

# Statement of Purpose



**Future Families (West  
Midlands) Ltd  
Chamberlain House  
28 – 30 Hall St  
Hockley  
Birmingham  
B18 6BS**

URN SC395046



# Contents

<b>Introduction to Future Families</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Structure of the Agency</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Aims and Objectives</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Our Philosophy</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Commitment to Diversity</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Placements Offered</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Service Provision</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Safeguarding</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Complaints</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Finance</b>	<b>17</b>

# Introduction to Future Families

This statement of purpose had been developed in accordance with appropriate legislation and guidance contained in the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 (amended 2013)

This statement of purpose is made available to employees, carers, local authorities, children and young people in placement and to the general public. It is regularly reviewed and agreed by the Responsible Individual and the Registered Manager. It is published on the Future Families website.

Future Families is a small independent fostering service, situated in Birmingham. It is a limited company, staffed fulltime by a team of dedicated workers. Our aim is to provide a high quality service for looked after children. We believe that every child has the right to be brought up in a safe, caring home environment and the chance to achieve their full potential.

## **Name and Address of the Responsible**

### **Individual:**

Pauline Wellington  
Chamberlain House  
28 – 30 Hall St  
Hockley  
Birmingham  
B18 6BS

## **Name and Address of the Registered Manager:**

Nicola Bettinson  
Chamberlain House  
28 – 30 Hall St  
Hockley  
Birmingham  
B18 6BS

## **Name and Address of Inspection Body:**

Ofsted

All the activities of Future Families are inspected and regulated by Ofsted who can be contacted at the following address;

Ofsted

Picadilly Gate

Store St

Manchester

M1 2WD      Tel 0300 123 1231

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)



# Mission Statement

**Future Families strive for positive outcomes for children and young people, providing a safe and healthy environment where they can enjoy their childhood; are encouraged to achieve and to contribute to their care.**



**We want to turn the lives of children around**

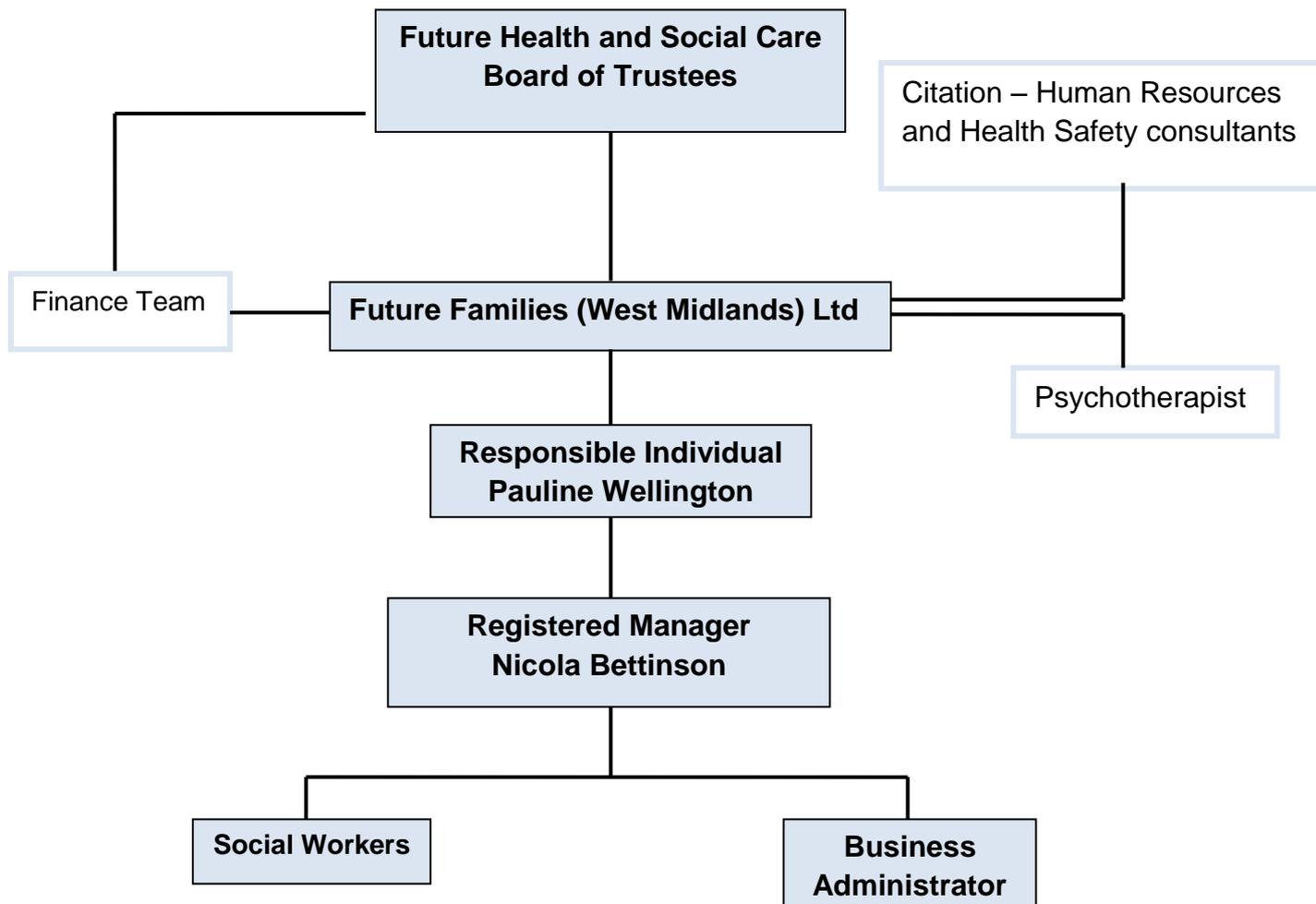
# Structure of the agency

## Company Structure

Future Families is an agency with a family feel. We have one office which is based in the Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham and we work with local authorities across the West Midlands. Our small team is highly qualified and experienced in working in fostering and our carers reap the benefit of their knowledge and skills

Future Families was formed in 2006 under the umbrella of Future Health and Social Care, a community interest company. In 2009 Future Families became a company in its own right and its managers report on a regular basis to a Board of Trustees. Tessa Griffiths, Chair of the Board also sits as an independent member on the fostering panel

The Responsible Individual and the Registered Manager work closely together to manage the agency and report regularly to and have meetings with the board. Monthly team meetings and regular support groups for carers ensure that all staff and carers are involved in the development of the service.



In addition to our permanent staff team Future Families also has a team of self – employed, qualified individuals who support the agency in a variety of roles. For example we have independent assessors who undertake some of our Form F assessments of prospective foster carers. Our learning and development programme is delivered by specialist trainers and we have an independent reviewing officer to carry out foster carer reviews.

Future Families ensures that all staff, both permanent and self-employed undergo all statutory checks, including written references, follow up telephone calls and enhanced DBS checks where appropriate. A record of all references and checks is retained. In addition all permanent staff are required to complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. All social work staff employed by Future Families have a current social work registration. The recruitment processes are robust and fully comply with regulations and national standards

Future Families' foster carers have access to a qualified psychotherapist, who was a looked after child herself and so has a unique insight, to provide them with additional support. We can also provide support with educational issues.

Future Families subscribes to the services of Citation who provide us with advice and guidance on employment law, human resources issue and who carry out regular health and safety checks on our premises. Future Health and Social Care in provide us with out our financial support services.

# Aims and Objectives

## Aim

Our aim is to recruit, train and support a broad range of families or single people who can provide emergency, respite, short term and permanent, fostering placements for children local authorities find difficult to place, i.e. children with mild to moderate special needs, children with disabilities, black children, white children, Asian children, children of dual or mixed heritage and unaccompanied children. Future Families is committed to the delivery of a service which meets high standards and which is compatible with the statutory and regulatory requirements of:

Fostering Services: The National  
Minimum Standards 2011 (amended 2013)  
The Children's Act 2004

The Children's Act 1989, Guidance and  
Regulations Volume 4 2011  
The Care Planning Placement and Case Review  
(England) Regulations 2010

The Care Planning Placement and Case  
Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous  
Amendments) Regulations 2013

## General Objectives

- To provide a diverse range of foster carers for children and young people aged 0-18 years that are unable to live with their own family. A fostering setting is therefore seen to be in the best interest of the child.
- To provide foster carers who can care for a wide range of children: sibling groups, children who have experienced physical, emotional, sexual abuse or mental trauma culminating in the experience of neglect, children with mild/moderate disability and children with special educational needs
- To value diversity and promote equality, by recognising the importance of a child or young person's ethnic origin, religion, cultural and linguistic background and to consider fully a child or young person's gender, sexuality or any disability they may have
- To ensure that our provision of foster placements provides high quality care to children and young people is a safe and healthy environment.
- To meet an individual child's needs and to promote their best interests, in accordance to their care plan
- To place children and young people with foster carers who have been recruited, assessed, approved and reviewed in accordance with statutory regulation and national standards
- To monitor and evaluate the services we offer from the assessment and preparing of foster carers to the supervision and support, in line with government regulations.
- To provide foster carers who are specially trained and approved for parent and child placement.
- To implement and evaluate an annual recruitment plan, with the purpose of identifying foster carers with whom children in the care system may be placed with minimal delay.
- To provide foster carers with a named qualified social worker who will provide regular supervision of the placement with access to specialist advice from appropriate professionals. In addition carers will have access to a psychotherapist who will provide reliable and insightful advice and support. The agency also makes available annual events and regular support groups which carers are encouraged to access.
- To promote children's rights and attain children's/young people's views with regards to their placements and ensure that their views are represented.
- To protect and safeguard children and young people from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation
- To develop a child or young person's sense of identity and self worth.

- To promote the child or young person's health and wellbeing including their physical, psychological and emotional welfare
- To promote and encourage educational achievement and attainment
- To help young people to develop relevant life skills and acquire the knowledge to prepare them for adult life
- To provide specific and more intense support to carers and children or young people at times of stress/crisis
- To maintain a fostering panel of suitably qualified people, including access to education, legal and medical advisors.
- To negotiate funding from local authorities wherever possible, to secure required services to meet the needs of children placed.
- To identify the training needs of Foster Carers through supervision and carers annual review. In terms of staff, training is identified through supervision and annual appraisal.



## Our philosophy

- Future Families philosophy is that every child has the right to grow up in a family environment where they are nurtured and feel safe. In doing so, Future Families annually evaluate its service to improve practice, (this includes feedback from foster carers attending training, undergoing the assessment process, panel attendance and support of placement). In addition, Future Families seek feedback from stakeholders, children and young people to inform its practice.
- All staff employed by Future Families are DBS checked and are supervised regularly to ensure that the agency's policies and procedures are followed and that standards are maintained. Social workers are registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC). Training needs are identified through annual appraisals and supervision and all workers have an annual training programme.

- Future Families ensure that all staff have access to the Staff Handbook which details the agency's equal opportunities policy, Health and Safety, conflict of interest policy and Grievance and Disciplinary procedures
- Decisions regarding placements are made through Future Families and the local authority working in partnership and with the child's needs being paramount.
- Placements are monitored through supervision, to ensure Foster Carers are carrying out their roles and responsibilities, in accordance with the agency policies and procedures and in line with the Fostering Regulations and Minimum Standards 2011
- Foster carers are expected to report and record all incidents. The agency has a system in place for the reporting and recording of all Notifiable events which would be reported to Ofsted and other relevant regulatory bodies.
- Future Families provide Foster Carers with lockable storage boxes for confidential information.

## Commitment to Diversity

Future Families recognise the diverse society and communities in which we all work and live. We embrace diversity and promote equality of opportunity. We recruit people from all backgrounds to reflect the communities we work with. We have carers from diverse family backgrounds, such as White British, Black Caribbean, Black African, White Irish and Asian Bengali and Asian Pakistani. We pride ourselves in being inclusive and welcoming and would consider prospective carers from single people and couples and we are open to applications from the LGBT community.

The children we care for, also come from many family backgrounds and our staff group are also a diverse mix of people.

Future Families Equal Opportunities Policy applies to all staff and foster carers. Valuing Diversity is one of our core courses and as such is mandatory for all carers. We want all children and young people, foster carers and staff to feel valued and treated equally and fairly.

The agency considers the needs of all children and young people referred to us in the areas of race, gender, culture, religion, sexuality, ability and location and will endeavour to promote each young person's sense of identity through appropriately matched placements.

There is a commitment to challenging individuals or groups who discriminate against any of our young people in any way.



# Placements Offered

**Future Families provides a range of placements as defined by the local authorities who commission our services**

- Emergency placements provided at short notice, including out of hours
- Short term placements can provide care for a few days, weeks or months whilst plans are being made for the child's long term future
- Bridging placements, which are short term flexible placements focussing on helping a child's transition from one placement to another.
- Long term placements are placements where the foster carer/s provide continuing care for a child up to and into adult independence
- Permanence is where the care plan is for the child to remain with that carer until adulthood.
- Sibling placements are placements that allow brothers and sisters to stay together
- Solo placements are placements for children and young people who need to be placed on their own due to their very complex needs
- Unaccompanied Children are placements for unaccompanied asylum seekers. These children need support to deal with immigration, and to support them to learn English, understand the culture and to integrate into the community.
- Parent and Child arrangements – these provide a family based environment where parenting skills can be modelled, observed and assessed. Our carers receive specific training to undertake these placements.

- Respite placements – these placements provide support to other Future Families foster carers to either have a short break or to support them with a child who has particularly complex needs.



# Service Provision

Future Families recruits foster carers from different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds and from all parts of the community. We need carers who bring a variety of experiences to the fostering task.

## Application Process

### Initial visit

Once applicants have expressed an interest in fostering for Future Families they will receive an initial visit to them in their own home. All initial visits are undertaken by qualified social workers who will provide the prospective applicant with realistic information about the fostering task and the support offered by Future Families. The discussion will also consider the potential carers skills and motivation to foster.

### Application

All prospective applicants will be asked to complete a comprehensive application form and to consent to checks and references being undertaken.

### Assessment

Assessments of prospective foster carers are carried out within a given timescale by a qualified social worker in accordance with the Fostering Regulations 2011 (amended 2013)

There are 2 stages to a foster carer assessment. Stage one includes DBS checks (criminal record checks) checks with the local authority and medicals are undertaken. Each applicant must provide 3 personal references and in addition employment references will be taken up. Ex partners with whom applicants have jointly parented a child will be interviewed unless there are exceptional circumstances that make this inappropriate. Applicants' children, including adults will be interviewed as part of the assessment process.



Should sufficient concern be raised by any of these enquiries then a decision not to proceed may be reached. In such cases the Registered Manager will inform the applicants in writing of the decision and the reasons for this.

As part of the assessment prospective foster carers will be required to attend a three day Skills to Foster training programme which will help to prepare them to foster.

In addition an evidenced based written report will be produced, using the Coram BAAF form F template, which will explore:

- The applicants motivations to foster
- Their capabilities and individual skills.
- Their understanding of child development and the needs of children
- The views and involvement of all household members and the applicant's children who may live away from home.
- The impact that fostering might have on the family.
- Safer care

## Approval

The applicants will have an opportunity to read and comment on their Form F assessment prior to it being presented to our fostering panel. Applicants are expected to attend panel with their assessing social worker. The panel makes recommendations to the agency regarding the suitability of the applicant to foster. The Agency Decision Maker takes full account of the panel's recommendations when reaching the decision about approval.

Should the agency not recommend approval the applicant will be informed in writing of the reasons for this decision. The applicant will be provided with information regarding their right to appeal or to access the Independent Review Mechanism.

Successful applicants will be informed in writing and will be provided with a Foster Carer Agreement confirming their approval as a foster carer for the agency. The agreement provides detail about their terms of approval and outlines the expectations of both the foster carer and the agency.

All foster carers are provided with information of the agency learning and development programme and they are expected to complete their Training Standards portfolio within one year of approval



## Transferring Carers

Foster carers have choices and may in some instances make the decision to move agencies. In these circumstances the Fostering Network protocol is followed. The agency would work with the responsible local authorities to make sure that the experiences of any children in placement are not detrimentally affected by the transfer.

## Reviews

The agency reviews carers' approval annually, or following a significant event or change in the household. The review is usually held at the Future Families office and is conducted by an independent reviewing officer. Foster carers are expected to attend their review meeting.

For all reviews a full report will be written by the supervising social worker and contributions will be sought from:

- The child's social worker
- The child's birth parents
- The child's school
- Any therapeutic service involved with the child
- The child
- Other household members
- The Foster Carers

The review provides an opportunity for the carer and the agency to reflect on the past year and plan for the next. It takes account of:

- Recommendations of the previous review
- Enquiries made and information obtained by the agency
- Outcomes for the children placed since the last review
- Any significant changes in the household or to the accommodation
- Training undertaken and support given
- Updates on all statutory checks
- Annual updates on the Health and Safety checks
- Annual update on the personal development plan
- Any concerns, complaints or compliments raised by the carer in relation to the agency
- Any concerns, complaints or compliments raised regarding the carer

The review report and recommendation submitted to the agency will then be presented to the fostering panel. Foster carers will be invited to attend. The panel recommendation and review reports will be considered by the agency decision maker. The carer will receive confirmation of their re-approval in writing.

## Referrals and Matching

On receipt of a referral from a local authority it is considered by a qualified social worker who will look at the needs of the child or young person and measure these against the foster carers with a vacancy based on:

- Their experience, knowledge and skills
- Their location and the distance from the foster home to the child's school or college and community
- Any other children in placement
- The foster carers' own children and other family members
- The child's individual matching requirements, including cultural needs and wishes.

All the information known about the child or young person from the referral will be shared with the potential foster carer and a discussion will be held about how the carers might meet the child's needs. Where gaps are identified then consideration will be given as to how these could be met with extra support or training.

The local authority will be sent information about the carers being proposed as a potential match. This will include the carer's profile and an additional 'child friendly' profile to be shared with the child to initially introduce them to the carers. The carers' form F and recent review will also be provided along with any other information requested by the local authority.

Potential risks will be considered as part of the matching process and a risk assessment and behavioural management plan will be completed on making the placement.



# Safeguarding

Future Families believes that one of the best ways to ensure that children and young people are safe is to have a culture of listening to children and taking what they say seriously.

At the time of their placement all children are given a copy of Future Families Children's Guide – this comes in two versions, dependent on the age and ability of the child – and includes a section on 'what can I do if I am unhappy'. They also receive other leaflets on child protection 'what's that all about' 1 (again in two versions), staying safe online and the Children's Commissioner. Foster carers are asked to encourage children to look at this information and make sure that they understand it.

Foster carers are given very clear guidance about safer caring. This is reinforced by mandatory core training which is repeated regularly and ensuring that all carers have a safer caring policy that is adapted to all new placements and reviewed at least annually. Social Workers and other staff are also expected to participate in safeguarding training and the agency's safeguarding statement is displayed in our reception by our signing in books.

Our policy is underpinned by our recruitment, training and assessment of all our carers and members of staff, in that the safer recruitment guidelines are observed in the recruitment of staff and extensive checks are undertaken on carers alongside a robust form F assessment.

When a child is placed with Future Families the supervising social worker is responsible for completing the risk assessment and behaviour management plan. This looks at the identified risks and puts into place steps to minimise and manage these. The risk assessment and behaviour plans are subject to annual reviews unless new information comes to light in which case they will be reviewed immediately. Future Families have clear procedures in relation to young people going missing and risk of child sexual exploitation and these follow local guidelines and we work closely with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Future Families have clear procedures in place to monitor critical incidents and accidents and for dealing with complaints and concerns about standards of care.

The Registered Manager is responsible for making sure that all such incidents are properly recorded and reported and that outcomes are achieved within an acceptable time scale.

Concerns about the standards of care issues or allegations against carers are conducted using the clear policy and procedures. The registered Manager oversees

all cases where carers' conduct is being investigated and ensures that referrals are made to the appropriate LADO based on the carers address.

Carers subject to allegations of abuse or standards of care have access through Fostering Network to independent advice and support. Following an investigation the foster carers are reviewed at panel with a recommendation for the future management of the foster carers. If a change of approval or termination of approval is considered necessary the carers will be informed of the appeals process, including an application to the Independent Review Mechanism.

# Complaints

Future Families has a comprehensive complaints policy and procedure which is made available to all service users: e.g. foster carers, children and young people. All complaints from foster carers, children, social workers or parents will be treated seriously and will receive a professional response. Any complaint received that is of a child protection nature will be referred to the appropriate local authority.

Children and young people who wish to make a complaint will be provided with and help to access an advocate to independently support them in making their complaint.

There are three stages to Future Families complaints and representations policy and this policy is made available to all foster carers and to other complainants on request.

The outcome of any complaint is discussed within the Future Families team so that we can continually learn and improve.

## Compliments

Compliments are equally as important in helping us to improve and these are shared across the team.



# Finance

## Fees

Future Families operates within a number of Framework Contracts, for independent fostering agencies, in the West Midlands. The fees agreed within each Framework are transparent and incorporates discounts for long term placements; placements matched for permanency and sibling groups. The local authority will issue a Individual Placement Agreement to confirm the price. Any variation on this due to a child's specific needs will be negotiated and agreed by the local authority.

## Carers' fees

The remuneration offered to the agency's foster carers reflects the quality of service the carers are expected to offer. Out of their fee carers are expected to meet the routine costs of looking after a child or young person.

## Financial Statement

The agency's income is generated entirely by the fees paid by local authorities for the placements made with the agency. The agency's expenditure comprises of fees to foster carer, staff salaries, and fees for support services and providing activities for children and young people.

Future Families is a community interest Company.



**Future Families (West Midlands) Ltd  
Chamberlain House  
28 – 30 Hall St  
Hockley  
Birmingham  
B18 6BS  
0121 234 6210**



(West Midlands) LTD 'Where every child matters today, tomorrow and in the future'