



2026 - 2027

Statement of Purpose

Lighthouse Fostering



WWW.LIGHTHOUSEFOSTERING.CO.UK

Lighthouse Fostering

Where children shine





Contents

Introduction	4-5	Recruiting and Assessing	17
Our Mission Statement	6	Training and Support	18-19
Our Aims and Objectives	7	Reward Pathway	20-21
Standards of Care	8	Reviews	22
Matching process	9	Status and Constitution	22-23
Our Staff	10-12	Complaints and Outcomes	23
Fostering Placements	13-15	Contact Us	24
Safeguarding	16		



Introduction

Lighthouse Fostering was established in July 2015 and is based in Faversham, Kent. We pride ourselves on being a small independent fostering agency, with a family approach to looking after children in our care. In October 2025 we opened a satellite office in Heathfield, East Sussex which has enabled us to continue to fully support our foster carers and the children in their care within this area. We follow the safer recruitment process with all our staff and only appoint Lighthouse Fostering staff if they have the significant experience, knowledge and skills needed to promote positive outcomes for children and young people and can demonstrate a passion and dedication for wanting to exceed expectations.

Our resources are reinvested in the development of our services for children, young people and foster carers to ensure better quality of care.

Lighthouse Fostering has been established to provide a secure base, child centered approach and family-based experiences for children in the care of the Local Authority.

This Statement of Purpose has been developed to inform foster carers, parents caregivers, children and young people (Links with the Children and Young People's Guide to Lighthouse Fostering), colleagues in local authorities, Ofsted, and other interested parties, of our services and what to expect from our organisation.

Requirements

The Statement of Purpose has been prepared in accordance with the appropriate regulations including:

- ✓ The Care Standards Act 2000
- ✓ The Fostering Service Regulations (England) 2011
- ✓ Amendment to the Fostering Service Regulations (England) 2013
- ✓ The National Minimum of Standards for Fostering Services 2011
- ✓ The Children Act 1989 (amendment including Children Act 2004)
- ✓ Care Planning, Placement and Care Review (Regulations 2010)

It aims to provide children, young people, parents, carers, staff and other professionals with information about the agency and the services and facilities we provide, including:

A statement of the aims and objectives of Lighthouse Fostering, information about the services and facilities provided by Lighthouse Fostering. A copy of the statement is made available upon request to:

- ✓ Ofsted
- ✓ Purchasers of the service
- ✓ Any person working for or with the fostering service
- ✓ Any child (subject to age and understanding) placed with the fostering service

Any parent or guardian of any child placed with the fostering service children and young people are also provided with age-appropriate welcome guides which are in more suitable formats for them to understand. This Statement of Purpose is reviewed at least annually by the senior management team.

Details of our Status, Constitution and National Legislative & Policy Framework are detailed at the end of this document.

Our Statement of Purpose will be kept under review and where appropriate updated at least annually. The Statement of Purpose is saved and distributed electronically wherever possible to reduce environmental impact. On request, this statement of purpose is available in different languages.

Mission Statement

Lighthouse Fostering aims to provide outstanding, safe, child centered and secure based experiences for children in the care of the local authority. Lighthouse Fostering is where children can shine.

Insight:

With insight and clarity we can help foster carers make positive changes to the lives of young people.

Guidance:

Foster carers are given help and guidance to make transformational changes.

Hope:

We believe that no matter what the circumstances there is always hope for positive change.

Help:

We encourage foster carers to seek help when they need it and are available to them day and night.

Openness and trust:

We at lighthouse have a culture of transparency.

Understanding:

We help carers to develop a thorough understanding of the reason for children's behaviours.

Safety:

The safeguarding and welfare of our children and young people is our paramount consideration.

Empathy:

Throughout all our training we expect foster carers to demonstrate empathy for our young people.

Lighthouse Fostering staff believe that the way children behave makes sense when you understand their backgrounds. Training is important for foster carers to develop further in their understanding of the children they care for.

Lighthouse Fostering continues to support the Secure Base Model within all forms of our practice.

SECURE BASE MODEL

Availability

helping the child to trust

Sensitivity

helping the child to manage feelings

Acceptance

building the child's self-esteem

Co-operation

helping the child to feel effective

Family membership

helping the child to belong

Our Aims & Objectives

- To provide high-quality services that will promote and improve the life chances of young people.
 - To be committed to multi-agency working and the development of partnerships with local authorities by providing and designing services that will meet local needs.
 - To recruit foster carers who can demonstrate a genuine commitment to providing excellent parenting for all children who are looked after.
 - To carefully match the needs of children and young people with the skills and capabilities of foster carers.
 - To provide positive personal, social, and educational opportunities for young people in our care to ensure that positive outcomes are achieved.
 - To value, respect and promote individual cultural, religious, racial and gender needs in a non-discriminatory environment.
 - To encourage and empower children and young people to have a voice that is listened to and to ensure that they have an active role in the making of decisions.
 - To prepare young people for independence by providing opportunities to learn new skills and build their self-esteem and confidence.
 - To always embrace the values of the “Leaving Care Charter for Young People” by ensuring we, respect and honor their identity, believe in them, listen to them, inform, and support them, find the right home and be a lifelong champions and advocate for all our young people.
 - To consult with our foster carers, children, young people, and all stakeholders and ensure that they feel able to express their views and that these are listened and responded to.
 - To provide support, encouragement, and learning opportunities to enable foster carers to maximize their potential and enhance their knowledge and skills to effectively integrate a “care giving model”, a Secure Based approach to fostering. Our aim through the development of a caregiving model is to promote security and resilience for young people whilst with our families but additionally as they grow into self-reliant, confident adults.
 - To maintain transparency in our finances, policies, and procedures.
- And...
- To provide value for money.



Standards of Care

At Lighthouse Fostering, we believe that every child matters and that the needs, welfare and best interests of children and young people are paramount. Lighthouse Fostering sets out the expectations of our standards throughout all our documents but in particular our:

- ✓ Policy & Procedures manual
- ✓ Foster Carers Fostering Agreement
- ✓ Foster Carers Handbook
- ✓ Employee Handbook

At Lighthouse Fostering we believe that:

- ✓ Every child and young person have an inherent right to develop their full potential, regardless of previous life experiences.
- ✓ Children & young people have a right to be looked after by adults who offer respect, concern and affection within a secure base.
- ✓ Adults need to respect the significance of the child and their birth family, their race, culture, heritage and religion.
- ✓ Children & young people have the right to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- ✓ Young people should be suitably prepared for leaving care: leaving their Lighthouse foster carers with savings, educational attainment to support their chosen career and suitable independent living skills.
- ✓ The agency should be managed ethically, effectively, and efficiently.

All staff, foster carers and other adults who meet children through Lighthouse Fostering will be subject to appropriate checks and safer care vetting procedures, in addition, Lighthouse Fostering will:

- ✓ Comply with all the relevant legislation and strive to exceed the National Minimum Standards.
- ✓ Ensure the rights of children are promoted in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of The Child
- ✓ Child protection procedures are always followed robustly to ensure children and young people are safeguarded.
- ✓ Work in partnership with the local authority to identify the individual needs of the child and then deliver that care.
- ✓ Foster carers do not use corporal punishment, are skilled in behavioural management and do not do anything that demeans, degrades, or humiliates the young person in their care.
- ✓ Equality & diversity is always promoted, through recruitment, assessment, matching and placement support.



The Matching Process

We recognise and respect that every child and young person is a unique individual. At Lighthouse Fostering all placements are carefully 'matched' to ensure that the needs of children and young people can be best met by the foster carers put forward with their level of skills and experience. Referrals are initially received by the placements officer, who liaises closely with the social work team, local authority colleagues and foster carers, to ensure that the child's needs will be fully met through the best possible match. At Lighthouse Fostering, we take the decision to place a child very seriously and all decisions to place are overseen by Lighthouse Fostering's Registered Manager to ensure we have made the best possible match for the child and foster carer. Children and young people placed with Lighthouse Fostering will never be expected to share a bedroom with another fostered child or child of the foster carer, other than where they are siblings, if that is deemed in the children's best interests.

Referrals are shared with foster carers and they are encouraged to read carefully through the referral and ask further questions, the placements officer will relay this back to the local authority and request a matching meeting with the child's social worker. Specific training is also made available to support the foster carer to meet the needs of the child or young person.

Meet the Staff



Les Mitchell *Managing Director*

Les began his fostering journey over 20 years ago and spent a decade, alongside his wife, opening their home to children who needed a safe and loving place to grow. Those years shaped his deep commitment to making sure every child is truly heard, valued, and given the chance to reach their full potential.

As Lighthouse celebrates 10 years of providing outstanding foster care, Les is immensely proud of the organisation's growth and the impact it has had on children and carers alike. He believes that exceptional foster care is only possible when carers are supported by a skilled, compassionate team—one that stands beside them with the training, guidance, and confidence they need to thrive.

Les brings warmth, experience, and a genuine passion for children's wellbeing to everything he does. And yes—he's a Chelsea supporter, but we promise not to hold that against him.



Mary Vincent *Responsible Individual / Agency Decision Maker*

Mary brings over 32 years of experience in statutory children's services, where she has held both managerial and training roles within Children's Safeguarding. For the past 15 years, she has specialised in the fostering sector, joining Lighthouse Fostering in 2015.

Registered with Social Work England, Mary offers extensive expertise in supporting children, young people, and families with complex needs. She is deeply committed to promoting positive outcomes and ensuring high-quality, child-centred practice across all aspects of her work.

Outside of her professional role, Mary enjoys the freedom of the open road on her Harley-Davidson motorcycle.



Lisa Holness *Registered Manager*

Lisa has been a qualified social worker since 2014 working with both the local authority and independent fostering agencies. She has been in the role of registered manager since 2022 overseeing the running of Lighthouse and team of foster carers and staff. Lisa is proud to have overseen the agency's last Ofsted inspection, achieving "good" in all areas. Lisa describes her role as challenging but rewarding.

Lisa is married with two adult children and loves following her football team West Ham and is a passionate season ticket holder.



Jenny Vaughan *Assistant Fostering Manager*

Jen has worked in fostering since qualifying as a social worker in 2014. Jen started out in larger independent fostering agencies, where she built up experience managing big caseloads and completing Form F assessments. Jen moved to Lighthouse Fostering in 2019 because she wanted to be part of a smaller agency with a genuine family feel, which is what it's continued to be.

Jen's role as Assistant Fostering Manager is all about relationships. She works closely with foster carers to make sure they feel supported, heard, and confident in what they're doing. For Jen, it's about being someone they can turn to for advice, reassurance, or a bit of perspective whenever they need it.

Outside of work, life is full-on in a fun, chaotic way. Jen is a mum to three kids and a step-daughter, they have recently added a very energetic cocker spaniel to the mix... so there's never a quiet moment.



Shannon Francis *Senior Supervising Social Worker*

Shannon is a committed Senior Supervising Social Worker at Lighthouse Fostering, recently celebrating four years with the agency. Her passion for fostering is rooted in her own experience of being raised in a fostering family throughout her teenage years, giving her a deep understanding of the support carers and children need.

Shannon is dedicated to supporting foster carers, their families, and the children in their care, and she brings energy and creativity to organising the agency's activities and events. Always looking for new ways to strengthen support for carers, Shannon plays a key role in helping Lighthouse stand out as a nurturing, forward-thinking fostering community.



Lynne O'Shea *Supervising Social Worker*

Lynne joined the Lighthouse Team in August 2025. She was a foster carer for 16 years working with mainly teenagers, young offenders and children with drugs misuse.

Lynne has previously worked with two independent fostering agencies, supporting carer families and the foster children in their home.

It is important to Lynne to build good relationships with her carer's and their children, and her experience as a foster carer helps her to understand a carer's perspective enabling her to support them more effectively.

She really enjoys being part of the Lighthouse Team.



Emma Blazkowicz *HR, Marketing & Business Support*

Emma has worked for Lighthouse since October 2015, recently celebrating her 10 year work anniversary! Known for her super organisational skills, Emma manages multiple roles including the smooth running of admin & compliance tasks, foster carer recruitment, human resources recruitment and is also the panel administrator. Emma has recently started to work full time, enhancing her dedication and commitment to her role, describing her role at Lighthouse as diverse, rewarding & engaging.

Emma is a busy single mum to three boys!



Jane Blagden *Family Matching/Social Work Assistant*

Jane joined Lighthouse in 2021 and works full-time in her role as family matching and social work assistant. Jane also takes the lead supporting foster carers with regards to education and coordinates foster carer training.

Jane comes with a wealth of experience having worked within children's social care, a previous independent fostering agency and education where she was an assessments and placements officer, seeking school placements and writing education health care plans (EHCP's).

Jane has two grown up children and two very large, but lazy, fur babies.



Other staff used by Lighthouse Fostering

Lighthouse Fostering commission an experienced psychodynamic psychotherapist who delivers training to foster carers in the Secure Base Model, Attachment theory, Child development, Importance of play and communication, Mentalisation, Psychodynamic processes, and the Impact of trauma and neglect on development, including many others. With agreement from children's placing authorities, we are able to arrange high quality therapeutic input for children, (with regular reviews/reports to monitor progress) and commission specialist assessments to inform care planning. Our linked therapist can also offer clinical supervision and emotional support to our carers and their families where the need arises, and also facilitate clinical supervision for staff and offer reflective learning sessions on complex cases. At times and in agreement with the Commissioners for Local Authorities 1:1 therapeutic work is undertaken with the child/young person in placement, to support placement stability.



Bridget Hamlet
*Inhouse Psychodynamic
Psychotherapist*

Lighthouse Fostering has a bank of sessional support workers as well as qualified assessing social workers. These members of the team, work on an adhoc basis and will be commissioned as and when needed to help support the growth and development of Lighthouse Fostering. All bank staff are processed through our safer recruitment procedures.

Lighthouse Fostering has a diverse panel central list and each panel member has completed our safer recruitment process. The fostering panel has a crucial role in the provision and monitoring of foster care for children and young people. The making of decisions about approval, the terms of approval and assessing the continuing ability of foster carers to meet the needs of children is a central task focused on ensuring the child's welfare is paramount.

Fostering Placements

Long Term

We can offer permanent care to families who are committed and keen to support children and young people through their childhoods and into adulthood.

Emergency Placements

In these circumstances, there has usually been little time to undertake any introductions or planning and usually take place within 24 hours of the request for a foster family.

Short Term and Bridging Placements

These are often known as “task-centered placements”, which provide children and young people security during the development of their Care Plan. This may include the identification of a more permanent long-term foster family or for an assessment to be undertaken.

Short Break Care

Short Break fostering is when you provide care for a child or young person over a short period, usually somewhere in between a weekend to a fortnight. Short Break foster care gives families and foster carers a network of support when they most need it.

As a Short Break foster carer, you will join Lighthouse Fostering foster carers to support each other with Short Break care when required. We all know looking after a family and fostering is a demanding role so when things do get tough and you need time away, you can be there to provide that much needed support.

Parent & Child Placements

A foster carer caring for a parent & child placement is slightly different to other types of fostering – the foster carer is there to teach and support the parent so that they can hopefully move on to independence, but the role involves a lot more reporting and logging of activity. The foster carer helps contribute to the assessment if there are significant concerns about parenting capacity, and therefore the foster carer will be logging both positive and negative things that have been observed.

A parent & child foster carer will give support with skills for independence such as cooking, cleaning, budgeting and life skills. The role of the foster carer is also to provide an opportunity for enhancing the self-esteem and social skills of the parent, to support them in coping with trauma they've experienced and to ensure a positive experience for the parent & child.

Fostering Placements

Sibling Groups

We know that it is important for siblings to remain together where possible when they need a foster care placement. Children and young people placed in foster care tell us this is what they want. There may be occasions when siblings cannot be all placed together due to concerns of behaviour or risk, but in most instances, we strive to keep siblings together as much as possible.

For children coming into care, often the only support network or constant presence they have experienced comes from their siblings. After going through what can often be traumatic experiences together, being able to remain with their siblings group can bring safety, familiarity and comfort.

Remand Placements

Remand carers are recruited to be able to support young people through periods of immense pressure and anxiety before Court. The Court will have informed the young people that they have been remanded to the care of the local authority.

There are usually additional advisors that will also be involved in supporting the young person during this time and there may be certain conditions/instructions that the young person has to agree to.

Foster carers who can provide a family environment during this period will have undertaken additional training to enable them to effectively support young people. These are often short-term arrangements.

Unaccompanied Asylum seeking children (UASC)

Wherever and whenever possible we seek to match children with families from the same cultures and ethnicities. However, where this is not the case we will draw up a detailed plan to demonstrate how we can actively promote identity, heritage and maintain cultural traditions. We have access to translators and will provide information in different languages.



Solo Placements/Complex Needs (including complex health needs)

We provide foster carers who have the relevant skills to provide these specialist placements. This includes children with complex or harmful behaviours, working with external partners to provide intensive support and therapeutic intervention.

A child or young person may require constant individual attention and supervision that precludes the placement of any other fostered children or young people (or prohibits the use of any remaining placement vacancies) within the foster home.

‘Step Across’

Although there are times when a residential placement is in the best interests of a child or young person, our primary aim is always to support them in a home-based environment. We actively recruit and train foster families who can meet the needs of children and young people ready to move from residential care into a family setting, with the hope that this will provide them with a stable home for the remainder of their childhood.

Staying Put Beyond 18 and Preparing for Independence

At Lighthouse Fostering we wholeheartedly embrace the belief that young people should be able to remain with their foster carers should they wish to after 18 years of age and remain with their foster families until they are 21 years old if they choose to do so.

A staying put arrangement is not the same as a foster placement. The young person staying put, who must be a former relevant child, is no longer a looked after child. They are a young adult and a care leaver. They are entitled to support as a care leaver and will be allocated a personal advisor. The foster carer is no longer acting in the capacity of foster carer for that young adult; they are their ‘former foster carer’. The foster placement becomes a ‘staying put arrangement’ and is not governed by fostering services regulations.

The ‘former foster carer’ offering a staying put arrangement may at the same time be offering foster placements to children who are looked after. Such placements will continue to be subject to provisions of the fostering services regulations. In this circumstance, the former relevant child will, as things stand, require a DBS check as they become a member of the fostering household.

<https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/policy-practice/practice-information/staying-put>



Safeguarding

All our children and young people have Risk Assessments and Safer Care Plans which are reviewed as part of the carers ongoing Supervision.

Where possible we include children and young people in the assessment of any risks, so that they can work with their carers in keeping themselves safe, and understand the concerns held by the professionals around them.

We have clear policy and procedures for the reporting of any child protection matters and all our carers and staff are trained in child protection procedures.

In addition we operate rigorous recruitment procedures and checks to ensure that carers and staff are safe to work with children and young people.

Suitability

We recruit foster carers who come from all walks of life and backgrounds and we don't have an image of the 'perfect foster carer'. People often have a stereotypical image of who can foster. We actively welcome applications from people regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and religion or employment status. Our website (www.lighthousefostering.co.uk) provides information about who can become a foster carer and requirements. Anyone over the age of 21 years may apply to become a foster carer. There is no upper age limit, although all applicants must be healthy and active in order to keep up with and care for a child or young person. It is a minimum requirement that a foster carer has a designated spare room available (not a curtain or partition dividing a space).

STAGE 1

1. Registering Interest (Enquiry)

After talking with one of the team we take some brief information and if appropriate will arrange a home visit.

3. Application

Following the visit if appropriate the potential carer/foster family will be asked to complete and submit an application form. This also has the requests for permission to undertake all the checks that are required in Stage 1 of the process.

2. The Initial Visit

All enquirers are visited during the initial stages, and their suitability and motivation to foster is assessed, prior to invitation to apply

4. Preparation Training

Prospective carers attend an initial training event based on the Fostering Network material called the "Skills to Foster". They will also be invited to attend our Secure Base Training programme and will then be suitably informed to make the right choice.

STAGE 2

Assessment:

Following the successful attendance at the Skills to Foster preparation training we will assign a qualified social worker to undertake a comprehensive assessment with the prospective carer and their family. The information gathered will complete the BAAF (British Association of Adoption and Fostering) Form F assessment report. This assessment usually requires the Social worker having 20 hours direct contact with the family over a period of approximately 8 to 12 weeks.

Panel:

Our Panel is made up of a variety of people with diverse experience in the childcare field. The panel is made up of representatives from health, education, the police, and social care. In addition, we include members with lived experience, having themselves been in care throughout their childhood. The members on the Panel are independent and ensure a positive and rigorous contribution.



Training and Development of Carers

Foster Carer Training & Development

Lighthouse Fostering is committed to lifelong learning and providing all foster carers with training, opportunities, advice, information, and support to ensure the continued development of skills and knowledge. As well as inspiring personal and professional development, Lighthouse Fostering's training programme is designed to equip carers with the knowledge and skills to face the challenges of caring for and improving the life chances of our children and young people. Our courses are a mixture of facilitated group workshops, formalised events, Online Learning and informal support and resources – delivered by internal and external trainers, all of whom are experienced childcare practitioners.

All prospective foster carers must complete the Skills to Foster course during their fostering assessment, this forms part of our initial assessment of new fostering families. We also ask applicants brand new to fostering to complete some online learning during the assessment process, to facilitate the beginning of their learning and training journey.

Lighthouse Fostering recognises the importance of triangulation of learning and has embedded this framework within foster carers supervision. All foster carers will have a Personal Development Plan (PDP) which will be completed with their Supervising Social Worker.

Once approved by our Panel and Agency Decision Maker, all new foster carers must then complete the Training, Support and Development Standards (TSDS) within 12 months. Foster carers will be supported by their supervising social worker and TSDS workshops are available to assist in the completion of the TSDS.

Training Guide

Preparation to foster - Online and Group facilitated

- + Skills to Foster – 1-day interactive event
- + Six module online preparation to foster

Pre-Approval Training - Online

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| + Child Protection and Safeguarding | + De-escalation | + Equality & diversity |
| + Managing Challenging Behaviours | + Safe use of medication | + Introduction to the Lighthouse Therapeutic training module |
| + First Aid | + GDPR | + FGM |
| | + Prevent | |

Mandatory Training for Both Carers - In line with National Minimum Standards

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| + Child Protection & Safeguarding (2 yearly) | + Paediatric First Aid (3 yearly face to face) | + FGM (one off online) |
| + Adult Safeguarding Advanced - Parent & Child Carers (3 years online) | + GDPR (2 yearly online) | + Fostering: Legal Framework, Regulations & Standards (one off) |
| + De-Escalation Training: (3 yearly) | + Prevent (2 yearly online) | + Safe Use of Medication (one off online) |
| | + Equality & Diversity (2 yearly online) | + Safer Caring Principles (2 yearly) |

Mandatory Training Main Carer - Open to both

- + Recording & Report Writing (2 yearly)
- + Internet Safety (2 yearly)
- + Impact of Trauma & Neglect on Development (2 yearly unless completed 12-week Therapeutic Workshop)
- + Secure Base & Attachment (2 yearly)
- + Child Sexual Exploitation (3 yearly)

Complimentary Training - This is only a small selection of the training on offer

- | | |
|--|---|
| + Supporting a child in therapy | + Good enough parenting |
| + Importance of play & communication | + Gender diversity |
| + Contact & family membership | + Meeting the educational needs of children in care |
| + Positive Endings | + Understanding and supporting behaviour in autistic and neurodivergent children. |
| + Separation & Loss | + P&C placements |
| + Working with adolescent young people | |

Specialist Training - We offer a 12 week therapeutic parenting workshop for all carers

We also offer a Level 4 Advanced Diploma: Expert Practice in Work with Traumatized Children to selected carers who have completed the 12-week therapeutic course and wish to progress further with their skills and knowledge.

Other specialist training courses can be tailored to the specific identified needs of children, carer's, professional development or address a broader learning and development issue for the agency when the need arises.



“Children and young people receive high-quality individualised care from foster carers who want to make a positive difference to young lives”.

(Ofsted, 2019)

Reward Pathway

Lighthouse Fostering understands the importance of ensuring that the fostering payments to our carers are competitive enough to enable the continued recruitment and retention of foster carers.

Achieving the best outcomes for the children/young people in their care.

All foster carer's receive a maintenance allowance which is an amount that is to cover the costs of caring for a child/young person, however, Lighthouse Fostering also recognises that being a foster carer can be challenging and requires specialist knowledge and skills that is over and above the skills needed for “ordinary” parenting and due to this we have made the decision to offer a reward scheme to all our carers that will acknowledge their hard work, commitment to fostering and long service recognition.

The reward pathway is an additional weekly payment made to foster carers whilst they have a child/parent and child in their care. This payment is in recognition of the different experience, knowledge, and skills they have, as well as length of service and being able to evidence how they work over and beyond the day to day fostering role to benefit the children and young people in their care, and this is broken down into three levels.

Level 1 – Core

All foster carers will be on level 1 – (Core) and there will be an expectation that all carers will be meeting all the mandatory requirements. These mandatory requirements are as follows:

- All foster carers should be able to evidence that they are meeting the National Minimum Standards (2011) which will take place during monthly supervisions and within their annual review, these include completing daily/ weekly logs in a timely manner.
- Support group attendance is expected to be at a minimum of 50% per year for all main foster carers.
- All foster carers are expected to meet the mandatory training requirements and main carers also attend at least 2 complimentary training courses as outlined in their Personal Development Plan.

Level 2 – Intermediate

- All foster carers will need to have completed 2 years' service with Lighthouse Fostering, and
- Support group attendance is expected to be at a minimum of 75% per year for all main foster carers, and
- All main carers have completed the 12-week therapeutic parenting workshop or other relevant transferable training, and
- Complete at least 4 complimentary training courses as outlined in their Personal Development Plan.

Or

- Completed 5 years' service with Lighthouse Fostering and met the mandatory requirements as detailed in level 1 (Core)

Level 3 - Advanced

- All foster carers will need to have completed 5 years' service with Lighthouse Fostering, and
- Support group attendance is expected to be a minimum of 75% per year for all main foster carers, and
- All main carers have completed the 12-week therapeutic parenting workshop or other relevant transferable training, and
- Completed at least 4 complimentary training courses as outlined in their Personal Development Plan.

Or

- Have completed level 4 advanced diploma expert practice in work with traumatised children or other relevant transferable training.
- Completed 8 years ongoing service with Lighthouse Fostering and met the mandatory requirements as detailed in level 1 (Core).

Additional Evidence Statement

To progress to both the intermediate and advanced levels, all foster carers are expected to evidence that they are working over and beyond the day to day fostering role to benefit the children and young people they care for and have gained additional knowledge and skills to enhance their practice. (As above)

This statement will give the carers the opportunity to demonstrate their fostering practice over the last review period, which was over and above the core level.

Please note that periods on hold are not included in the calculation of service and all carers will need to have children in their care for a minimum of 36 weeks in one year. (discretion given in special circumstances)

Expectation to work towards higher levels

There is no expectation that you have to progress to the intermediate or advanced level of the reward pathway, and we recognise that as foster carers you still have to work hard and undertake complex work to ensure that the children and young people you care for reach their full potential.

We also understand that other commitments may stop you from going over and above and we will continue to appreciate all that our carers do regardless of what level they achieve.

Joint Carers

To progress within the levels there will only be an expectation that the primary carer will have to complete the additional elements needed however all second carers will still have to have completed all their mandatory training and meet the Fostering Minimum Standards (2011).

Changes in standards during the Annual Review period

If there are concerns that foster carers who are intermediate or advanced levels are no longer working to the expected criteria, their status will be reviewed at the next available panel and will also be discussed within their annual review.

Lighthouse Fostering has the right to change the level that they are on and place them down a level if they are no longer meeting the criteria and any additional payments that they are receiving will be stopped.

Reward Pathway Panel

The reward pathway panel will take place bi-annually and the members will consist of Director, Assistant Director, Registered Manager, Supervising Social Worker & Minute Taker. Decisions made by the panel members will be emailed to foster carers within 5/7 working days.

Once a decision has been sent to the foster carer to inform them that they can progress to the next level, additional payments will start with immediate effect. If a decision is made not to progress a carer to the next level, detailed reasons will be given.

Appealing Reward Pathway level decisions

If foster carers are not in agreement with the outcome decision following presentation at the reward pathway panel, they will be able to appeal this decision by making a written representation, providing additional information and evidence as to why they feel they should progress to the next level.

Reviewing

Lighthouse Fostering reviews foster carers on an annual basis and in accordance with National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations 2011.

In addition, we would review any foster carers where there is a serious complaint or incident, standards of care concerns or where there is a change of approval.

Our review procedure also focuses on the core competencies for foster carers, which appear in the BAAF Form F assessment, and includes a regular appraisal of training and development needs. In addition, our review procedure also focuses on the Training Support and Development Standards

Status & Constitution

Lighthouse Fostering is registered and inspected as a fostering provider under the Care Standards Act 2000 / Fostering Service Regulations 2011, and therefore properly constituted to provide foster care placements for looked after children and young people on behalf of local authorities.

Legal Status: Lighthouse Fostering is an owner-managed company that has grown steadily over the past 10 years to be a provider of fostering services across the South East of England whilst continuing to maintain a strong family-friendly feel. The Managing Director is an owner-manager and is actively involved in the day-to-day business.

Company Registration No.:	8922770
Year of Registration:	2015
Director:	Leslie Mitchell
Agency Decision Maker & Responsible Individual:	Mary Vincent
Registered Manager (fostering):	Lisa Holness
Ofsted Registration:	SC479090
Ofsted Rating:	Good (October 2023)

The Directors and senior managers meet regularly and are responsible for the corporate governance of the company, as well as determining and reviewing the following:

- Strategic Vision
- Quality Assurance
- Annual Business Development Plan
- Financial Management & Performance
- Policies & Procedures
- Legal Compliance
- Culture, Values, Vision & Mission

Management Structure

The Senior Management Team has responsibility for the strategic direction and day to day management of the organisation. The Senior Management Team consists of the Managing Director, Assistant Director (Responsible Individual) and Registered Manager. The Responsible Individual is a qualified social worker and supervises the Registered Manager. The Senior Management Team have considerable experience in fostering and social work, both within the statutory, and independent sectors. All have worked within the fostering/adoption field for many years in management, practice or developmental roles. They hold a range of qualifications including, Dip SW, BSc, PG Dip and Diploma in Leadership and Management. The Senior Management Team meet monthly. The purpose of this team is to provide overall strategic direction for the organisation. The Responsible Individual is responsible for regular compliance audits and is also the Agency Decision Maker.

The Registered Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the agency alongside the Senior Managers. The registered manager is an experienced social worker and has worked for Lighthouse Fostering for over 3 years, having previously worked for another Independent Fostering Agency as their Fostering Manager.

Our Social Workers

Foster carers are supervised by our supervising social workers and are also provided with guidance and training. Supervising social workers are qualified, Social Work England (SWE) registered social workers, having worked in statutory childcare, court work, child protection, therapeutic work and fostering/adoption. Supervising social workers each have a geographical area and are responsible for visiting foster carer households regularly, attending meetings, spending time with children and young people in placement, as appropriate and making recommendations for the annual foster carer review.

Supervising social workers and social work assistants work with young people on a 1-2-1 basis providing focused support in a planned way. For example, independence skills, developing and reviewing a particular behaviour management plan for a young person. Experience within the team includes education background, social work, youth offending and foster care. Support Workers are also on hand to provide additional and meaningful support to foster carers from day support to 1-2-1 sessions with young people as and when required. We also work closely with a psychodynamic psychotherapist who supports foster carers and young people as appropriate.

Complaints and Outcomes

Lighthouse Fostering has a complaints procedure, which is made widely available in different formats suitable for children, young people, carers, parents and professionals.

Lighthouse Fostering has a clear policy for investigating complaints, for a copy of our Complaints Procedure or to make a complaint, please contact the Registered Manager on 01227 250096.



Contact

Lighthouse Fostering
Quayside House
Standard Quay
Faversham
KENT ME13 7BS

01227 250096

Last OFSTED Inspection: October 2023

Result: **Good**



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