# Effective Management of the Service Policy

Foster Carer Policies and Procedures · https://handbook.co.uk/docs/effective-management-of-the-service-policy/

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**Legal Context**

National Minimum Standard 25 says that the fostering service must be run responsibly, efficiently and be regularly monitored.

**Underpinning Legislation: The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011:**

- 8 Fostering agency – Registered person – general requirements
- 10 Local authority fostering service – Manager
- 18 Independent fostering agencies – representations and complaints
- 35 Review of quality of care
- 36 Notifiable events
- 37 Financial position

**Monitoring and Consultation**

Each agency within Positive Aspirations has a Registered Manager who, with the Senior Management Group's support, makes sure the service is run ethically, effectively and efficiently so it meets the needs of children, carers and staff. To do this:

- We have clear, caring procedures for checking and guiding the service's work. These procedures let us talk about, record, review and understand information and data regularly. We do this through Senior Managers Meetings, routine file audits and regular reviews of policies and procedures. Together, these reports, meetings and tools help the Registered Manager track how well the service is working.
- We use systems to review Schedule 6 and Schedule 7 incidents and to spot any patterns in serious incidents, allegations or complaints.
- Our policies match our procedures and give a clear framework for guiding the service's work.

• We always look for ways to improve the quality of foster care we give to children in our care. We regularly listen to foster parents, the children living with them and the placing authorities.
• We have a system that makes sure different departments consult with foster parents, the children living with them and the placing authority. This system gathers feedback from every part of the agency using varied, accessible methods.
• We keep a list of consultation activities that shows how we consult, who leads the consultation, who we listen to, how it happens, how often and who is responsible. This variety makes sure consultation happens regularly with different professionals. The Registered Manager reviews this list often.
• We use feedback from these consultations to understand the quality of the service. The Senior Management Group discusses the findings, and any decisions are put into practice to make the service better.
• The Positive Aspirations Finance Manager checks the service's financial health each month and reports to the Senior Management Group monthly.
• The Positive Aspirations Group's Regulatory and Compliance Lead has systems that check we meet all standards. These systems review all records to safeguard the service's compliance, highlight any concerns and identify patterns or trends. If an issue is found, the Registered Manager takes prompt action.
• The Positive Aspirations Group's Regulatory and Compliance Lead meets Registered Managers every month.

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**Management**

Positive Aspirations Senior Management Group makes sure all employees' work and all fostering activities follow the 2011 Regulations, the National Minimum Standards and our policies and procedures.

Positive Aspirations has a value statement that sets out our core values, shaped through consultation with staff, carers and panel members.

Managers, staff and foster carers know their roles and responsibilities. Each job description clearly shows how much responsibility and decision-making authority the manager has and the lines of accountability. Managers and staff also receive a handbook.

An organisational chart clearly shows lines of accountability and responsibility. Each person has one manager who provides regular supervision.

If the Registered Manager is away, another Registered Manager within Positive Aspirations Group is

available to lead on any serious incident or allegation until the Registered Manager returns.
The registered person makes sure copies of Ofsted inspection reports are shared with all staff, foster carers, children fostered by the service and their parents/carers and, on request, with the responsible or placing authorities of children already with us or being considered for placement. Inspection reports are also posted on agency websites.
In addition, Positive Aspirations Group:
• shares written reports on the management, outcomes and financial state of the fostering service with all Senior Managers and Directors every month; these are discussed at the Senior Management Group meeting;
• reviews the management and outcomes of the services at the Monthly Management Learning Group meeting to be sure the service is effective and achieving good outcomes for children;
• checks compliance with the conditions of registration every six months and submits the Regulation 35 report of the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 (as amended) to Ofsted;
• notes that the Regulation 35 report gives Ofsted information about monitoring the matters in Schedule 6 and about actions to improve the quality of foster care;
• provides this report every six months and includes feedback from children in foster care, foster carers and placing local authorities. The report identifies key issues and shows how the service is developing and improving.

The registered person takes action to deal with any concerns they find or that are raised with them.
Staff, volunteers and foster carers have copies of:
a. the policies and working practices for grievances and disciplinary matters;
b. details of the services offered;
c. the equal opportunities policy;
d. health and safety procedures.
Staff can access these documents on the agency's database system, and foster families receive them through their handbook, the Foster Carers Charter and the Foster Carers Agreement; they are all covered during induction.

Local authority tenders are managed by the Financial Controller and the Placements Team Manager with input from Registered Managers. The tenders meet commissioners' requirements and follow competition and marketing laws. Information provided to commissioners includes:
a. charges for each service;

b. statements of payments to foster carers (showing fees and allowances separately); and

c. any payments for other services, such as health and education, when required.

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**Representations and Complaints**

In line with the Positive Aspirations Representations and Complaints Policy, the Registered Manager keeps the written policy and procedural guidelines for handling representations and complaints up to date with legal requirements and statutory guidance. This policy is reviewed every three years.

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**Facilities**

In line with NMS 16, Positive Aspirations Group provides oral and written information in ways that suit each child’s physical, sensory and learning needs, communication style and language. We can offer reading support, translation, pictures, audio recordings and explanations for anyone who needs help understanding a document.

To meet the needs of a wide range of children we have two children’s guides for different ages or needs. These guides are also available in different languages, including braille. For children with physical, sensory or learning impairments or communication difficulties, we arrange alternative ways to share the information.