short-Term / Short Breaks Time-Limited Placements

Some Foster carers will look after children on a short term basis, until the child can return home or moves on to a permanent placement. The time a child will spend in short term foster care can vary, though it will usually be for several months or years. These children and young people need nurturing care together with help to understand their experiences and the uncertainty of their future.

2. PACE Scheme

Short term placements primarily overnight, caring for a young person who is on remand in police custody whilst involved in court proceedings and they cannot live at home. Foster carers will relinquish responsibility for the young person once they have taken them to court or the allocated social worker the following morning.

3. Permanent Foster Placements

Many children who are not able to live with their birth families will need a new permanent family. Some foster carers care for children into adulthood and see them as a member of the family for life.

4. Foster to Adopt and Concurrency Placements.

When we know it is highly likely that a child will need an adoptive family but the court proceedings are still in progress, we sometimes place the child on a fostering basis with a family who have been approved to both foster and adopt. This avoids a potentially upsetting move for the child and can be helpful in forming attachment but it may initially be a less certain situation for the carers. We offer particular training and support to carers in these circumstances.

5. Suffolk's Therapeutic Fostering (formerly Zipwire)

Suffolk's therapeutic Fostering team provides therapeutic support to foster carers who are caring for children and young people presenting with challenging behaviours resulting from neglect and or trauma. The team has a wide range of offers aimed at helping foster carers understand and meet the needs of vulnerable children.

This includes:

- short term interventions, such as Theraplay Informed Practice, individual foster carer or family psychotherapy, consultations
- group programmes, such as KEEP safe or KEEP standard and therapeutic support groups

- direct work, such as foster carer therapeutic supervisions, skills coach sessions for children looked after or children who foster, psychotherapy for children in care
- regular training days on topics such as developmental trauma, mentalisation, self-harm. This training is open to foster carers, adopters, SGO carers as well as CYP staff
- group supervision using a mentalisation approach for supervising social works in the short term team.

The team aims to assess and provide appropriate support quickly to prevent placements breaking down when possible and give foster carers the confidence and skill needed to continue to care for the child/ran in placement.

6. Family & Friends (Connected Person/Kinship) Foster Carers

Family and Friends care is where a child or young person in care lives with a relative or another adult known to them. In Suffolk, Connected Person/Kinship foster carers are assessed and presented to Fostering Panel for approval, they received the same allowances and have access to the range of post approval training and learning opportunities.

These foster carers provide both short term care and permanent foster care for children of all ages and often care for sibling groups. Connected Person/Kinship Foster Carers often consider making an application for a Special Guardianship Order once the child in their care is settled.

The Link Scheme

This scheme aims to provide a flexible, culturally sensitive and safe service that promotes the diverse needs of those children with severe learning, physical or sensory disability. It seeks to offer a range of short break options that encourage social inclusion by working in partnership with the child and their parents or carers. The objectives of the Link Scheme are:

- To provide a 'stepping stone' for those who use the Scheme to make local friendships and join in with community activities
- To offer the child the opportunity of having someone special interested in them, in addition to their own family
- To give their parents or carers a 'breathing space' and an opportunity to spend time with the rest of their family
- To offer planned short breaks which could include home sitting, day care and overnight care in the Link Carer's home, and community based activities
- To assess, approve, monitor and review Link Carers in accordance with the required standards

- To recruit assess and support Link Up Befrienders approved with Activities Unlimited
- To provide targeted ongoing training, support and supervision of Link Carers to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to provide an excellent service
- To provide any special equipment that is required to meet the care needs of any child placed
- Link Carers are supported by and supervised by their own Link Supervising Worker.

Fostering Teenagers

Over half of the children in care in Suffolk are aged 11 or over, yet fewer people come forward to offer to care for them. Therefore, many teenagers may not be living with Suffolk carers, and will be away from friends, school and their local community.

Teenagers are often portrayed negatively and this may influence people's views about teenagers, however, caring for this age group is very rewarding because it is about growing young people into adults and helping them to discover their place in the world.

Foster Carer Support

As the largest fostering provider in Suffolk we offer the following terms & conditions for foster carers:

- Weekly allowance and, where applicable, a fee payment
- Loan of essential equipment
- Regular high quality support and supervision with a fostering social worker through a local support team
- Access to specialist advice via CONNECT (CAMHS) and other specialist services
- Support groups and activities for carers' children in school holidays
- Annual children who foster activity day or sons and daughters of foster carers and children in care.
- Membership of the [Suffolk Foster Carer Association](#)
- 24 Hour support via a dedicated fostering out of hours service
- Free Membership of the [Fostering Network](#)
- Computer for those offering placements to school aged children
- Support to achieve permanent placements
- 21 days paid respite.
- Extensive training & development opportunities from short one-day courses to the Diploma in Child Care Level 3

- Access to a comprehensive training programme through Suffolk County Council Children Workforce Development Team
- Access to reading material for adults & children which are reserved in Suffolk County Council libraries specifically for carers
- 4 weeks extra allowance each year to cover birthdays, holidays and religious festivals
- Part of wider professional multi-agency team

Key Principles in the Recruitment & Assessment Process

- The Fostering Service welcomes all applicants regardless of their ethnicity, background, faith, sexual orientation or marital status. Applicants may be disabled, responsible for dependents, working full-time, part-time or unemployed.
- Due to the medical concerns regarding passive smoking and harm to children, particularly young children, the Fostering Service will not place children under the age of 5 where any members of the household smoke. (This may be reviewed in the case of connected person/kinship foster carers who would be supported to avoid exposing children to passive smoking.
- The Fostering Service is committed to working in a way that does not discriminate.
- The Fostering Service aims to work transparently and openly with applicants at every stage of the process
- The Fostering Service ensures information regarding the formal complaints procedures available to all applicants
- The assessment process aims to help potential foster carers to have sufficient time and information to make an informed decision about whether fostering is right for them and their family at this time.

Stages of Fostering Approval Process

The process of approving a mainstream foster carer usually takes 6 months from application to approval, or 4 months for applicants who have previously fostered or are transferring from another fostering provider.

The process of approving a Connected Person/Kinship Foster Carer is similar but with a different assessment process and shorter timescales. The process in these cases is described in detail in the Suffolk *Procedures for the Assessment of Family and Friends as Foster Carers (2016)* document.

Following the initial enquiry, the process is divided into 2 stages, initial checks followed by assessment at Stage 1 and Stage 2, which is a more detailed

assessment. Where appropriate parts of these stages may be completed in parallel.

Home Assessment (Form F)

In summary, this assessment is completed with the applicants and the assessing social worker during visits to the applicants' home. This assessment is presented to Fostering Panel for a recommendation, from which the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) will make a final decision on whether to approve the applicants as Foster Carers. This part of the process will generally take about 4 months.

The Fostering Panel

Once the assessment is complete, applicants and the assessing social worker are invited to attend a fostering panel meeting. The Fostering Panel has a statutory role and responsibility to formally recommend approval of foster carer applicants to the Agency Decision Maker following the assessment. Panel also considers assessments from applicants to become kinship carers.

The Fostering Panel is made up of social workers, foster carers, a county councillor, professionals involved in child health or education services and independent panel members. All Fostering panels are chaired by the Independent Chair, Jim Bond.

Fostering Panel also provides annual Quality Assurance of foster carers reviews.

How decisions are made

The panel has an independent chair, Jim Bond. He is responsible for helping the panels to reach a recommendation.



Jim Bond is the Independent Fostering Panel chair. Jim was appointed as a Foster Carer in Essex in 1994 until 2014, and he has experienced living with in excess of 80 young people over the age of 13 during that time describing this as the "best job I've ever done!"

In his earlier life, Jim worked as a Deputy Head in a Comprehensive School and Director Youth Work and Training for a major national charity. Jim qualified as a counsellor and specialises in work with children in the care system as well as those who are adopted and their families. Jim was the President of the Fostering Network and he is passionate about the role of all in the child care partnership and has

first-hand experience of the impact this can have on children and young people.

In addition to Chairing Suffolk Fostering Panel Jim sits as Chair on another local authority panel and also the Independent Review Mechanism in London. The little spare time left over he spends with his two dogs Jack and Daisy and even more importantly the wide "extended family" that has grown through his fostering

The Agency Decision Makers are Allan Cadzow, David Jacobs and Cliff James.

Allan Cadzow is the Service Director for Children and Young People's Services and took on this role in April 2016. Allan qualified as a Social Worker in 1987 and worked in London until 1995 when he moved to Suffolk to manage a newly formed Child Protection team. After occupying various management roles in Children's Social Care Allan took up a post as Children and Young People's Services Area Director in Southern Area in 2006. In 2011, following a reorganisation, Allan took up post as Assistant Director: Integrated Service Delivery. In April 2015 he became Deputy Director with the lead for Early Help and Specialist Services.

David Jacobs is the Head of Service for Children's Social Care Fieldwork, and was appointed to the ADM role in June 2014. David has been employed in Social Work practice since 1979, working within various residential child care settings for statutory agencies and the voluntary sector.

He qualified and began practicing as a Social Worker in Suffolk, in 1991, occupying team manager roles between 1995 and July 2004, when he became a middle manager within Children's Social Care Services. David has been committed to continuing professional development and achieved an MA (distinction) in advanced Social Work Practice in 2010. In July 2011, within a new departmental re-structuring, David was appointed as "Service Manager" within Children's Specialist Services (his current substantive role), responsible for the Social Care children's teams in Ipswich South and West Localities and for South Suffolk and Sudbury in respect of services to children over 12 years old.

David has been in a Social Worker role for Suffolk's "out of hours" Emergency Duty Service (providing emergency social work responses to all customer groups) continuously since 1994 to the current date. He has also managed the Emergency Duty Team on a rota basis since 2008, providing management decisions and guidance "out of hours" for all customer groups across Suffolk.

Cliff James is the Head of Corporate Parenting for Children and Young People's Services and took on this role in November 2012. Cliff qualified as a

Social Worker in 1980 and worked as a social worker prior to taking up a number of management roles in various authorities before moving to Suffolk.

Prior to taking up his current role Cliff was Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance. He has extensive experience of planning for children to ensure they achieve permanence in a safe setting which meets their needs.

In their role as Agency Decision Maker, Allan, Cliff and David are committed to achieving positive permanent arrangements for children and young people that provide the best possible outcomes.

We review disrupted placements, ascertaining the causes for the breakdown to aid future planning for the child

Unfortunately, sometimes foster placements do break down. Where there is a disruption of a permanent placement the Service convenes a *Disruption Meeting* in order to try to understand the factors that led to the breakdown of the placement which helps in planning future placements. The meetings are chaired by a Practice Manager or Professional Advisor who does not have case responsibility for the foster carers.

A summary of the conclusions of the meeting are sent to the Fostering Management Team and the relevant fostering panel to inform future practice.

Procedures for the investigation of allegations or complaints made against foster carers

Suffolk County Council has the responsibility for ensuring that children are protected from significant harm as defined by the Children Act 1989 and for the investigation of any allegation or report of harm in accordance with the current safeguarding procedures. Children who are fostered are also vulnerable children and where allegations are made regarding foster carers, these are investigated in line with the Working Together procedures.

The Fostering Service in partnership with the Safeguarding & Quality Assurance Service has established procedures for the speedy and thorough investigation of concerns. For more information please visit the Suffolk Safeguarding website <http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/> and independent support, as well as advice and guidance, from the Fostering Network is available to all carers.

Safeguarding children and young people

Suffolk Fostering Agency is committed to ensuring that any safeguarding concerns are thoroughly investigated and appropriate procedures followed. Where children are placed for foster care any safeguarding concern, incident or accident, serious illness, a child who is missing, death or serious injury of

children or complaints, or incidents likely to impact on the child's welfare are recorded and appropriately investigated in accordance with statutory and safeguarding guidance. It also ensures that outcomes are analysed and relevant parties notified.

All staff, panel members and others involved in the service will have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service clearance and references will be obtained and verified.

Social work staff will hold current registration with the Health and Care Professionals Council and are expected to adhere to the standards of proficiency and the code of ethics.

<http://suffolkscb.org.uk/procedures/lscb-policies-guidance-and-protocols/>

Learning and Development

The training programme for approved foster carers and Link carers in Suffolk offers an ever-increasing and comprehensive range of courses, ensuring that foster carers have the very best opportunity to be trained in the skills required to provide high quality care for children and young people. All foster carers including family and friends carers and those offering short breaks are required to achieve the training, support and development standards (TSD) within the first 12 months of placement (or 18 months for Family and Friends foster carers). All foster carers will receive support and guidance to achieve this from their supervising worker and support groups. Learning and development opportunities are offered at introductory and intermediate levels allowing for the ongoing development of foster carers' skills and knowledge base. Core course subject areas include Diversity, Attachment, Safeguarding, First Aid, Behaviour Management and Recording.

E-learning opportunities (e.g. Health for Foster Carers) are also available and carers are supported in obtaining their Level 3 Diploma by a partnership with West Suffolk College. For full details of the Suffolk Foster Carer Training Programme please visit: <http://www.suffolkcpd.co.uk/cpd/>

The Fostering Service wishes to 'know itself', to understand what it does well and what aspects could be improved. It actively seeks the views of its foster carers in a variety of ways. For example, via assessment and annual review processes, with surveys, and direct feedback at supervision visits.

Complaints

When things go wrong it's really important to us that we respond quickly and fairly to put them right. We will always try to resolve any areas of disagreement or concerns informally in the first instance. We will also respond promptly to formal complaints about the fostering service through our County Council Complaints Procedure.

This can be found [here](#).

Our complaints procedure plays an important role in improving our service and our County Council Complaints Policy commits us to:

- Give a full and clear response to a complaint within 20 working days. If this is not possible, we advise complainants when an answer will be given.
- Look into complaints thoroughly and fairly.
- Be honest and polite, and keep information confidential.
- Apologise if we have made a mistake.
- Tell complainants about what we are doing to put things right.

Our Children's Safeguarding Service always deals with complaints that involve concerns for the safety or welfare of children in foster care. Information on this service can be found at the Suffolk Safeguarding Children's Board Website: <http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/>

Advocacy and Children's Participation

Suffolk has developed a children's promise to Children in Care, which can be found [here](#).

Advocacy

Looked after children and young people in care are entitled to the support of an advocate if they wish to make representations or complain about the service they receive. Children and young people are able to access an independent advocate provided by Anglia Care Trust.

Participation

Children and young people are kept safest when their voice is heard and services are most effectively provided when they have had a say in their development and delivery. Using the principles of 'You said....We did' children and young people are invited to Brighter Futures participation activities across the county.

During 2017/18 children and young people will continue to be involved in talking about their experiences of foster care and how well Suffolk is delivering its Promise to children in care. **Children's Rights Freephone 0800 9171119.**

Where to find us



The Fostering team is countywide, based at Endeavour House.

Our Fostering Teams are based at:

Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP1 2BX

Riverside Campus
4 Canning Road
Lowestoft
NR33 0EQ

West Suffolk House
Western Way
Bury St. Edmunds
IP33 3YU

Ferngate
Main Road
Martlesham Heath
IP5 3QX

Lothingland Community Unit
4 Airey Close
Oulton
NR32 3AX

Our Fostering Panels are based at:

Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP1 2BX

West Suffolk House
Western Way
Bury St. Edmunds
IP33 3YU

For all public enquiries please call: 0845 606 6067

Additional Contacts (Agency Managers)

Robina Khan	Head of Suffolk Adoption and Fostering	01473 260783
Christine Smith	Panel Professional Adviser	01473 265861
Allan Cadzow	Service Director for Children and Young People's Services	01473 260938
Cliff James	Head of Corporate Parenting	01473 264731
Sue Cook	Corporate Director for Health Wellbeing and Children's Services	01473 265354

Agency Medical Advisers

Dr Awais Khan and Dr Moira Pinkney are based at:
St Helen's House
571 Foxhall Rd
Ipswich
IP3 8LX

Phone: 01473 321209

Fostering Service Staff and Qualifications

Who manages the Agency?

Robina Khan started her social work career in 1990. She began work as a Development Worker in Children and Families and qualified as a social worker in 1996. Robina has worked as a Senior Manager in Safeguarding Children's services and since 2010 has been responsible for Children in Care, Care Leavers and Fostering and Adoption services. Robina has worked as an Interim Head of Service since 2012, in various local authorities and a Trust leading improvement work. This work has included Looked After Children, permanence planning, Care Leavers, Adoption, Fostering, Children in Care Council and promoting the voice of children and young people.



Robina is passionate about developing the fostering service and enhancing the lives of our children and young people by developing and supporting better care options for them.

Christine Smith has been the Agency Adviser to the Suffolk Permanence Panel since September 2008.



She has worked in Children and Families Services since 1980 qualifying as a Social Worker in 1985. She has worked as a Social Worker, and Social Work Manager, within Local Authorities and the voluntary sector. She has extensive practise experience particularly in the area of permanency planning. For the last 18 years she has worked as a

Children's Guardian in the London region and continues with this work as well as undertaking assessments as an Independent Social Worker

Dean Marsh has practiced as a qualified social worker and manager since 1997 and has work across all areas of child care spanning child protection, looked after children, adolescent outreach, independent reviewing, MASH and leaving care. Appointed to the Recruitment, assessment & matching team in May 2016 Dean's experience in local authority and independent sector social work and fostering sectors, including quality assurance management, social work practice & management, fostering panel management, policy development, will combine with a first career in marketing & publicity to further drive Suffolk's recruitment of carers.



Additional experience as an accredited practice educator and having completed the post-qualifying child care award / PQSW, will support Dean's interest in service development alongside previous involvement with user participation and co-production in the private fostering sector. Dean has had a number of roles within the independent sector which has required working across 12 local authorities as part of a management team holding entire commissioned out services. With significant experience within Suffolk's child and young people's services and a strong belief in co-production as an essential component of recruitment work, Dean remains passionate about the provision of a high quality local service and recruitment of carers to contribute to support local children who need it.

Catherine Biedul was appointed as Practice Manager for the Permanence Support Team in April 2015.



Catherine first became involved in children needing alternative care arrangements 27 years ago when she became a foster carer for the Local Authority. Fourteen years later she completed her Diploma in Social Work at Suffolk College Ipswich. On qualifying as a social worker Catherine worked for two years in the child care teams before joining the Adoption Team in 2006 as a social worker, when the Adoption Support Team was created, In 2008 Catherine completed the Post Qualifying Child Care Award; she then progressed on to become the Practice Manager for the Adoption and Permanence Support Team in April 2010.

Gill Davies has been the Practice Manager for the Fostering Changes for Children Team since July 2015. For 4 years prior to this she managed the County Asylum and Private Fostering Team within Social Care Fieldwork, until it merged with the then Kinship Care team to form the current team. Gill joined Suffolk County Council in June 2005 as a social care practitioner and qualified as a social worker in 2008 with an MA from Anglia Ruskin University. Before joining Suffolk, she acquired a BSC in Behavioural Science, and then worked for the British Refugee Council supporting adults and families seeking asylum in the UK.



As well as responsibility for all Connected Person/Kinship Carers, Gill's team also deliver the service for privately fostered children and their carers, and are responsible for all unaccompanied asylum seeking and trafficked children(UASC) as children in care. Gill also oversees regional co-ordination of the National UASC Transfer scheme in the East of England

Julie Macer-Wright is the Practice Manager for the Short Term Therapeutic Fostering Team. Julie worked for several years in drug rehabilitation and prevention clinics across London before qualifying with a Master's Degree in Social Work from Goldsmiths College London, in 1997. Julie then worked in child protection in Camden before moving into fostering in 2003. Julie joined Suffolk Fostering Service in 2008 and has been a manager in the service since 2010.



Nicola Lewis has been working in administration for 25 years, joining the Suffolk Fostering and Adoption Service in 2010 as a Business Support Manager.



She is keen to ensure that processes and procedures are followed throughout the service providing consistency and high level support to Operational staff and Managers.

The senior managers with overall responsibility for fostering services in Suffolk are;

Cliff James, Head of Corporate Parenting,

Allan Cadzow, Service Director for Children and Young People's Services

Signatures

Date:

Allan Cadzow

Service Director for Children and Young People's Services

Date:

Gordon Jones

Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills

