

Statement of Purpose 2018

Introduction

This Statement of Purpose has been developed in accordance with appropriate legislation and regulations relevant to:

- The Care Standards Act 2000
- The Fostering Services Regulations (England 2011)
- The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services

It's aim is to give children, young people, parents, carers, staff and other professionals information about the agency and services we provide, including:

- A statement of the aims and objectives of Wholistic
- Information about the services we provide

A copy of the Statement of Purpose is provided or made available upon request, to:

- Ofsted
- Any person working for or within the fostering service
- Any foster carer or prospective foster carer of the service
- Any child placed with the fostering service
- Any parent or guardian of any child placed with the fostering service
- Any purchasers of the 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 quarterly by the management team.

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Status & Constitution

Wholistic (Wholistic Fostering Ltd) is a private limited company registered under the Companies Act 1985 with the Company No. 8685379. The Registered Address is Office 34 Brook House, Brook Street Business Centre, Brook Street, Tipton. DY4 9DD.

Wholistic is registered with Ofsted. Our registration no. is SC476942.

- Patricia Nettleford: Registered Manager / Director
- Agency Decision Maker
- Michael Dennis: Responsible Individual / Operations Manager
- Fostering Panel
- Foster Carers

The management team 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 Plan
- Financial Management & Performance
- Policies & Procedures
- Legal Compliance
- Culture, Values, Vision & Mission

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Mission

“To recruit, train and support child centred, outcomes focussed families for children and young people in care”

Vision

“Brighter Today's, Brilliant Tomorrows”

We will help children and young people in care to achieve positive outcomes in their lives by developing families who are passionate, dependable, empathetic and focussed on having a positive impact.

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Values

Wholistic take our values seriously and strive to demonstrate them in our behaviour and practice. **Values are what we value** in our people and we particularly value the following 12.

Judgement

We make solid decisions, aim to identify root causes and try to get beyond treating symptoms. We think strategically, and can articulate what you are, and are not, trying to do. We prioritise the needs of the children and young people understanding clearly what must be done well now, and what can be improved upon later.

Communication

We listen well, instead of reacting fast, so that we can understand better. We are concise and articulate in speech and writing as this help with clarity. We treat people with respect, independent of their status or disagreement with us and we maintain calm poise in stressful situations.]

Curiosity

We learn rapidly and eagerly particularly in the area of knowledge about fostering and child care.

Impact

The value of having an impact means we accomplish lots of important work and we demonstrate consistently strong performance so our colleagues can rely upon us. We focus on great outcomes rather than process and ensure that we avoid analysis-paralysis in complex situations.

Dependability

We consistently show up when expected, demonstrate good timekeeping and can be counted on to do our work in a timely manner. We take the initiative to find out what else can be done and pay attention to details in our work. We answer the phone when contacted or return calls promptly.

Courage

We share what we think within the team, even if it is controversial. We make tough decisions without agonising. We encourage our team to question actions inconsistent with our values and work to keep each other honest.

Passion

We aim to inspire others with your thirst for excellence and we care intensely about Positive outcomes and Wholistic's success. We are tenacious and believe a brilliant future is possible for each and every child. We celebrate wins within the Wholistic team.

Innovation

We find ways to look at things differently to find practical solutions to hard problems. We challenge assumptions when warranted and suggest better approaches. We share ideas that can prove useful.

Honesty

We are known for being direct, frank and quick to admit mistakes.

Selflessness

We seek what's best for looked after children and young people and don't let ego get in the way when searching for solutions. We make time to help our colleagues and share tips openly and proactively.

Integrity

We understand right from wrong. We lead by example. We understand, respect and uphold workplace confidentiality. We practice treating others the way we want to be treated ourselves.

Empathy

We try to see things from the other person's point of view. We accept that people may have different opinions from our own, and that they may have good reason to hold those opinions. We use our eyes, ears, instincts and heart to listen to children and young people and our colleagues.

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Objectives

OUR objectives are summarised below.

- To recruit, develop and maintain a portfolio of foster parents across the West Midlands region.
- To carefully and suitably match placements of children with our foster parents.
- To ensure our families offer 'authentic warmth' and a safe, stable, caring environment for children.
- To provide foster families where each child will have their physiological and safety needs met in addition to their needs for love and belonging, esteem and self-actualisation.
- To ensure that the cultural needs of children and young people are met.
- To ensure all children placed without families are assisted with developing their educational attainment.
- To ensure children and young people are provided with support from the agency, school and foster parents in order that they have a platform to achieve progress.
- To promote contact in line with the child's care plan, birth family and significant others and to facilitate this with careful attention and understanding.
- To ensure a plan for the child's future is acted upon within agreed timescales set at each review.
- To ensure foster parents receive quality training, guidance and support.
- To provide 24 / 7 / 365 support for foster parents and looked after children.
- To undertake an annual review which focuses on service improvement and quality assurance.
- To demonstrate our commitment to stakeholder participation and to encourage children and young people to inform us and foster parents of their views, wishes and feelings.
- To ensure our staff and foster parents are trained to help children and young people achieve their potential using the 5 outcomes for modeling best practice and informing our outcomes analysis.
- To strive for continuous improvement of our services, using research and by reviewing how we

are doing, taking account of children's views, and those of foster parents and external parties.

- To proactively work in partnership with children, foster parents, local authorities, birth families (where appropriate) and other agencies for achieving better outcomes.
- To promote equality and diversity in all of our work.
- To help raise the educational attainment outcomes of children and young people in our care.
- To instill a sense of value for education in children looked after by our families.
- To create a culture which regularly celebrate the achievements of children in the care of our families
- To develop positive parenting skills within our families.
- To prepare young people for life as an independent Adult.

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Management Structure

The management team includes the Registered Manager, Operations Manager, ADM and a consultant / mentor who was founder of one of the UK's leading fostering agencies. The team have many years of experience in social work and fostering as well as other work within statutory, voluntary, charitable and independent sectors.

They hold a range of relevant qualifications. The agency also benefits from the insights of the Operations Manager's personal experience of having been a 'child in care'.

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Equality & Diversity

"It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength." - Maya Angelou

WHOLISTIC continuously seek to value the unique contribution of individuals from different backgrounds. We aim to ensure that every child and young person has access to fostering services that both recognise and address their needs in terms of their gender, religion, ethnic origin, language, culture, disability and sexuality.

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Services

The following are some key aspects of our service at Wholistic where we...

- ensure children are matched with families who can meet their needs.
- deliver safe, child-centred care with comprehensive, robust safeguarding systems.
- believe in and promote the importance of education for children.

- ensure all private information we hold is safeguarded.
- only have qualified social workers undertaking fostering applicants assessments.
- provide the support from specialist consultants as needed.
- offer first class telephone support 24-7-365
- review all staff and foster carers performance annually
- meet/exceed our legal, regulatory & statutory requirements such as those set out in The Childrens Act, National Minimum Care Standards Act, The Fostering Services Regulations, The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and The National Care Standards for Foster Care and Family Placement Services.

The following are some key aspects of our carers who...

- undertook pre-Approval training during their assessment.
- have been fully assessed by a qualified social worker.
- have a training plan and access to regular support groups.
- have homes which meet health & safety and risk assessment requirements.
- are committed to meeting the objectives within care plans
- will adhere to the terms of the Placement Plan.
- receive regular support and supervision with their SSW inc. regular phone calls.
- promote appropriate contact inline with the child's Care Plan.
- maintain regular logs on the care of each child we look after.

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Matching

We only put forward carers for placements where we feel confident that a good match is possible based on the information provided. We support planned placements where this is possible involving a pre-placement visit for children and young people where desirable to the local authority.

Referrals are discussed with the carers supervising social worker, the local authority and their social workers. Any gaps in the match between the child / young person and foster parent(s) are identified and appropriately addressed, either at the time of the referral or within a plan made at the placement agreement meeting.

Wholistic take decisions to place all children and young people very seriously and all decisions to place are overseen by our Registered Manager.

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Support

Wholistic are committed to giving our foster parents the very best support possible.

Supervision

Monthly supervision meetings take place between the foster carers and their supervising social worker. Additional support visits are utilised where it is useful.

Supervision meetings focus on positive developments and any areas of potential or actual concern for both carers and children. The Supervising Social Worker is responsible for assisting the carer in their development, identifying training needs and other methods for developing the carer's skills and knowledge.

Supervising Social Workers record of supervision in real time during supervision using the eForms portal and issue tracking portal ensuring that any points for action are quickly recorded and available.

We provide direct support services to children and young people. Our services include support for foster parents in the ways listed below.

Supervising Social Workers ensure that they regularly see and speak with children and young people alone when visiting the placement.

Foster parents receive regular visits and supervision and are supported by a qualified supervising social worker allocated to them once they are approved as foster parents. These visits provide the foster parent with an opportunity to discuss the placement, any issues of concern, training or developmental needs and general support.

Caseloads

For social workers caseloads are kept manageable, so that the high quality of support from the agency can be maintained.

Records

Foster parents are expected to complete written records on each child in placement. This is a very important part of the foster parents role and we provide training to help foster parents complete recording which is accurate, unbiased, and contains all the relevant information.

Handbook

We provide all our foster parents with access to our Guide to Fostering Handbook also accessible via our website. All relevant policies and procedures are contained in the handbook. The Handbook is available within the secure area of our website.

Out of hours

To ensure that any foster parent can contact a social worker and/or manager in the event of an emergency. We also have an "Out of Hours" support and advice service. This is for foster parents, and is provided by our social workers as part of our 24/7/365 day per year support package.

Reviews

All foster parents have reviews at least annually. During the review meeting, which the foster parents attend, their progress over the past year is discussed together with their future training and development needs, and recommendations are made for future work to be completed.

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Recruitment

Wholistic are committed to the recruitment of foster carers who can meet the needs of children and young people through the provision of high quality care. All prospective foster carers who make an enquiry are subject to a rigorous assessment and vetting procedure.

This includes:

- An Initial Home Visit
- Enhanced DBS,
- Local authority checks,
- Current or previous fostering,
- organisation references,
- School / health visitor reports (on own child, if appropriate),
- Medical reports,
- Current employment references,
- References from all previous employment involving children and vulnerable adults,
- Personal references (minimum 2) who will also be visited by a social worker.
- Overseas check *if apt. ,
- Health & Safety,
- Pet Questionnaire,
- Ex-partners references
- A two stage assessment process with mandatory training
- Full Form F assessment

Assessment Stage 1

AS SOON AS someone who is interested in becoming a foster carer has contacted us we will contact them to discuss their interest. If appropriate, following this discussion an Initial home visit will be arranged. This is a two-way discussion to make an informed decision whether the prospective carer can be invited to apply.

Assessment Stage 2

We assign a qualified social worker to do an assessment with the prospective carer & their family.

They produce a report, (Form F) which covers individual profiles of applicants and their lives.

The applicants will have the opportunity to read the form f and discuss any amendments. Following a review of the completed form f / HSA it's time for Panel, which the applicants attend at our office in the Brook Street Business Centre.

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Panel

The function of the Panel is to provide an independent quality assurance role recommending whether the potential carers presented to them are suitable to become good foster carers.

The form f / HSA report is presented to the fostering panel. The fostering panel is made up of a variety of professionals and independent members, including foster carers, educationalists and other people with experience of the looked after children system.

They will ask relevant questions to the applicants / carers and the panel members will make their recommendations to the panel chair and the agency.

The final decision for approval is made by the Agency Decision Maker — a senior manager who is social work qualified. If the foster carers are unhappy with the final decision they have a right to appeal. This can be made direct to the agency or direct to the Independent Review Mechanism.

Upon approval as a foster carer, the agency will advise in writing and assign a Supervising Social Worker to support the foster carer in the fostering task. We will then advise local authorities of the approved foster carers availability.

Approval

Foster Care Agreements & Undertaking Foster Carer Agreements are completed following approval, covering a range of contractual information and undertakings including:

- To care appropriately for children & young people in placement, as identified in the foster placement agreement.
- To inform Wholistic of any relevant significant changes to their household or details.
- Follow procedures laid down within the agency's handbook

All foster carers have access to the Fostering Handbook which includes details of the following:

- Standards of care
- Support & Training
- Complaints & Appeals
- Child protection procedures
- Annual carer review process
- Insurance provision
- Confidentiality procedures
- Behaviour management policy

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Placements

Wholistic support a range of types of placement for children & young people as well as offering a life coaching service for young people preparing for independent living.

WE are committed to ensuring a 'best possible match' prioritising the needs of children and young people and then balancing them with the skills and expertise of foster parents to meet those needs.

Today it is well known that there are not enough quality foster families being recruited from black and minority ethnic backgrounds so we aim to help improve this scenario by actively recruiting carers so that our portfolio of foster families reflects the diverse communities where we operate. The list below highlights the currently supported placement types offered by Wholistic.

- Long Term
- Bridging
- Short Term
- Emergency
- Respite
- Solo
- Sibling
- Asylum Seeker

We match all placements carefully to balance the skills, experience and preferences with the needs of each individual child.

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Money

Wholistic foster parents receive a bi-weekly fostering allowance, paid directly into the foster parents bank account by bacs transfer.

All Foster parents need to be registered as self-employed and are responsible for ensuring they pay their own tax and national insurance. Detailed financial information and guidance is supplied to Foster parents within the Foster Parents Handbook and a detailed annual statement is provided, as well as the allowance paid to Foster Carers.

Payments for clothing, pocket money and birthdays and Seasonal Allowances. Savings for children in care are deducted at source by the carers and saved in individual accounts checked by Wholistic in Supervision. Detailed information and guidance on Rates and Allowances is provided to Foster Carers in the Foster Carers Handbook.

Local authorities should contact Wholistic for information relating to our charges for the different types of placements and support services offered.

Foster Carers can often find the Tax Implications and details of registering as self employed confusing so we provide professional advice and assistance to help them out.

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Training

Pre-Approval

All applicants are required to undertake pre-approval training to provide an understanding of the tasks required of them as foster carers. Pre-approval training is delivered at our offices and topics include:

- Introduction to Wholistic
- Why Children Come into Care
- Introduction to Safeguarding
- Introduction to Separation and Loss
- Managing Behaviour
- Introduction to attachment
- Promoting a Positive Identity
- Anti-Discriminatory Practice
- Safe Caring Principles
- Working Together with Others
- Promoting Contact

Post Approval

Once a foster carer has been approved they will begin to complete the Training & Development Standards (TSD's) following which they will be able to undertake a range of courses on the following topic areas. We encourage our foster carers to take our post approval training courses as a necessary part of their ongoing development.

1. Safeguarding Children
2. Equality and diversity in practice
3. Recording and Reporting ; Written record
4. Working in partnership
5. First Aid (2 days)
6. Understanding & managing behaviour
7. Healthy Lifestyle
8. Safe Handling & De-Escalation
9. Childcare legislation
10. Education and Children in care
11. Fire Safety Training
12. Attachment training
13. Fostering family & friends
14. Caring for BME children Advanced
15. Online Safety for Children in care

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Feedback

Complaints

Our complaints policy is accessible and available to young people, carers, parents and professionals. A copy can be requested by email info@wholisticfostering.co.uk or phone on 01922 622233.

All children/young people are informed of the Complaints Policy at the start of placement. Information on making complaints is in the Children's Guide or Young Person's Guides. Children/young people are advised they can make a complaint at the following website:

<https://www.wholisticfostering.co.uk/make-a-complaint/>

Compliments

We always encourage feedback as it helps us learn and grow. It doesn't matter whether it's positive or negative - we need your feedback to tell us how were doing.

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Contact Information

Children's Commissioner

Anne Longfield, Children's Commissioner Office of Children's Commissioner for England Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street London SW1P 3BT

T: 020 7783 8330 E: Info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Freephone for children and young people

T: 0800 5288330

Ofsted

Regulatory Inspector Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231 E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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