



Statement of Purpose

Kindercare Fostering Northern Ireland
June 2021





This Statement of Purpose is provided to and made available to employees, carers, Trusts, children and young people in placement and to the general public via the Kindercare Northern Ireland website or in hard copy when requested.

The statement of purpose is reviewed and agreed annually by the Senior Management Team.

www.kindercareni.co.uk



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Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

We will build incredible futures by empowering vulnerable children and young adults in the UK to be happy and make their way in the world.

Our Mission

Every day we improve the lives of those we educate and look after, their families and communities through a relentless focus on learning and caring.

Our Values

Open & Honest

- Be fair and transparent.
- Do the right thing.
- Be respectful.

Deliver Promises

- Be accountable.
- Take responsibility.
- Be committed.

Dream Big

- Make positive changes.
- Aspire and Achieve.
- Be ambitious.

Be Inclusive

- Value diversity.
- Create safe, nurturing environments.
- Care about each other and what we do.

OneTeam

Together we inspire trust, happiness and an infectious passion to accomplish our vision.





Principles

The Principles within the Children Order (NI) 1995 guidance and regulations volume 4: fostering services (referred to as statutory guidance), The Fostering Services (NI) Regulations 2016, The National Minimum Standards (NI) 2016 underpin the policies, procedures and good practice of the Kindercare Northern Ireland Fostering Agency, its foster carers and employees.

The Welfare Principle

The welfare of the child or young person comes before and above any other consideration is reflected in our support and service delivery to ensure that the education, health, identity and welfare of the child is paramount.

Valuing Uniqueness

Kindercare Northern Ireland provides each child and young person with a carefully matched placement which reflects and supports their individual needs.

Working in Partnership

Kindercare Northern Ireland's staff and foster carers work in partnership with the child, birth parents, social workers and other individuals and agencies to ensure the best outcomes for the child.

Consultation

Kindercare Northern Ireland believes that children must be listened to and heard and their wishes and feelings taken into account in the planning for their futures and in the development of the services the agency provides.

Investors in People

Kindercare Northern Ireland has achieved the celebrated Investors in People Gold Standard Award.

It is only awarded to well-run companies that meet set criteria, including learning and development, leadership skills and recognition and reward of staff.



Aims and Objectives

“Celebrating and Supporting Children is our pledge”

Kindercare Northern Ireland will help children and young people to feel safe, nurtured and happy so they can enjoy their lives and achieve their potential.

The primary aim of Kindercare Northern Ireland is to put Children and Young People first by offering a child centred service.

At Kindercare Northern Ireland the physical and emotional safety and well-being of the child or young person in care always comes first. Kindercare Northern Ireland prides itself on offering a high quality and professional service that is built on good relationships with our stakeholders, careful selection and management of foster carer's and the careful matching of children and young people.

Kindercare Northern Ireland is dedicated to measurably improving children and young people's lives and future outcomes. We are achieving this through:

- Delivering outstanding support and training to carers
- Working openly and in partnership with Trusts
- Committing to the continued development of our professional team

Kindercare Northern Ireland aims to surpass the statutory framework and the associated codes of conduct. All the policies and procedures are written and subsequently monitored and reviewed with reference to these codes, legislation and guidance. Every Child Matters is embedded into all aspects of training and development for carer's.

Kindercare Northern Ireland staff and all of our carers are trained in the Therapeutic Model of Care, and has a dedicated Training Manager who manages and oversees the Kindercare Northern Ireland training and development programme for its carers.

Kindercare Northern Ireland also provides a wide range of child-centred services that are innovative and progressive via our Outreach Service and a number of innovative initiatives have been introduced including an independence training programme and a magazine for young people, called teenlines and kidlines.

Our objectives include:

- Working in partnership with Trusts and agencies to find the right caring solutions for children and young people – many of whom Trusts find difficult to place. Our specialist fostering service is designed to complement and support existing Trust provision, not replace it
- To broaden the choice of services on offer to children, young people and their families who are in need of support. Fostering teams often find our services particularly useful where children and young people are difficult to place, for example, because of a need for a specialist service, to remain with siblings, or in cases where an emergency placement is needed and no in house placement can be found
- To provide a workforce who are appropriately qualified, experienced and registered with their professional regulatory bodies. The company is committed to continuous professional development for all employees

Carers and young people are supported 24 hours a day and 365 days per year by supervising social workers supported by the Team Manager and Service Manager.



Children and Young People's Rights

Koulla Yiasouma is the Children's Commissioner for Northern Ireland. The Commissioner and her team make sure that adults in charge listen to children and young people.

The role of the Children's Commissioner was created by the Children Act 2004 and is there to promote the views of children and young people from birth to 18 (up to 21 for young people in care or with learning difficulties).

Their Vision

A society where children's and young people's rights are realised, where their views shape decisions made about their lives, and they respect the rights of others.

Their Mission

We will promote and protect the rights of children in Northern Ireland. We will do this by involving children and young people in our work and ensuring their voices are heard. We will use our statutory powers to undertake enquiries, and our position to engage, advice and influence those making decisions that affect children and young people.

How can young people have their say?

Children and young people can have their say by answering questions, creating shapes in Shape It! and uploading content such as videos, PowerPoint presentations and photographs. We use their views to shape our policies and influence decision-makers.

- Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, Equality House, 7-9 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast BT2 7DP
- Tel: 028 9031 1616
- Email: info@niccy.org
- Twitter: @nichildcom
- Facebook: @nichildrenscommissioner

Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a legally-binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

Since being adopted by the United Nations in November 1989, 193 countries have ratified the convention, meaning they have agreed to do everything they can to make the rights a reality for children around the world.

All signatories are bound to the UNCRC by international law, and its implementation is monitored by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Under the terms of the convention, states are required to meet the basic needs of children and help them reach their full potential. Central to this is the acknowledgment that every child has basic fundamental rights. These include:

- The right to life
- The right to his or her own name and identity
- The right to be protected from abuse or exploitation
- The right to an education
- The right to having their privacy protected
- To be raised by, or have a relationship with, their parents
- The right to express their opinions and have these listened to and, where appropriate, acted upon
- The right to play and enjoy culture and art in safety



Committed to Equality and Diversity

Kindercare Northern Ireland recognises the diverse society and communities in which we all live and work. We embrace diversity and promote equality of opportunity. We aim to recruit people from all backgrounds to reflect the demographics of the regions we cover.

We are aware however, that discrimination, prejudice, unfairness and oppression exist in every aspect of daily living, including education, employment, health and social care. We are committed to enabling all children and young people, foster carer's and employees to reach their full potential as individuals, unimpeded by discrimination, unfairness or oppressive behaviour within the organisation.

We want all children and young people in our placements, our foster carer's and employees to feel valued and treated equally and fairly in Kindercare Northern Ireland. Our goal is to ensure our values are embedded in our day to day working practices with all our stakeholders and service users.



Company Status

Kindercare Northern Ireland was founded in Belfast in 1999, and was one of the first independent fostering agencies to supply family placements and specialist professional family placement services to complement existing statutory provision for Trusts in Northern Ireland.

It is a not for profit company; registered in Northern Ireland No NI616776.

Kindercare Northern Ireland provides local placements to children and young people from the five Trusts covering Northern Ireland.

Kindercare is a member of The Fostering Network and CoramBAAF. All our Foster Carers have organisational membership of The Fostering Network.

Senior Management Objectives

The Senior Management Team, are responsible for strategic planning for the company including its business plan, in line with service user needs, direction and aims, organisational structure, policy and procedures, to incorporate new legislation, guidance and regulations, and financial commitments – our financial management ensures best value for our stakeholders.

They are also responsible for setting performance targets and the subsequent monitoring, in addition to ensuring the legal compliance of the organisation.

Kindercare Fostering Northern Ireland is a preferred provider for a number of the Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland.

Quality Assurance

Kindercare Northern Ireland's Quality Assurance manager, has a responsibility to ensure consistency of service across Kindercare Northern Ireland and has a monitoring and auditing role in relation to all aspects of Kindercare's work.

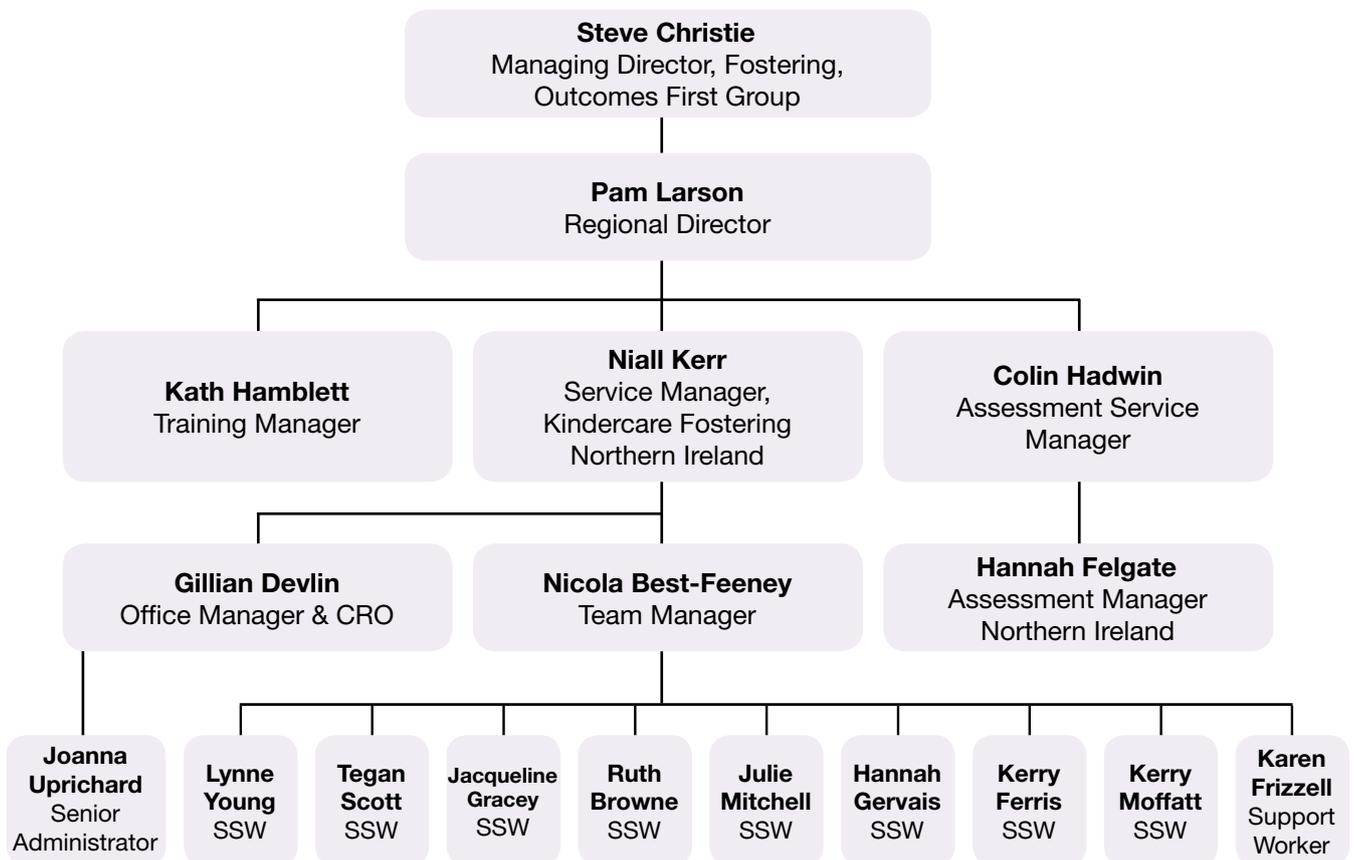
Issues arising out of complaints and allegations are managed, investigated and reported to the Quality Assurance Manager.



Management Structure

The company establishes clear roles for Managers and Employees and has well established lines of communication and accountability between Managers, Employees and Carers.

Kindercare Northern Ireland employs 13 staff and staff numbers are maintained in line with placement numbers, supported by a HR Manager and Quality Assurance Manager from a HR Business Partner of the parent company.





Our Employees

Operations Manager

The Regional Director works in close liaison with the Service Manager and the Group's commercial and operational directors and teams to ensure that the customer experience is excellent, through business development and the building and nurturing of relationships, to promote and develop excellent customer service.

Service Manager

The Service Manager is responsible for the management of the service in a defined geographical area. This includes the supervision and management of all staff and overall responsibility for the Kindercare Fostering Northern Ireland. They are responsible for budgetary control in their area and for producing the area business plan. The Service Manager is also involved with the development and implementation of the strategic aims and objectives of the organisation, and meets monthly with Senior Managers and Team Managers.

Assessment Manager

The Assessment Manager is responsible for the allocation, supervision and management of all assessments. They are also responsible for the recruitment, training, support and supervision of assessors. The Assessment Manager quality assures all reports that are presented to panel and works closely with Regional and Service Managers, Team Managers, Care Recruitment Officers and Panel Chairs.

Team Manager

The Team Manager is responsible for the leadership and management of the social work team ensuring that children and foster families receive a responsive service that safeguards and promotes welfare. They manage fostering resources supervising and working with a team to recruit, assess, supervise and support carers and their placements. The TM actively promotes and ensures the organisation provides quality, professional services for Trusts placing the safeguarding of children and young people at the heart.

Supervising Social Workers (SSW's)

SSW's undertake the assessment, support and annual review of Foster Carers. The SSW will also work in partnership with the LAC's social worker to ensure good outcomes for the LAC. SSW's support training and run support groups for foster carers, LAC's and birth children. The SSW's also run the duty system manage incoming referrals and work with Trusts in identifying the most suitable placements.

They operate the CHARMS system, a computerised management system which provides initial matching of referrals with foster carers using a wide range of criteria. The SSW are also responsible for collating data including placement outcomes and agreeing contracts and finance for placements. The SSW's provide Out of Hours support to our Foster Carers 365 days a year 24/7.

Office Manager/Carer Recruitment Officer (CRO)

The role of Office Manager includes ensuring the smooth overall running of the Kindercare Northern Ireland office, including the administrative function. The CRO is responsible for implementing the recruitment and marketing strategy, organising carer recruitment events and the initial screening of potential foster carers. The CRO works closely with the Service Manager, SSW, and the QA Manager.

Administration

Kindercare Fostering Northern Ireland's administrator is responsible to the Service Manager and supports the whole team.

Our Employees

continued

Support Worker

The support worker is responsible for providing additional support to fostering families who are dealing with the challenging behaviours of the children and young people they are looking after. This support is often imperative to help maintain these placements. The support worker also facilitates the meeting of the CYP participation group, and they are responsible for planning events and meetings. The Support worker also assists the rest of the Kindercare Team with other duties such as co-ordinating quarterly newsletters, social and family events.

Finance Team

The finance team undertake all financial duties in the company including invoicing, carer's payments, pay role, credit control and accounts payable.

Employees Qualifications and Experience

Kindercare Northern Ireland's office is based in Belfast and covers the whole of Northern Ireland and the 5 Health and Social Care Trusts. Headed by a Service Manager, a Team Manager with 6 Supervising Social Workers, Support Worker, Office Manager/Carer Recruitment Officer, Assessment Manager and Administrator.

The Service Manager, Team Manager and all Supervising Social Workers hold professional social work qualifications, and are registered with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. Kindercare social work employees are all experienced practitioners with a wide range of post qualification experience in the private voluntary and statutory sectors.



Complaints and Outcomes

Kindercare Northern Ireland complaints procedure aims to deal with complaints received in a prompt and equitable manner. The Regional Director is responsible for monitoring complaints and their outcomes.

Kindercare Northern Ireland Complaints Policy

All the children and adults with whom this agency comes into contact have the right to receive a good and professional service. If they do not feel they have received such a service, they have the right to complain and have that complaint listened to. If it is possible to identify a way forward with a complaint which is informal and therefore easily resolved, this should be the preferred option.

We would encourage all complainants to talk to the person with whom they have a complaint wherever possible as we find most complaints can be resolved at this point. Where this is not possible there will be a meeting between the complainant and the line manager of the person/s being complained about. A letter of resolution will be issued by the line manager detailing how the outcome was arrived at.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome at the initial stage, or if at the outset they require the matter to be dealt with by another employee of Kindercare Northern Ireland they will be asked to write to the Service Manager who will then contact the complainant within five working days to advise that the Regional Director has been instructed to investigate the complaint.

Following this investigation a report will be made available to the complainant outlining the outcome of the investigation. The Service Manager will invite the complainant to a meeting to discuss the report.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the report they must confirm in writing their reasons for their dissatisfaction to the Service Manager who will arrange for the complaint to be reviewed by an Independent panel within 28

days. Once the panel has reached a decision the complainant will be advised of the outcome within 7 days.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied they may take advice from the Regulatory Authority.

RQIA

- The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority, 9th Floor Riverside Tower, 5 Lanyon Place, Belfast, BT1 3BT
- Tel: 028 9051 7500

Children and Young people may also make a complaint to the Children's Commissioners based in Northern Ireland. Contact details below:

- Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, Equality House, 7-9 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast BT2 7DP
- Tel: 028 9031 1616
- Email: info@niccy.org

Support

It is the policy of Kindercare Northern Ireland to make its complaint procedures accessible, effective, fair and as independent as possible.

Sometimes children and adults need help and support to make a complaint.

The child may have support from his or her parent, social worker, Independent Visitor or foster carer. A child who wishes to make a complaint about any aspects of his or her care should receive assistance to access independent advice and support from their Independent Reviewing Officer. Any complaint made by a Looked After Child will also be referred to a recognised advocacy service if the child wishes.

Foster carers may enlist the help of a supporter or advocate or their Supervising Social Worker, as appropriate, to make a complaint about the agency under this policy or where appropriate, about the placing authority under the relevant local Trust's complaints procedure.

Complaints and Outcomes

continued

Allegations of Abuse

If any complaint is made to any employee of Kindercare Northern Ireland that is clearly of a child protection nature that complaint will be immediately passed on to the relevant Trust, the responsible authority and RQIA will be informed.

If at any time during an investigation into a complaint it becomes clear that there may be child protection implications, the current investigation will be halted and the relevant Local Trust will be notified immediately, and the responsible authority and RQIA will be informed.

Where a complaint is made against a registered person, RQIA will be notified; both of the nature of the complaint and of the outcome. This action will be undertaken by the Regional Director of Kindercare Fostering Northern Ireland



Services

We are passionate about improving the quality of life for children and young people.

We pride ourselves on finding the closest possible match when children need to be placed in foster care. Each carer is rigorously assessed and constantly supported, trained and monitored to ensure the best possible outcomes for each child. We provide the following flexible services

- Short and long term fostering placements
- Bridging and respite care placements
- Parent and child placements
- Sibling group placements
- Emergency placements
- Unaccompanied minor's placements
- Disability placements
- Remand placements
- Outreach services
- Staying put (GEM)
- Supervised contact
- Form F Assessments
- Independent living programme
- Assessment placements
- Court reports
- Bridge to Foster Placements

We underpin our placements services by:

- The recruitment of a diverse range of carer's throughout Northern Ireland by our dedicated and highly experienced Carer Recruitment Officer.
- The assessment of carer's through a rigorous and comprehensive screening process lasting between three to four months
- Statutory checks, including medicals and enhanced AccessNI checks
- The taking up of extensive references (minimum of three)

- Independent Fostering panel for recommendation for approval of potential carer's
- Ongoing support to carer's is via a dedicated emergency support system provided by the Supervising Social Workers, Registered Manager, Team Manager and Service Manager. The carer's can access this facility 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year
- Regular, relevant training and development for carer's
- Regular support groups
- Children and Young people participation groups
- We work in close partnership with the local Trusts
- The management, support, supervision and monitoring of placements, including placement planning meetings, case conferences and regular reviews
- Continuous assessment of carer's, including annual household reviews and regular updating of references, medical checks, educational checks, household checks etc.
- Special events and activities for carer's and children



Carer Recruitment, Assessment and Approval

Prospective Carer Pack and Registration of Interest Form

Individuals who contact using the application form or who we contact as part of a recruitment drive will undertake a screening call within 3 days of the enquiry with the Carer Recruitment Officer. This information will enable a decision to be made whether or not to proceed with the enquiry and to send out an Enquiry Pack and proceed to the next stage, an Initial Visit.

The Prospective Carers Enquiry Pack contains the following documents:

- Introduction letter
- Statement of Purpose
- Kindercare Fostering Information
- Carers task description
- Case studies
- Complaints procedure
- Foster Carer Journey flow chart
- Registration of interest form

A Supervising Social Worker will make contact by day 7 of the enquiry, to set a date of an Initial Visit within 24 hours of a successful screening call which should be completed within 2 weeks. Following the initial visit the applicant is advised of their success or otherwise. If successful the Assessment Manager will allocate an assessing Social Worker who will start the checking and assessment process, which is expected to take a maximum of 4 months.

Assessment Process

All fostering assessments will be undertaken in accordance with the National Minimum Standards, BAAF Form F format, equal opportunities policy and any other relevant legislation and or policy in force at the time of the assessment.

The assessor will assist the applicant in completing all relevant statutory check forms including AccessNI checks and references.

The assessor will also agree a schedule of visits to complete the assessment. The Applicants will be invited to undertake Skills to Foster training which forms part of the assessment. Applicants will need to have a medical with their GP prior to approval.

The assessment is very comprehensive and produces a report that covers past and present relationships and partnerships, support networks, individual profiles, interviews with children and adult members of the household, lifestyle, parenting capacity and experience and valuing diversity, as well as a Health & Safety check of the home.

This report will be presented to the Kindercare Northern Ireland's Independent fostering panel. The applicants will also be required to produce a family portfolio which includes photographs, descriptions of family lifestyle, household rules etc.

The assessor will invite the applicants to attend the panel and will advise the applicants in advance, how the panel presentation meeting will be organised and what part they will play in it, the assessor will also attend the panel. The panel members experience derives from a variety of backgrounds, including education, health, social care and fostering.

Following the panel presentation, the applicants will be notified immediately of the panel's recommendation in respect of their application. However the final decision as to the applicants' approval will be made by the Agency Decision Maker.

In line with the Fostering Regulation (NI) 2016 if, at any time during the assessment, the assessor feels the applicant falls short of the standards required, this will be discussed with the Service Manager immediately.

Any areas of shortfall will be investigated and where training or support will not bring the applicant up to acceptable standards, the assessment will cease. The assessor will inform the applicants of this decision and the reasons within 48 hours.

Post Approval

The applicants will receive written confirmation of their approval, a foster carer agreement and foster carers handbook. Where panel have asked for further work or clarification, the assessor will agree a timescale for this work to be undertaken.

Where approval is given and all checks are complete, the household details will be entered on to the CHARMS system which acts as a central register, and the carer allocated to an SSW.

The CHARMS system will then be able to provide a matching service between the Foster carer and a child/ young person referred to Kindercare Northern Ireland.



Annual Reviews

Each Fostering Household will have a review annually, unless there are significant changes to their circumstances in which case we will conduct a review at that time. These circumstances include –

- After the final strategy meeting of an investigation involving a carer(s)
- Where allegations have been made regarding a carer(s) child care practice and no investigation is pursued
- Where there has been a breakdown in the approved carer's relationship resulting in one carer moving out of the household. In this instance both carer's will be subject to review except where one/or both carer's has given notice of an intention to resign
- Where there have been significant changes to the carer's lifestyle
- Where there has been the death of a carer
- Where a carer has been diagnosed with a serious illness
- When a carer has stopped or started living with a partner
- Where a carer is not working in partnership with the agency including a lack of willingness to attend training

The annual household review will address the carer's training and development needs for the next year and suggest, if required, alterations to their approval status. The CM (Child Matters) outcomes are covered to provide a picture of how the carer works with the children and young people in their care.

Reports will be requested from the responsible social worker, school, SSW, carer, the child/young person in placement, the birth family (if appropriate) and any other interested party. An Independent Reviewing Officer will chair the review either in the respective office or within the carers home.

Following approval, the carer's first review report and every third year the annual review will be presented to the Fostering Panel for their recommendation and comments and subsequently the Kindercare Northern Ireland's decision maker for approval. Carer's will be invited to attend all panel reviews.



Matching Process

All Children and Young People are closely matched to ensure that their needs are met by our skilled and experienced Foster Carer's. At Kindercare Northern Ireland we recognise that all children and young people are different and thus all placements are unique.

Our dedicated Supervising Social Workers are therefore on hand to assist local Trusts in finding the right match for children or young people. They work closely with the Foster Carers and local Trusts to ensure the best possible matches are made.

The matching process will consider the child's needs especially regarding the following key areas:

- Schooling/Education
- Expectations around contact, particularly in relation to the foster carers' part in facilitating and/or supervising such contact
- The child's identity/race/culture/religion
- The child's history
- The child's behaviour
- The child's health
- The focus of the placement

The matching process will also consider the carer's availability and:

- Their experience/knowledge/skills
- Their address and the distance from the foster home to the child's school
- Any other children in the placement
- The foster carers' own children and other family members

Kindercare Northern Ireland will not propose a placement if the assessed needs of the child cannot reasonably be provided by the proposed foster carers.



Financial

Kindercare Northern Ireland Foster Carers receive a generous weekly fostering allowance, paid directly into the Foster Carers bank account on a fortnightly basis.

As part of the allowance paid to Foster Carers they will also receive a maintenance payment with additional payments for clothing, pocket money and birthdays and Seasonal Allowances.

Savings for children in care are deducted at source and saved in individual accounts administered by the National Fostering Group.

Detailed information and guidance on Rates and Allowances is provided to Foster Carers in the Foster Carers Handbook and a detailed annual statement is provided to each Foster Carer.

Foster Carers are self-employed and must seek their own advice on liability for Income Tax and National Insurance.

Local Trusts should contact Kindercare Northern Ireland for information pertaining to our charges for the different types of placements and support services offered.



Training and Development

Foster Carers

Kindercare Northern Ireland is committed to ensuring that foster carers are highly skilled and equipped to give children and young people placed with this agency a positive experience of fostering.

The Statutory framework for fostering informs the comprehensive training programme delivered to our foster carers to ensure their continual provision of high quality care.

The training provided is delivered by a dedicated training coordinator with input from external trainers. The training equips the foster carers to work with complex children and young people to ensure their quality of life is improved.

The foster carers are trained to develop an understanding and knowledge of the multi-racial and disadvantaged groups in our communities.

Kindercare Northern Ireland training is updated and reviewed annually to ensure the courses delivered are compliant with the latest guidance and legislation. The training schedules are planned and any new courses will be introduced at the beginning of each year. Each foster carer will have an annual performance development plan where training needs are identified and assessed.

It is expected that all our foster carers attend training regularly and that they further their development in a variety of ways. The carers are offered e-learning courses and are encouraged to read widely and at times may attend relevant externally provided courses.

The carers will develop an understanding of attachment, safeguarding, promoting healthy living and managing challenging behaviour, including de-escalation techniques.

Support Group Hubs

Kindercare Northern Ireland provides hubs which are placed geographically in 5 locations across Northern Ireland, so that our foster carers can meet other carers in an informal setting to discuss topical issues. These meetings enable the carers to share experiences of fostering and to discuss any issues that may be concerning them. Special

issues are often discussed with guest speakers being invited to address the support groups.

Helping Hands

Helping Hands is a peer led service which offers support and guidance for newly approved carers as well as carers who may be experiencing particular challenges and require additional support.

Foster Carer Participation

Kindercare Northern Ireland encourages experienced foster carers to participate in the delivery of some training courses and at recruitment events. This furthers the development of the presenting foster carer and enables newer foster carers or applicants to gain first hand insight into the fostering task.

We have a Fostering Forum run by a mix of foster carers who meet regularly and feed back to the Service Manager ensuring carers' voices are heard in the decision making process and direction of the agency. We send out carer questionnaires to ascertain the carers views on a wide range of subjects including our service to them. Feedback is gathered from carer's regarding their annual household review.

The Senior Directors and Managers meet with carers for an annual consultation event to ascertain their wishes and feelings.

As part of the QA audit process carers' views may be sought with one to one interviews being held and questionnaires being completed.

Employees

Kindercare Fostering encourages all employees to develop professionally by accessing e-learning and training courses where appropriate.

Employees will continue their training and development under the guidance of their regulatory body.

Each year all permanent employees will have an appraisal, part of this is an audit of training and development needs.



Support and Management of Carers

All Foster Carers have an allocated Qualified Supervising Social Worker.

It is the SSW's responsibility to manage and support the foster carer in the fostering task, backed up by their Team Manager and Service Manager. Both the Kindercare Northern Ireland SSW and foster carers are trained to ensure the children and young people's welfare is paramount.

They will work in partnership to ensure that the children and young people's needs are met and that they are provided with a safe, nurturing placement where they are able to meet their potential.

The SSW will visit the foster carers at least monthly to undertake supervision and at least one weekly phone call. These times are an opportunity to discuss the day to day care needs of the children and young people and how the foster carer is working to meet those needs and progress the care plan. Discussions about training needs will also be held at these meetings.

The SSW will undertake at least two unannounced visits to foster carers per year, one during the day and the other in the evening. Kindercare Northern Ireland also carries out independent health and safety inspections of each fostering household to ensure the standard of accommodation on offer is of the highest quality.

The SSW will attend all meetings and reviews with the carer, prepare reports for annual reviews and keep a thorough and accurate record of all fostering activity.

Kindercare Fostering has membership of coramBAAF and all our foster carers benefit from membership with The Fostering Network.

The teams are contactable at their local office during office hours, and for out of hours support, the foster carer can ring the duty number. The duty system is operated centrally and manned by the SSW's on a rota basis backed up by the Registered Manager, Team Manager and Service Manager.

All Foster carers have access to a SSW 24hrs a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year.



Contact Details

Registered Office

- Kindercare Fostering Northern Ireland, Unit 24,
40 Montgomery Road, Belfast, BT6 9HL
- Tel: 028 9002 0247
- Email: enquiriesni@kindercare.co.uk
- Web: www.kindercareni.co.uk



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