Statement of Purpose
2019-2020

Rainbow
FOSTERING
caring for
bright futures

Statement of Purpose updated 12th April 2019: next update March 2020
1 - Introduction

This Statement of Purpose has been developed in accordance with the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and associated statutory guidance (both as amended) and the National Minimum Standards 2011. This Statement of Purpose gives an outline as to how Rainbow Fostering manages its service, its fitness to provide fostering services and how the welfare of the children within its care will be met. It demonstrates the systems that have been put in place to recruit, train and supervise foster carers and staff.

The Statement of Purpose relates to the Children's Guide which is provided to all children in placement, according to their age and understanding.

The Statement of Purpose is available to all foster carers, prospective foster carers, children and young people in placement, parents and colleagues from Local Authorities and other agencies. A copy of the statement is also made available to Ofsted. The Statement of Purpose is reviewed annually by the senior management team and is also available on the website: www.rainbowfostering.co.uk

2 - Description of Rainbow Fostering Services

Rainbow Fostering services was established in 1998 to provide fostering services to children who are in need within the meaning of the Children's Act 1989.

It has an article of Memorandum, which clearly sets out the company's aims and objectives and its intention to recruit and provide services, advice, training and support to foster carers.

Rainbow Fostering services is a Private Company Limited by Shares. It is registered with Ofsted to operate in England and Wales.
Our Rainbow is a sign of the promise we make to our children & young people to respect and honour their inalienable rights as human beings.

If you care...foster care...
3 - Aims & Objectives

Aims

Rainbow Fostering is an Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) founded in 1998.

We work in partnership with Local Authorities, providing foster carers for children who need to be placed in a suitable home on an emergency, short or long term basis. We were set up with the aim of attracting carers from many different backgrounds. This enables us to match the right foster carer with the right child/young person according to their needs.

Services are offered to children on the principle that the child’s needs and welfare are paramount at all times and that their needs are best met within a caring and nurturing environment.

1In the context of this document, child/children refers to person(s) under the age of 18.

Objectives

• To institute a marketing programme that addresses the key motivators and barriers regarding the recruitment and retention of foster carers. This will enable us to identify potential carers who will possess the motivation and emotional resilience for the challenging nature of our referrals.

• Recruiting foster carers from a diverse range of backgrounds who can offer high quality placements to looked after children.

• Providing a pro-active, responsive and professional service to foster carers, children & young people and commissioning authorities.

• Ensuring that foster carers have access to the necessary support & training to assist them with the tasks of fostering.

• To deliver foster placements that provide looked after children with a caring, safe and secure environment where they can achieve their full potential.

• To meet the social, educational & health needs of young people in placement by offering a high quality service.

• Ensuring that the views of young people and foster carers are considered in services provided.

• Building strong relationships with existing and potential Local Authorities by offering high-quality foster placements.

• Ensuring all staff are up to date and knowledgeable regarding legislation, safeguarding and current good practice regarding fostering.

• Developing our service through consultation opportunities with foster carers, children & young people and commissioning authorities.
4 - Philosophy of Rainbow Fostering Services

The name Rainbow was chosen as it symbolises our view of the community our company serves. The children and families, with which Rainbow comes into contact, have different racial origins, religions, languages, cultures and customs. Britain is a multi-racial and multi-cultural society and Rainbow wished to represent this type of diversity and richness.

The Rainbow is also a sign of promise and that by working together adults can make a promise to children and young people to respect and honour their inalienable rights as human beings. This equally applies to foster carers, staff and professionals with whom Rainbow works to achieve best practice in foster care.

“ In order to ensure a high quality of service Foster Cares are required to promote the child’s welfare in such areas as their education, health, emotional and behavioural development, identity, social presentation, family, social relationships and self care skills. ”

5 - Standards of Care

The principles and standards of care of Rainbow Fostering Services Ltd are designed to be in keeping with the Care Standards Act 2000, Fostering Services Regulations (2001) and associated statutory guidance (both as amended) and the National Minimum Standards (2011). Foster carers must demonstrate their capabilities of providing safe care for children.

Rainbow Fostering Services Ltd Standards of Care ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is safeguarded and promoted
- Consideration is given to the child’s wishes and feelings
- The child’s religious, racial origin cultural and linguistic needs are promoted.

6 - Equality & Diversity

Rainbow has an equal opportunities policy that applies to staff, foster carers and allied professionals. The Equal Opportunity policy is based on the Race Relations Amendment Act, Sex Discrimination Act, Disability Discrimination Act and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. These pieces of legislation help Rainbow to make a clear statement of the intention not to discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, religion, language, disability, sexuality, age or on any other grounds. A copy of this policy is available on request.
Rainbow Fostering Services Ltd is managed in a matrix structure and is led by the Managing Director (MD). Strategic Direction is overseen by a Senior Management Team including the Managing Director, Registered Manager and Team Manager. The roles and responsibilities of staff are as follows:

- **The Managing Director**
  The Managing Director oversees the Company how it is run and determines what direction it should take. The Managing Director is also the Responsible Individual.

- **The Registered Manager**
  The Registered Manager is responsible for managing social work services, support services and foster carer development. They ensure that the company adheres to regulatory and statutory requirements. They also lead on day-to-day operations and development of the company, overseeing: data protection, contract management, placements, H&S, staff recruitment and Agency Decision Maker.

- **Team Manager**
  The Team Manager is responsible for managing the social work team as well as the Youth Participation Officer. The Team Manager also works alongside the Therapeutic Assistant Manager and the Placement and Recruitment Assistant Team Manager maintaining oversight of both of these roles. This is to ensure the efficiency and quality of service delivery as well as monitoring the development of the agency to ensure the maintenance of best practice.
• Placement and Recruitment Assistant Team Manager

The Placement and Recruitment Assistant Team Manager: is responsible for the management of placement and recruitment officers to ensure the delivery of a high quality service. To maintain oversight on matching and making sure placements are stable - consistently meeting the needs of children and young people.

• The Finance Manager

The Finance Manager: is responsible for managing the financial aspects of the company, including Foster Carer Allowances.

8 - Our Teams

Social Work Team

The Registered Manager is responsible to ensure that services are delivered to a high standard, in line with the regulatory requirements. Supervising social workers are line managed by the Registered Manager, Team Manager, Assistant Team Manager and Senior Social Worker. Supervising social workers are responsible for carrying out supervisory home visits, unannounced visits and support foster carers to meet the needs of children and young people. Supervising social workers also carry out Annual Foster Carer reviews and support foster carers to enhance their skills and knowledge. Supervising social workers meet regularly with children and young people in placement to ascertain their views regarding their foster placements. We also have a Youth Participation Officer who works with children.
Youth Participation Officer

The Youth Participation Officer is responsible for providing opportunities for the involvement and participation of our children. The YPO is also required to liaise with foster carers to communicate the benefits of our youth participation services. The responsibility extends to supporting children in their placements, as well as providing advocacy when needed. The YPO takes the lead in devising a whole range of activities; both during term time and the holidays, to enrich the lives of our children and young people. They are designed to be educational and FUN!

Duty Team

The Duty Team is responsible for liaising with Placing Authorities regarding the matching and placement process. Duty Officers liaise with foster carers regarding possible placements and ensure that foster carers receive all the necessary information to meet the needs of children/young people in placement. Duty officers follow a robust matching process to ensure that children are matched with the right foster carer.

Recruitment Team

The Recruitment Team is responsible for recruiting and assessing foster carers who can meet the needs of looked after children. The recruitment team is responsible for arranging recruitment events, Skills to Foster Training courses, assessment of foster carers and the panel process. The Team Manager is responsible for supervising Form F Assessors and quality assurance of documents presented to the fostering panel.
9 - Organisational Structure 2018 - 2019

Managing Director

- Finance Manager
- Registered Manager
- Independent Supervisor
- Marketing Content Management

Placement & Recruitment Assistant
- Team Manager
- Panel
- Central Admin

OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- Independent Social Workers Consultants
- Youth Participation Officer
- Supervisory Social Workers
- Foster Carers
In line with our aims and objectives, a range of services are provided to Foster carers, the Children/Young People in the care of Rainbow, and the professional agencies it works with. Rainbow Fostering provide placements for all children/young people from birth to 18 years of all nationalities, ethnicities and religions. Rainbow provides:

**Emergency Care:**
emergency foster care is provided at any time of the night or day to be provided for a few days. This type of fostering is available at short notice.

**Short-Term Care:**
providing care for anything from an overnight stay to a period of several months. This care is provided on a temporary basis until the child can return home to their own family or a longer-term fostering placement or adoption arrangement can be made.

**Long-Term Care:**
care provided for children and young people who cannot return to live with their families so need to stay in foster care until they are old enough to live independently.

**Respite:**
also known as ‘shared care’, this covers a variety of different types of part-time care. Care can be provided for anything from a few hours a week to a couple of weekends each month, giving a child’s own family or their full-time Foster Carers a break.

**Therapeutic Foster care:**
this is an area which we are developing in order to meet the needs of children who require a higher level of support on a daily basis. This will cover children who may be affected by conditions such as ADHD, Autism, Asperger’s syndrome, severe learning difficulties or any other medical conditions.

We will provide training to enable carers to support those children who have suffered physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect.

**Parent and Child Care:**
working alongside parents and their children is a unique opportunity to contribute to decision-making during a child’s early years and to promote and develop healthy attachments. The main aim of parent and child placements is to provide a safe environment for the child while an assessment of parenting capacity is undertaken. Rainbow Fostering services offer pre-birth placements and Parenting Placements. Our Parent and Child Policy specifies the safeguarding measures to be taken into account to ensure that the safety of all household members and any other looked after child(ren) are taken into account.

This includes the following measures:
- Matching considerations
- Training
- Risk Assessment completed for all parent and child placements
- Placing Alongside Considerations
- DBS checks for parents in placement
- Expectations regarding recordings and progress reports
- Safe Caring Strategies
- Support from Supervising Social Worker
Rainbow Fostering also provides some specialist placements by recruiting carers with professional qualifications or experience such as nurses, police, probation officers etc. These carers provide services to children with complex behavioural - and emotional issues.

**Staying put arrangements:**
where identified as a possibility in the child's pathway plan, and where the child requests it, we will offer a child a staying put place. This enables a child who turns 18 to stay on in their former foster care placement until they are 21 allowing them extra time to complete A levels or vocational studies, and either look for employment or go on to higher education. Staying put placements are not fostering and the former looked after child, as an adult member of the household, will need a DBS check to be carried out.

In order to prepare young people for independent living we provide Foster Carers with an allowance. We have a policy on savings for children/young people looked after by Rainbow Foster Carers and the savings scheme is administered by Rainbow. This money is made available to children/young people when they cease to be looked after by our Foster Carers.

**Rainbow Fostering Services provides a 24-hour emergency service.**
A number of Rainbow’s Foster Carers are available for short-term care thereby enabling them to accept emergency placements for individual children or a sibling group. The out-of-hours emergency service ensures that foster families can contact a named person in an emergency.
Rainbow Fostering Services value the contribution that Foster Carers are making to the development and well-being of children and young people in placement. Rainbow Fostering provides a high level and wide range of support to Foster Carers to enable Foster Carers to meet the needs of children and young people in placement. Types of support offered by Rainbow include:

**Support from a Qualified Social worker:**
the Supervising Social Worker (SSW) links with specific Foster Carers, and offers them support on a regular basis. All Foster Carers are introduced to a Supervising Social Worker when approved and they carry responsibility for liaising with the Foster Carer and other agencies on their behalf. Supervising Social workers also conduct home visits on a monthly basis, unannounced visits and annual Foster Carer Reviews.

**Foster Carer Training:**
all Carers receive relevant training in their area.

**Foster Carers Support Groups:**
Foster Carers are provided a space to meet regularly with each other and Senior Managers to give mutual support to each other and have direct access to putting forward ideas/concerns to Senior Management.

**Out-of-Hours Service:**
the out-of-hours service operates seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. Foster Carers know that they can always contact a member of staff should they need to do so. Supervising Social Workers are available 24 hours a day via the out-hours-service.
**Other Placement Support:**
where appropriate Foster Carers are given additional support, i.e. respite arrangements, group outings for foster children, birth children and events for whole foster families.

**Annual Review:**
all foster carers have an Annual Review to ensure that they continue to be suitable to look after foster children. Annual Reviews also provide an opportunity for foster carers to evaluate their practice and review their Professional Development Plan. Professionals and children in placement (including birth children) are invited to contribute to the review process.

**Foster Carer Handbook:**
all foster carers receive a copy of the Foster Carers Handbook. The Handbook contains information regarding the agency’s policies and procedures and is updated regularly.

**Foster Carer’s Annual Award Ceremony:**
the Annual Awards Ceremony acknowledges Foster Carer’s commitment to fostering - Foster Carer’s are nominated for achievement awards to acknowledge the work that they are doing with young people in placement.

**Finance:**
all Rainbow Foster Carers receive an allowance.
Rainbow offers a range of services to children who are placed with the agency. Foster Carers ensure that children/young people’s health, educational, psychological and emotional needs are met. Foster Carers work in partnership with various professionals to ensure that children and young people achieve their full potential. Young people in placement are encouraged to maintain positive links with birth families (if appropriate and part of the care plan) and Foster Carers play an important part in facilitating contact arrangements.

Children and young people are also offered opportunities to express their views at the Foster Carer’s Annual Review, contributing to Rainbow’s quality assurance systems.

**Types of support offered by Rainbow include:**

- **Child Saving Scheme** - every child or young person placed with Rainbow has £10 per week saved for them for the duration of their placement with Rainbow.
- **Reasonable access to a computer** - Rainbow encourages all Foster Carers to provide young people with reasonable access to computers.
- **Consultation with Children and Young People** - Rainbow takes the young people’s participation agenda very seriously and holds consultation events for children and young people to assess its performance and suggest ways in which it can improve. Children and young people are also encouraged to provide feedback for Foster Carer’s reviews.
• **Promoting Independent Living** - a support package is available to support young people age 15+ to promote their independent living skills. Young people are given the opportunity to attend training courses to prepare them for independence.

• **Children and Young Person’s Guide** - in accordance with the National Minimum Standards (2011), Rainbow has developed some Children’s Guides to compliment the Foster Carer’s Handbook. We have produced two guides, one is aimed specifically at children under 12 and the other aimed at young people over 12 years. Foster Carer’s are requested to go through the guide with children who are placed with them and ensure that they understand their rights. The Children’s Guide contains a list of important contact numbers that children and young people can use if they would like to speak to an independent person.

• **Children’s Annual Award Ceremony** - Rainbow holds an Annual Award Ceremony to give children and young people an incentive to do well regardless of whether this is in education, sports, progress within the placement or overall behaviour.
Rainbow Fostering is committed to the recruitment of a diverse group of Foster carers who can meet the needs of children and young people who are placed with the agency. The following process is followed when dealing with applications to foster:

- **Initial Home Visit** - takes place in the home of the prospective Foster Carer.
- **Application Form** - applicants complete this form which gives detailed information about them and their families. This includes each person giving written consent to carry out the necessary checks and enquiries to ascertain their suitability to foster.
- **Statutory Checks and References** - are undertaken regarding all applicants. This includes the following checks and references:
  - Enhanced DBS checks on applicants and adult members of the household.
  - Identity Checks and verification of personal history.
  - 3 referees who will provide written references and will also be interviewed.
  - Previous partner references (if applicable).
  - Medical Assessment.
  - Enquiries to Children’s Social Care.
  - Health and Safety Assessment.
  - Employment References.
- **Skills to Foster** - applicants are invited to attend this training course to enhance their understanding regarding the tasks of fostering.
- A qualified Social Worker carries out a Competency-based Assessment (Form F Assessment). This means that applicants are asked to demonstrate their competence to become approved Foster Carers. We advise applicants that they must provide evidence of their suitability to foster vulnerable children and young people. We will also gain additional evidence from our observations when applicants attend the ‘Skills to Foster’ course. Throughout the assessment process information is gathered using CoramBAAF assessment form called a Form F.
- In addition, we expect all Foster Carers to have good written and spoken English skills, as well as good IT skills. These will be assessed at the same time as the Form F.
- The assessment process includes 6 - 8 home visits to the applicants and interviews with the applicants, household members, birth children and referees. Throughout the assessment process applicants are advised and helped to gather information and evidence providing examples of their relevant experiences and skills. This enables applicants to produce a portfolio of evidence.
- The Form and Portfolio are presented to the Fostering Panel. Applicants are given an opportunity to read the social worker’s assessment before it is presented to the Fostering Panel.
Rainbow Fostering Panel is compliant with the Fostering Services Regulations 2011. According to these regulations, all fostering services have to set up a Fostering Panel to carry out the following duties:

- to consider applications and to recommend whether or not applicants are suitable to be approved as Foster carers,
- recommend the terms on which fostering approval is to be given (i.e. the number of children/young people, types of placement),
- consider Foster Carer annual reviews: the first review of newly approved Foster Carers will be presented to the Panel and any other subsequent reviews referred to it by the fostering service,
- to give advice and make recommendations regarding any other matters referred to them by Rainbow Fostering Services,
- to oversee the conduct of assessments carried out by the fostering service.

Pre-Approval Training

All potential Foster Carers are required to attend a mandatory training course (Skills to Foster Training) to enhance their understanding regarding the tasks of fostering. The training course covers the following areas:
- what do Foster Carers do?
- identity and Life Chances
- working together (as part of a team)
- understanding children in foster care
- Safe Caring
- Transitions

Post-Approval Training Courses

Rainbow Fostering Services understands the benefits of training and education. Training is provided to both Foster Carers, including developing parental skills, the management of difficult and challenging behaviour, Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity, Legislation, Working with Birth Families, Moving Children On, how to live independently etc.

All approved Foster Carers are required to complete the Training Support and Development (TSD) Standards within their first year of being approved. Rainbow supports Foster Carers to achieve this by running regular training courses for them and through the support of their Supervising Social Worker. It is also a requirement of Supervising Social Workers to discuss with their Foster Carers how they are getting on with meeting the TSD standards and check their portfolios. This helps Rainbow to realise its vision of substantially improving outcomes for children and young people by maintaining high quality standards.

Rainbow develops its training programme on an annual basis following feedback from Foster Carers. The programme is outsourced to experienced reputable training providers and covers a wide range of training sessions.
Training Support and Development Standards for Foster Carers

Foster carers are required to complete TSD workbooks within the first year of being approved. Rainbow Fostering provides the necessary support to Foster Carers (via regular workshop and meetings with Supervising Social Workers) to meet the TSD standards and complete their workbooks.

16 - Complaints

Rainbow Fostering services has a Complaints Procedure and the guidelines are clearly described in the Foster Carers Handbook. The Complaints Procedure indicates the types of actions that will be carried out if a complaint is made. In addition Rainbow has a ‘Whistle Blowing’ Policy, which is designed to give staff and Foster carers the freedom to expose any area of poor practice within the company. Complaints are handled by our Registered Manager. If you require a copy of the Complaints Procedure you can contact Rainbow Fostering Services on 020 8427 3355.

17 - Ofsted

Rainbow Fostering services are subject to regular external inspections by Ofsted. Inspection reports are publicly available, either via Ofsted’s website (www.ofsted.gov.uk), or by contacting the relevant Rainbow Fostering Office.

Ofsted is responsible for monitoring, regulating and inspecting fostering services provided by both Local Authorities and independent foster care providers, under the provisions of the Care Standards Act 2000.

Complaints or concerns regarding Rainbow Fostering can at any time be referred to Ofsted.

Ofsted,
Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street.
Manchester M1 WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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18 - Further Information & Service Development

If you would like further information please do not hesitate to contact Rainbow in writing or on the phone using the contact information outlined at the front of this statement.

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