



Department
for Education

Training, Support & Development Standards for Foster Carers

Guidance

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Contents

Introduction	3
Training, support and development standards	4
Evidencing the standards	5
The guidance	6
Principles and values statement	7 - 8
What to expect from your foster care provider	8
Standard 1: Understand the principles and values essential for fostering children and young people	10
Standard 2: Understand your role as a foster carer	14
Standard 3: Understand health and safety, and healthy care	22
Standard 4: Know how to communicate effectively	29
Standard 5: Understand the development of children and young people	35
Standard 6: Keep children and young people safe from harm	44
Standard 7: Develop yourself	52
Glossary	58
What next? Further knowledge and skills	66
Further resources	67

Introduction

Foster carers play an extremely important role, providing much needed support and security for often very vulnerable children, and enabling their successful transition into independent adult life. Fostering is a challenging role and requires skills and dedication

The Training, Support and Development (TSD) standards form part of a foster carer's induction in the role. They provide a national minimum benchmark that sets out what foster carers should know, understand and be able to do within the first 12-18 months after being approved

These standards were developed by the sector and were introduced in 2007 and apply to all approved foster carers in England

The TSD Standards provide a national minimum benchmark to set out what all foster carers should know, understand and be able to do within the first 12 months of approval. They form part of a national strategy, supported by the Department for Education, to raise the profile of foster carers as valued professionals and to improve and standardise service provision for looked after children.

All foster care providers are expected to engage with their foster carers to support them in achieving the TSD Standards. This ensures that the Standards are delivered in a way which allows carers to understand how the standards support them in their caring role, encouraging them to build on any areas for development identified in their assessment.

It is the government's view that all foster carers who are approved under the Fostering Services Regulations should complete the TSD Standards, which are designed to equip all foster carers with the skills and knowledge to provide high quality care to the children they look after. The TSD Standards are also now a requirement of the National Minimum Standards (Fostering)

Completion of the TSD Standards is a requirement for all approved foster carers in England and is referenced within the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011.

Further information about the TSD Standards for Foster Care can be accessed at

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/fostercare/fostercarestand/b00203661/nationalstandardsforfostercarers>

Training Support and Development Standards

There are seven TSD standards:

Standard 1: Understand the principles and values essential for fostering children and young people

Standard 2: Understand your role as a foster carer

Standard 3: Understand health and safety, and healthy care

Standard 4: Know how to communicate effectively

Standard 5: Understand the development of children and young people

Standard 6: Keep children and young people safe from harm

Standard 7: Develop yourself

Foster carers must evidence that they have met **all** these standards, where these apply to the child(ren) they are caring for.

In each of the seven standards there are a number of topics that you will need to know about.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Guidance for Supervising Social Workers, Managers and Training Officers (revised February 2011). The guidance forms part of a resource pack for foster care service providers to help them with implementation of the TSD Standards. The guidance factsheets may be particularly useful in helping you to understand how to complete the standards and provide examples of the type and amount of evidence required. Visit our website at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/fostercare/fostercarestand/b00203661/nationalstandardsforfostercarers> for copies of these resources.

Additional information for service providers

The National Minimum Standards (NMS, Department for Education, April 2011)) do not link directly to the completion of the TSD standards. They are issued by Ofsted to assess how a service provider develops and maintains services to meet a child's needs. However NMS 1-12 are specifically child focused and are key to the foster carer's role. These national minimum standards can therefore be mapped in a general sense to the TSD standards. In addition NMS 20, 21 and 26 set out training for foster carers, the supervision of foster carers and the importance of keeping records, respectively. The following Fostering Services NMS can therefore be said to map generally to the TSD standards:

Standard 1 - NMS 1, NMS 10

Standard 2 - NMS 9, NMS 10, NMS 11, NMS 12, NMS 21

Standard 3 - NMS 6, NMS 10

Standard 4 - NMS 1 NMS 9, NMS 11, NMS 21, NMS 26
Standard 5 - NMS 2, NMS 3, NMS 8, NMS 7, NMS10, NMS 12
Standard 6 - NMS 4, NMS 5, NMS 26
Standard 7 - NMS 3, NMS 20, NMS 2

It should be noted that it is the service providers' responsibility to demonstrate that they meet National Minimum Standards. Foster carers must complete the Training Support and Development Standards.

Evidencing the Standards

Although the amount of evidence will vary with each outcome, it should be short and simple, use bullets points where appropriate. Essays are not required! The evidence box in the workbook is meant to be guidance and is not an indication of amount of evidence expected. In some cases this may be reference to another document with a short accompanying paragraph or witness statement. Other outcomes may require a short reflective piece of writing, giving an example of when a particular task was carried out or when an incident occurred.

The exemplars given below indicate the maximum amount.

Exemplar: Standard 5.3c Transitions (also meets 5.1c and 4.1d)

P has been in foster care for over 13 years and been placed with me for the past 4 years. She is now 19 years old and I have been helping her prepare for adulthood and independent living over the past few years. Some of the ways I have helped P include:

- Support with decision making and encouraging P to develop her own opinion.
- Teaching her basic recipes and cooking skills.
- Involving her in household chores and talking to her about safety in the home.
- Supporting and encouraging her to continue with her education.
- Helping her with financial planning and budgeting. These are just some of the ways that we are helping P get ready for independence. As someone who has been brought up in foster care most of her life, she is
- uncomfortable and wary of new situations. This means she needs additional encouragement, support, love and patience until she feels able to deal with new situations.

There should be at least one piece of evidence per outcome. Please note: one piece of evidence can be used as the basis for a number of different outcomes. For example, in the exemplar below the evidence has been cited for Standard 5.5b. This evidence could also be used as the basis for Standard 2.4a, 4.4a and also for Standard 3.4b.

Exemplar: Standard 5.5b Supporting Educational Potential

T has been in foster care with me for 3 years. As he is a complex and challenging young person, I get support from a therapeutic worker who offers advice and support around managing his behaviour. I also work closely with the staff at his school who are experienced with looked after children. I have close links with the named person for Looked after Children and we speak on the phone about once a week. I learnt at T's review that he had not been doing his homework. When I discussed this with the school, they suggested that they take him out of one lesson per week to catch up with homework. This seems to have taken some of the pressure off him and the school has agreed to let him continue with this. Working together with the therapeutic worker, school staff and social worker has really helped T receive consistent messages and support, which helps him feel secure and safe.

The guidance

The guidance explains what the Standards are and how you can show that you have met each Standard. Foster carers who have previous experience of working with children and young people can use their prior learning and experience as evidence to show that they can meet the Standards.

Experienced carers who may also be professionally qualified in health or care or any other similar field (e.g. care work, nursing, schools, youth work) or who have a relevant NVQ or level 3 Diploma units are still required to complete the Standards, as they are tailored to fostering. You can use your qualifications and experience as evidence against specific outcomes in the Standards.

To note: If you are undertaking the social care pathway and optional foster care units in the level 3 diploma working in the children and young people's workforce you should have completed the TSD standards before embarking on the optional foster care units.

Your supervising social worker or support worker will help you complete the Evidence Workbook and will sign off each Standard when you have provided sufficient evidence to meet the Standard.

At the end, a manager or the training officer in your fostering service will check to ensure that the Evidence Workbook has been completed satisfactorily, and will issue you with the Certificate of Successful Completion
– see evidence workbook.

How to use this guidance

Skills and knowledge

These are the pieces of knowledge or skills that you have gained. You will need to provide evidence that you meet each of these outcomes.

Evidence requirements

This section outlines what you need to do in order to provide evidence of your skills

and knowledge. Your supervising social worker may ask you questions in order to check your understanding or you may prefer to write out your own response first to share with your supervising social worker. Assessment and preparation training should have provided some of the evidence already (particularly if you have completed the Skills to Foster training and the Skills to Foster assessment)

Providing evidence

You should enter a summary of the evidence that you have collected to meet a particular outcome(s) in the separate Evidence Workbook.

Fact Sheets

Further guidance factsheets are available on the following topics

- Getting started with the TSD Standards.
- The Workbook.
- Evidencing the TSD Standards.
- Assessing foster carers' workbook.
- Engaging all foster carers.

These factsheets and Training toolkit, including trainer's notes, session plans and group exercises are available here: [Foster Care Training Toolkit](#)

Principles and values statement

The same principles and values underpin all the induction standards for staff and carers who work with children, young people and their families.

Principles

The welfare of the child or young person is paramount.

Carers contribute to children and young people's care, learning and development, and safeguarding. This is reflected in every aspect of practice and service provision.

Carers support parents and families who are partners in the care, learning, development and safeguarding of their children, recognising they are the child or young person's first, and in most situations, their most enduring carers and educators.

Carers are integral to the team supporting children and young people.

Values

The needs, rights and views of the child or young person are at the centre of all practice and provision.

Individuality, difference and diversity are valued and celebrated.

Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice are actively promoted.

Children and young people's health and well-being are actively promoted.

Children and young people's personal and physical safety is safeguarded, whilst allowing for risk and challenge, as appropriate to the capabilities of the child or young person.

Self-esteem and resilience are recognised as essential to every child and young person's development.

Confidentiality and agreements about confidential information are respected as appropriate unless a child or young person's protection and well-being are at stake.

Professional knowledge, skills and values are shared appropriately in order to enrich the experience of children and young people more widely.

Social inclusion and advancement of children and young people are actively promoted as specified in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

What to expect from your foster care provider

Your foster care provider has a duty to arrange for you to learn about the different areas within the standards and to make sure that you know enough to meet the outcomes for each area. They will also provide you with learning opportunities and support through your supervising social worker and training officer.

Before you are approved, your foster care provider should arrange for you to attend preparation training (the Skills to Foster course or similar). Practice varies but will usually take place before or during your fostering assessment. Within six weeks of your approval your supervising social worker should induct you into the fostering service you work for and help you draw up a Personal Development Plan identifying learning activities to help you complete the Training, Support and Development Standards. They will advise you on what 'core' training courses and/or learning support are available.

They will also tell you about opportunities to participate in training with other colleagues working with children (e.g. multi-agency child protection training) and support groups for foster carers. Foster care providers have been asked to provide financial support to enable foster carers to attend training sessions. Your foster care provider is responsible for providing an assessor who will usually be your supervising social worker, but could be a training officer or work based learning assessor.

Your foster care provider is also responsible for:

- The safety and well-being of individuals with whom your fostering service works.
- The safety and well-being of you and your family.
- Fulfilling their obligations as set out in law and in professional standards - for example, health and safety laws, the Care Standards Act, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and the Fostering Service Regulations and National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services (April 2011).

It will not always be practical for foster care providers to offer face to face training courses if foster carers are spread over a wide geographical area, but training can be provided using distance learning, computer based learning packages, or similar.

Foster care providers are also inspected to ensure that they are preparing and training their foster carers in line with the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services.

If you move and are approved as a foster carer in a new area after you have successfully completed the Training, Support and Development Standards, your new foster care provider will want to see your Certificate of Successful Completion. You may still need to undertake some further induction or training to familiarise you with your new fostering service, but you will not need to repeat the standards. Similarly if you decide to take up a job working with children you will be able to use your Certificate of Successful Completion to indicate that you have met the Training, Support & Development Standards for Foster Care.

Standard 1: Understand the principles and values essential for fostering children and young people

Summary: This Standard sets out what you are expected to know about the principles and values underpinning work with children and young people, and how you should put them into practice. You will be expected to show you understand how to promote the values listed and work in a way which supports and respects diversity. You will be expected to understand the importance of confidentiality, including what you should keep confidential and what you should not. You will also be expected to know how to put into practice the policies and procedures of your fostering service about sharing information with others. The child or young person should be at the centre of all of our work. It is one of the ways you will put the principles of care into practice. You will show you understand how you put children and young people at the centre of your work by meeting the outcomes set out in this standard. This includes understanding the right of children and young people to take risks and your role in relation to that risk-taking.

1.1 Principles and values

Skills and knowledge

- 1.1a Show** your awareness of the principles and values essential for looking after children, young people and their families.
- 1.1b Demonstrate** how you promote these principles and values in the care you provide for children and young people.

Evidence requirements

- 1.1a** With regard to the principles and values statements on page 6 give two examples of how you might express these in regard to the child or young person in your care
- 1.1b** Give an example of how you promote equality and diversity with the young people you care for.

1.2 Equality, inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice

Skills and knowledge

- 1.2a **Understand** the different types of prejudice and discrimination which can affect children and young people.
- 1.2b **Understand** why it is important to provide care which respects and preserves each child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.
- 1.2c **Demonstrate** how you support and encourage children and young people to develop skills to deal with discrimination, enhance self-worth and make a positive contribution.

Evidence requirements

- 1.2a What different types of prejudice or discrimination have you come across or are you aware of?
- 1.2b Why is respecting and preserving a child's background important? Where can you get advice about the care needs of a child or young person who has a different racial, cultural or religious background from your own?
- 1.2c What skills might children and young people need to develop to deal with discrimination? How can you challenge prejudice and discrimination or help other people to challenge them? How would you enhance their self-worth and encourage children and young people to make a positive contribution? How can you support them in this?

1.3 Person centred approaches

Skills and knowledge

1.3a Be able to explain how your care relates to the outcomes of ensuring that a child is supported to:

- Be healthy.
- Stay safe.
- Enjoy and achieve.
- Make a positive contribution.
- Achieve economic wellbeing.

1.3b Give examples of how you take account of the experiences, preferences, wishes and needs of individual children and young people, and their families.

1.3c Explain why it is important to listen to children and young people's views about risk and safety, and show how you take these into account in your role as a foster carer the importance of confidentiality and how it applies to your role.

Evidence requirements

1.3a What support is available in your fostering service or local authority to help children achieve the five outcomes listed? Give a practical example of how your work as a foster carer helps children and young people achieve one these outcomes.

1.3b Give an example of how you have made changes to accommodate the individual needs and expressed wishes of a child or young person.

1.3c What should you do if a child or young person wants to do something you consider as "risky" or "dangerous"? How would you approach the subject with the child or young person? Give an example where a positive challenge for a child or young person might involve an acceptable level of risk. Why is it important to allow children and young people to take measured risks?

1.4 Confidentiality and sharing information

Skills and knowledge

- 1.4a **Understand** the importance of confidentiality.
- 1.4b **Understand** how to apply your fostering service's policies and procedures about confidentiality and information sharing.
- 1.4c **Understand** the limits of confidentiality (for example, when it is necessary to share information to safeguard a child or young person).

Evidence requirements

- 1.4a What do you understand by the word 'confidentiality'? Why is confidentiality important?
- 1.4b How do you maintain confidentiality in the home? If a GP, teacher, social worker or professional from another organisation asked for information about a child or young person what would you do? If a relative, friend or neighbour asked about a child or young person what would you do?
- 1.4c Give one example of when and to whom you would disclose information you are given; give one example when you would not disclose information.

Standard 2: Understand your role as a foster carer

Summary: This standard sets out what you need to know about your role and responsibilities as a foster carer in relation to the law, Government policies and other professionals working with children and young people. You will be expected to know and understand the legislation, policies, values and procedures relevant to your work as a foster carer. You will be expected to know how to work well with colleagues in your fostering service and local authority and from other organisations involved in the care and education of the children and young people you foster. You will also be expected to understand the value of, and how to work with, families and carers.

2.1 Fostering role

Skills and knowledge

- 2.1a Know** the overall aims of your fostering service.
- 2.1b Understand** your own role and responsibilities.
- 2.1c Understand** the role of your supervising social worker.

Evidence requirements

- 2.1a** Explain the aims of your fostering service. Does it have a specialist role?
- 2.1b** What are your role and your responsibilities as a foster carer? Explain three specific tasks you undertake.
- 2.1c** What is the role of your supervising social worker?

2.2 Legislation, policies and procedures

Skills and knowledge

2.2a Know about relevant legislation, policies and procedures relating to foster care, and where you can get further information.

2.2b Understand the importance of following your agency's policies and procedures.

Evidence requirements

2.2a Identify two important pieces of childcare law that foster carers need to know about.

For example, give an example of how your local authority explained the law and the assessment process relating to becoming foster carer.

Who would you speak to in order to get clear information about the law or a procedure relating to being a foster carer?

2.2b Where can you find out about your fostering service's policies and procedures? Pick two of your fostering service's policies and explain how they affect your work? Why is it important to follow the policies?

2.3 Relationships with parents and others

Skills and knowledge

2.3a Understand the importance of families and friends for children and young people.

2.3b Demonstrate how you involve families and others in the lives of children and young people and the important role of foster carers in helping a child maintain contact.

Evidence requirements

2.3a What is important about family and friends for children? Why is it important to maintain links with the child's birth family?

2.3b Explain your role as a foster carer in helping a child or young person maintain contact with their family and friends in relation to someone you have looked after? What do you do in relation to this? How would you support a child or young person where there was no parental contact or contact had a negative impact on the child?

2.4 Team working

Skills and knowledge

- 2.4a Understand** the concept of 'the foster care team' and your contribution to effective teamwork.
- 2.4b Know** who you are accountable to in your work as a foster carer and where to go for support.
- 2.4c Know** how to contribute to planning for children and young people, including contributions to meetings and reviews.

Evidence requirements

- 2.4a** Draw a diagram or make a list of the people supporting the child or young person in their placement with the child at the centre. Indicate how you work with each member of this 'team'.
- 2.4b** Who are you accountable to in your work as a foster carer? What different types of support are available to you? What support should you receive from the child or young person's social worker?
- 2.4c** Get feedback from your supervising social worker on how you contribute to meetings. Identify any specific help you might require in making effective contributions.

2.5 Being Organised

Skills and knowledge

2.5a Demonstrate that you are well organised, reliable and dependable.

2.5b Show that you provide activities and environments that are well organised and safe

Evidence requirements

2.5a Why do children and young people need carers who are organised, reliable and dependable? Give an example from your own practice and also provide witness testimony to back up your example.

2.5b Give an example of an activity that you have organised. How did you organise it and ensure it was safe?

2.6 Complaints and compliments

Skills and knowledge

- 2.6a Understand** how complaints and compliments are dealt with in your agency, and know how you can make a complaint.
- 2.6b Know** how children, young people and their families can access the complaints procedure and how you can support them.
- 2.6c Know** about the allegations policies and procedures of your fostering service and how to access support and legal advice.

Evidence requirements

- 2.6a** What should happen when someone makes a complaint? How and to whom would you make a complaint or compliment?
- 2.6b** What does the organisation do to make sure children are happy in their placement? How would you support a child or young person who wanted to make a complaint?
- 2.6c** What should happen if an allegation is made against a foster carer? What support and advice is available?

Standard 3: Understand health and safety, and healthy care

Summary: This standard is about all the things you need to know to do your job as a foster carer safely, and not to put yourself, your family or the children and young people you look after in danger. It is also about providing 'healthy care'. You will be expected to understand health and safety laws and regulations as they apply to your role as well as the policies and procedures of your fostering service. You may be expected to undertake specialist training, for example, to help a child with a specific health need. You will be expected to demonstrate that you have an understanding of the health care needs of children and young people, how to promote healthy lifestyles, and what to do in case of accidents or illness. You will be expected to assess potential risks and understand how to manage challenging behaviour in line with the guidance provided by your fostering service.

3.1 Legislation, policies and procedures

Skills and knowledge

3.1a Show an awareness of the relevant health and safety legislation and guidance and your responsibilities.

3.1b Know your agency's procedures in relation the health and safety of children and young people

Evidence requirements

3.1a Give an example of how you use the health and safety legislation to protect the child or young person in your care.

3.1b What procedures must foster carers follow in respect of the health and safety of children and young people?

3.2 Accommodation

Skills and knowledge

3.2a Know how to keep your home safe and free of avoidable hazards that might be a risk to children and young people.

3.2b Know the importance of maintaining a good standard of hygiene and cleanliness.

3.2c Show that you and those living in your household know what to do in case of a fire.

Evidence requirements

3.2a How does your responsibility as a foster carer in relation to health and safety apply to:

- Electrical safety
- Hazardous substances
- Play equipment

Give two examples of potential fire hazards and how you can reduce the risk of fire.

3.2b How do you prevent the spread of infections in your household? How should you dispose of infected waste (e.g. bodily fluids)?

3.2c How have you made sure everyone in the house knows what to do in case of a fire? Do all members of your family know what to do in case of fire?

3.3 Healthy care and medication

Skills and knowledge

- 3.3a Know** what 'healthy care' means for the physical, mental, emotional and sexual health of children and young people.
- 3.3b Have** an understanding of children and young people's health and hygiene needs, including allergies and infection control procedures.
- 3.3c Explain** your role in promoting the health of children and young people, including giving advice and information in relation to risk taking, substance misuse, relationships and sexual health.
- 3.3d Have** an understanding of first aid and know how to access emergency medical treatment.
- 3.3e Know** what procedures to follow in relation to medication and health-care procedures including what consent is required.

Evidence requirements

- 3.3a** What does providing 'healthy care' mean in relation to the children and young people you look after in terms of meeting their: physical, mental, emotional and sexual health needs? Give an example for at least 3 of the 4 areas.
- 3.3b** How do you encourage children and young people to maintain personal hygiene? How do you find out about the individual health needs, allergies and medication of the children and young people you look after? What is our role in meeting these needs? How do you maintain a good standard of hygiene in your home?
- 3.3c** What actions should foster carers take in relation to the health of all children? Give an example of how you would deal with a situation where a child or young person was putting their health at risk, related to either risk-taking, substance misuse, relationships and sexual health.
- 3.3d** What would you do if a child or young person:
- Had an accident?
 - Showed symptoms of being seriously ill?
- What record should you keep of accidents or injuries?
- 3.3e** Which of the following do you need consent for and who would be involved in giving consent?
- Taking a child to the GP
 - Administering medicines
 - Vaccinations/ inoculations
 - Routine operation

- Emergency operation
- Contraception
- Dental treatment
- Body piercing

Think of other examples where you might need consent? What records should you keep?

3.4 Personal safety and security

Skills and knowledge

- 3.4a Understand** potential risks to the safety and security of yourself and members of your family and what you can do to reduce or manage the risks.
- 3.4b Know** about the range of challenging behaviours presented by children and young people and how to encourage positive behaviour.
- 3.4c Understand** the need to manage challenging behaviour in a way that is safe without the use of physical or other inappropriate punishment and give examples from your work as a foster carer.

Evidence requirements

- 3.4a** Give two examples of situations where you or your family might be placed at risk. What could you do to reduce or manage the risks?
- 3.4b** Describe the range of challenging behaviour that could be presented by the children and young people you look after. Give examples of ways in which you can encourage positive behaviour.
- 3.4c** What is the policy of your fostering service or local authority on what sanctions are permissible/not permissible (including use of physical restraint)? What steps would you take to discourage challenging behaviour directed towards:
- Yourself?
 - Another child or young person?
 - Another adult?
 - Self harm?

3.5 Risk assessment

Skills and knowledge

3.5a Identify examples of risks to children and young people and appropriate action to reduce or manage the risks.

Evidence requirements

3.5a Give two examples of different types of risks to children and young people (e.g. from their own behaviour, from the environment, from other people). What have you/can you do to reduce each risk? Give an example of a way you have managed one of these risks that you could not remove? Who should be involved in this decision?

Standard 4: Know how to communicate effectively

Summary: This standard is about developing your communication skills for working with children, young people and their families, as well as with other professionals in your fostering service, and other organisations. These are fundamental skills for foster carers and are needed to achieve all the other standards. You will be expected to show that you know about communication, what helps and what hinders communication, and how to use it effectively. You will be expected to know about and use different forms of communication. You will be expected to understand the importance of good record keeping and how you can make, use and keep records properly.

4.1 Encourage communication 'Empathy' is the ability to put yourself in someone else's shoes and understand how that person might feel

Skills and knowledge

4.1a Demonstrate how you listen to and understand the wishes and feelings of children and young people.

4.1b Understand the need to use appropriate means of communication with children and young people including non-verbal and other means, and give examples from your practice.

4.1c Demonstrate that you respond appropriately to children and young people in clear, jargon-free language, without being patronising.

4.1d Show how you help children and young people to make their own decisions.

Evidence requirements

4.1a Explain how you listen to children and young people and how you know what they want and how they feel. What have you done in response to this?

4.1b Describe different ways of communicating, including non-verbal and other means, with children and young people taking into account their age, understanding, body language, use of words, any disability, cultural background and where their first language is not English. Give examples of this from your practice.

4.1c Ask your supervising social worker or someone else you have worked closely with to give you feedback on their observations of your communication with children or young people.

4.1d How do you encourage and empower children and young people to make their own decisions? Explain how you have helped children and young people contribute to planning- for example with consultation booklets. Give examples of phrases you could use which would:

- Encourage them to make their own decisions
- Discourage them from making their own decisions

4.2 Knowing about communication

Skills and knowledge

- 4.2a **Describe** effective ways of communicating with children and young people.
- 4.2b **Understand** some of the common difficulties in communicating with children and young people and give examples of how you try to overcome these.
- 4.2c **Know** how to use different communications media.

Evidence requirements

- 4.2a Make a list of techniques you have found to be helpful in communicating with children and young people.
- 4.2b Describe some of the common difficulties in communicating with children and young people. Give two examples of difficulties you have encountered and how you have tried to overcome them.
- 4.2c Show that you can write a short report or a letter using a computer and send and receive an email message or use a fax machine, and produce written reports using log-books/diary. Show also that you can write a text message and make a phone call also put in text messages or phone calls.

4.3 Communication with parents, families and friends

Skills and knowledge

- 4.3a **Show** that you are aware of the procedures for arranging contact and understand your role as a foster carer.
- 4.3b **Understand** when and how to raise concerns with families and friends in an appropriate way.
- 4.3c **Demonstrate** that you understand children and young People's confidentiality when communicating with parents, families and friends, including your own family and friends.

Evidence requirements

- 4.3a How would you arrange contact for a child or young person with their family? What different contact arrangements might be made? For example can you agree to extra visits or withhold visits? Where would you get information on this?
- 4.3b If you had to raise a sensitive subject to a parent or carer, how would you go about it? If a parent or carer became aggressive or was threatening, what would you do?
- 4.3c What information should you pass on to parents and carers? What should happen to information that a child or young person might pass to you or your family? Give an example of a decision where it would be appropriate to consult their parents and carers. Give an example of confidential information that it would not be appropriate for you to share.

4.4 Communication with organisations

Skills and knowledge

4.4a Understand the importance of effective communication with other organisations who are in contact with children and young people.

4.4b Demonstrate effective communication with your supervising social worker.

Evidence requirements

4.4a Give an example of an agency (e.g. school, CAMHS) you have contact with. What was the purpose of your contact and how has it benefited the child or young person?

4.4b How can you achieve good communication with your supervising social worker? Give an example or provide feedback from your supervising social worker.

4.5 Principles of keeping good records

Skills and knowledge

- 4.5a Understand** the importance of keeping accurate records.
- 4.5b Know** the record keeping policy of your fostering agency, and how information is shared with others, including children and young people and their families.
- 4.5c Know** how to record understandable, relevant, clear and concise, factual information, which can be checked.
- 4.5d Know** how to enable children and young people to participate in record keeping and keep their own records and memorabilia.

Evidence requirements

- 4.5a** Make a list of the reasons why your records might be needed now or in the future.
- 4.5b** What is the record keeping policy of your fostering agency? What should you record? How and when do you share information with others?
- 4.5c** Examine an example of a report or a record that you have written (e.g. for a LAC Review or from your foster carer diary). Is it:
- Understandable?
 - Relevant?
 - Factual?
 - Clear and concise?

What does a record need to contain so that it can be checked? What is meant by the following and how they differ from each other:

- An observation?
 - A fact?
 - An opinion?
 - Information from others?
- 4.5d** How can children and young people contribute to records kept about them? How do you ensure that they have recorded memories of their stay?

Standard 5: Understand the development of children and young people

Summary: This standard sets out what you need to know about the development, behaviour and special needs of the children and young people you look after. You will be expected to show that you understand the stages of normal child development and how children develop attachments, and the impact of interrupted development, loss and separation. You will be expected to know how to help children develop 'resilience' and self-esteem and how to support them through changes in their lives. You will be expected to know how to help children achieve their full potential and promote their learning and development at different stages of their childhood. You will be expected to know how to promote positive sexual health and sexual identity. You will be expected to understand how to support children with disabilities and special educational needs.

5.1 Attachment and stages of development

Skills and knowledge

- 5.1a Understand** the basic principles of how children of all ages form attachments, how these attachments affect their development, and the impact of interrupted development, trauma, separation and loss.
- 5.1b Understand** child development and the developmental needs of children and young people.
- 5.1c Understand** the difference between chronological age and stages of development, and how this may affect a child or young person.

Evidence requirements

- 5.1a** How do children form attachments? How might the experiences of looked after children affect their ability to form attachments? How can you help children to build caring relationships following the impact of interrupted development, trauma, separation and loss?
- 5.1b** What are the main stages of a child's development? Give two examples of the developmental needs of children and young people you look after.
- 5.1c** Describe the stages of development and relate these to the child or young person you look after. Give examples of the difference between chronological age and stages of development.

5.2 Resilience 'Resilience' is a quality that helps children and young people resist and recover from adversities.

Skills and knowledge

5.2a Understand how foster carers can help children and young people develop 'resilience' and self-esteem.

Evidence requirements

5.2a How can you encourage children and young people to have increased ability to overcome difficulties and develop a positive view of themselves?

5.3 Transitions ‘Transitions’ are milestones in children’s lives – some are general, some are individual.

Skills and knowledge

5.3a Explain significant milestones that mark transition in the lives of children and young people, and the range of responses to them.

5.3b Understand how to support individual children and young people through significant life changes and challenges.

5.3c Be able to work with young people to develop skills, self-confidence and knowledge to prepare them for adulthood and independent living.

Evidence requirements

5.3a Think about your own life and what significant milestones (transitions) you experienced as a child. What helped you through these? What significant milestones have you seen children and young people experience? Give examples of different responses to these milestones.

5.3b Select an example of a child or young person who is going through a significant period of their life (e.g. starting a new school, separation from their birth family). What have you done to support them with these changes?

5.3c What helped you prepare for adulthood and to live independently of your family? Give examples of specific help the children and young people you look after might need with skills, self-confidence and knowledge. Give examples of the different areas of support you will need to cover.

5.4 Supporting play, activities and learning

Skills and knowledge

- 5.4a Know** how to encourage children and young people to participate in activities.
- 5.4b Explain** how play, hobbies and interests are important to social and personal development, and enjoyment of recreational activities.
- 5.4c Explain** the importance of adhering to appropriate routines for children and young people.

Evidence requirements

- 5.4a** How would you encourage children and young people to take part in activities:
- At home?
 - Sporting and outdoor activities?
 - With friends?
 - Out of school activities?
- 5.4b** Why are play, hobbies and interests important for development?
- 5.4c** How do routines benefit children and young people? What routines do you have in your household and why?

5.5 Supporting educational potential

Skills and knowledge

- 5.5a **Show** how you can encourage and support children and young people with their education (including early years education) and help them overcome setbacks.
- 5.5b **Be able** to actively work with families, social workers and teachers to help children and young people achieve.
- 5.5c **Know** how to support young people in their further education and training, and employment.
- 5.5d **Be able** to advocate on behalf of children and young people to ensure their educational needs are met.

Evidence requirements

- 5.5a Describe active ways in which you can provide support for children and young people and how you can enable them to achieve in their education. Give examples of how you can help pre-school children with their learning and development. What setbacks have the children and young people in your care experienced with their education? How did you help them to overcome these?
- 5.5b Show how you have worked with others e.g. those listed to support a child or young person's education.
- 5.5c Make a list of resources and support available for young people who have left school. How would you assist a young person to access further education or find employment?
- 5.5d What would you do if you felt that a child or young person's educational needs were not being met?

5.6 Understanding contexts

Skills and knowledge

- 5.6a Understand** children and young people in the context of their wider family, caring or social network.
- 5.6b Understand** the contribution family, caring and social networks make to the development of children and young people.
- 5.6c Understand** the impact of abuse, separation and loss on the behaviour of children and young people.

Evidence requirements

- 5.6a** Why are wider family, caring and social networks important to children's well-being and development? Draw a diagram or make a list of a child or young person's family, friends and wider social networks.
- 5.6b** Give an example of how family, caring or social networks can affect the development of a child or young person positively or negatively.
- 5.6c** What types of behaviour would you expect to see in a child or young person who has experienced abuse, separation or loss? For example, if the child or young person in your care has been/ is affected by separation, loss, trauma or abuse how are you helping them to overcome this?

5.7 Promote positive sexual health and sexual identity

Skills and knowledge

- 5.7a **Understand** how to promote good sexual health with children and young people.
- 5.7b **Understand** how to enable children and young people to develop a positive sexual identity with regard to their own sexuality.

Evidence requirements

- 5.7a What advice and information should be available to children and young people to promote their sexual health, and when? What is your role as a foster carer?
- 5.7b What help do children and young people need to develop their sexual identity in positive ways? How would you respond to a child or young person telling you that he or she is gay/lesbian or bi-sexual or who was unsure of their sexual identity?

5.8 Supporting disabled children and children with special emotional needs

Skills and knowledge

- 5.8a **Understand** the 'social model of disability' and what it means in relation to your work as a foster carer.
- 5.8b **Have** a broad understanding of the needs of children and young people who are disabled or have learning difficulties.
- 5.8c **Understand** the need to adapt activities and experiences so individual children and young people can take part.
- 5.8d **Understand** how you might support children and young people with special educational needs, and their families.

Evidence requirements

- 5.8a Explain what is meant by the 'social model' of disability (see glossary). What do you understand about disability? How has your fostering agency explained this to you?
- 5.8b Give two examples of needs that may be specific to children and young people who are disabled or have a learning disability.
- 5.8c Think of a game or activity you might use with a child or young person. How can you adapt it so a disabled child or young person can join in?
- 5.8d Think of an example of a special educational need. How would you support the child or young person and their family with this?

Standard 6: Keep children and young people safe from harm

Summary: This standard sets out what you need to know and do to keep children and young people safe and protect them from harm. You will be expected to show you understand the relevant laws, policies and local safeguarding arrangements to protect a child or young person from harm or abuse. You will be expected to show you understand how to recognise that a child or young person is being abused or neglected and what action you should take working alongside other agencies who have a child protection role. You will be expected to know what to do if you have concerns about a child or young person's welfare, instances of malpractice, negligence or unprofessional behaviour.

6.1 Legislation, policies and procedures

Skills and knowledge

6.1a Know about legislation and national guidance relating to protecting and safeguarding children.

6.1b Understand your local multi-agency safeguarding policies and procedures on identifying and protecting children and young people who have been abused or are at risk of abuse.

Evidence requirements

6.1a Look at and then summarise a piece of legislation or guidance that relates to protecting and safeguarding children.

6.1b Give examples of the multi-agency safeguarding policies in your local area related to protecting children from abuse.

6.2 Keeping children safe

Skills and knowledge

- 6.2a **Demonstrate** that you understand what children and young people want and need to feel safe.
- 6.2b **Be aware** of what contributes to a safe environment for children and young people.
- 6.2c **Know** how to help children and young people keep themselves safe from harm or abuse.
- 6.2d **Develop** and maintain 'safer caring' guidelines for you and your household.

Evidence requirements

- 6.2a What do children and young people say they want and need in order to feel safe from harm? What aspects of staying safe might children and young people not understand or are aware of when coming from an unsafe situation? How can you help meet these needs?
- 6.2b How can children and young people be unsafe in a foster home?
- 6.2c Give a practical example of how a child or young person can protect themselves and stay safe?
- 6.2d How have you applied these guidelines in your household?

6.3 Recognising and responding to abuse

Skills and knowledge

6.3a Understand the different ways in which children and young people can be harmed by adults, other children and young people including the internet.

6.3b Understand the different ways in which children and young people can be placed at risk, for example:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- exposure to domestic abuse
- neglect
- faltering growth
- institutional abuse
- self-harm

6.3c Understand signs and indicators of possible abuse and neglect.

6.3d Understand how children might be bullied and know what action to take if you suspect a child or young person is being bullied.

6.3e Understand the procedures you need to follow if you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, and the action you might need to take immediately.

Evidence requirements

6.3a Give an example of how children and young people could be harmed by **each** of the following:

- Adults
- Other children and young people
- Individuals through the Internet

What are the risks of the Internet and mobile phones and what can you do to reduce the risks?

6.3b Find out about two areas of abuse and describe how children and young people may be placed at risk.

6.3c Make a list of signs and indicators for the two types of abuse you found out about for 6.3b. How can parental problems (e.g. domestic violence or drug and alcohol misuse) increase the risk to the child or young person?

6.3d In what different ways might children and young people be bullied?
What action should you take if you suspect that a child or young person is being bullied?

6.4 Working with other agencies

Skills and knowledge

- 6.4a **Know** about your local Safeguarding Board and the responsibilities of your fostering service and other agencies in keeping children safe from harm.
- 6.4b **Know** who the designated child protection worker is at the school, pre-school group, club or other activity.
- 6.4c **Be aware** of the safeguarding policy of the school, pre-school group, club or other activity.

Evidence requirements

- 6.4a What local agencies are involved in safeguarding children and young people? Describe the role of your local Safeguarding Children Board. Outline the responsibilities of one of these agencies for keeping children safe from harm. Explain your fostering agency's policy on safeguarding.
- 6.4b Find out who the designated staff are.
- 6.4c Read a copy of the Safeguarding Policy of a children or young people's organisation you have contact with.

6.5 'Whistle-blowing' (reporting failures in duty)

Skills and knowledge

- 6.5a Know** when and how to refer a concern about child protection, the child's welfare or any other instance of malpractice, negligence or unprofessional behaviour which might not be in the child's best interests or pose a risk to the child.
- 6.5b Know** how and to whom to report your concern about unsafe practice of others.
- 6.5c Know** what to do if you have followed your own fostering service's policies and procedures on reporting concerns, and you are not satisfied with the response.
- 6.5d Identify** what to do when you do not get a satisfactory response from other organisations or agencies.

Evidence requirements

- 6.5a** Describe the 'whistle blowing' policy of your fostering service/agency. If you had a concern about a child or young person's welfare or any instance of malpractice, negligence or unprofessional behaviour what should you do?
- 6.5b** What would you do if you consider the practice of another person is unsafe or inappropriate?
- 6.5c** What would you do if you had reported abuse or unsafe behaviour but no action was taken by the person you reported it to?
- 6.5d** What would you do if you didn't receive a satisfactory response from another organisation or agency after reporting a child protection or child welfare concern?

Standard 7: Develop yourself

Summary: This standard is to help you make the most of the support and development opportunities that are available to you. This is important for developing your skills as a foster carer, for your own well-being, and to help you provide the highest standard of care. You will be encouraged to think about how fostering has affected you and your family, in particular the impact on your own sons and daughters. You will be expected to show that you know how to access and use information and supervision sessions, and use the support and supervision provided by your fostering service. You will be expected to show that you are committed to improving your practice as a foster carer through training opportunities and continuing professional development. You will be encouraged to think about how you can develop your career, either by remaining as a foster carer or through other career opportunities.

7.1 Your role and approval as a foster carer

Skills and knowledge

- 7.1a Understand** the implications of your approval as a foster carer for yourself and your family.
- 7.1b Understand** how being a foster carer may affect you personally and where you can get support.
- 7.1c Be aware** of the particular issues for male, black and minority ethnic, gay and lesbian foster carers and the support available.

Evidence requirements

- 7.1a** What changes have you and your family had to make since becoming foster carers? What have you found challenging? What fit in easily?
- 7.1b** What are the biggest challenges you have had to face? Where would you go for support if your supervising social worker was unavailable or if a situation arose outside of office hours?
- 7.1c** What are the issues for you in your role as a foster carer? What issues might male, black and minority ethnic, gay and lesbian foster carers face? What support is available in your fostering service or the wider community for these carers?

7.2 Being aware of the impact of fostering on your sons and daughters and extended family

Skills and knowledge

7.2a Understand the impact of fostering on your own children and other members of your family, their support and training needs and how to access these.

Evidence requirements

7.2a How has fostering affected your own children or family members? What issues have arisen and what training and support is needed or has been provided? Where would you access this support?

7.3 Using support and supervision to develop your role

Skills and knowledge

- 7.3a **Understand** the purpose of your personal supervision and annual foster carer review and know how to make the best of these opportunities.
- 7.3b **Know** what additional support and training is available to you.
- 7.3c **Be able** to recognise when you need support and the importance of asking for help and advice.
- 7.3d **Develop** knowledge, skills and understanding pertinent to your foster care role (e.g. treatment foster care, fostering teenagers).
- 7.3e **Develop** knowledge, skills and understanding to enable you to "broaden" your foster care role.

Evidence requirements

- 7.3a Why is supervision necessary? What do you expect to gain from supervision? How have you used supervision and support from your supervising social worker? Why is your annual review necessary?
- 7.3b Describe the training and support that is available to foster carers.
- 7.3c What aspects of your role do you find more difficult? Give an example of when you have asked for help. Give an example of some advice you have been given as a carer.
- 7.3d Identify current changes and developments in fostering and children's services. What specialist roles and key areas of learning are you interested in developing for yourself? What knowledge and skills have you gained that enables you to do your particular type of fostering?
- 7.3e What new skills or knowledge would help you in your current role? Suggest an activity (e.g. reading, a visit, specialised training) that would broaden your role.

7.4 Meeting learning needs as part of continuing professional development (CPD)

Skills and knowledge

- 7.4a **Understand** the need for continuing professional development and the ways in which it can improve your practice.
- 7.4b **Understand** and be able to reflect on how your day-to-day work as a foster carer is influenced by feedback from people you come into contact with and from children, young people and their families.
- 7.4c **Work** with your supervising social worker or other relevant person to agree and follow a personal development plan.
- 7.4d **Be willing** to continually improve your practice and understand how to do this.

Evidence requirements

- 7.4a Why do you need to develop and improve your skills and knowledge? How does this improve your work?
- 7.4b Give two examples of when you have received compliments or criticisms from the children, young people and families you work with. How did you change the way you work as a result of the feedback you received? If you did not change the way you work, explain the reasons why not.
- 7.4c What is a personal development plan? How has your personal development plan helped you? Are there ways in which it could be improved?
- 7.4d Explain methods you can use to improve your work as a foster carer. Which do you think will be most useful and why?

7.5 Meeting learning needs as part of continuing professional development (CPD)

Skills and knowledge

- 7.5a **Understand** the career opportunities available to foster carers and who can help you identify your needs and make the most of these opportunities.
- 7.5b **Work** with your supervising social worker/provider to access further or higher-level training, development and qualifications.

Evidence requirements

- 7.5a Describe the career opportunities that are available to you as a foster carer, both within and beyond your current role? Who is able to help you make the most of these career opportunities?
- 7.5b Which people or organisations can help you in higher-level training, development and qualifications? Have you discussed this with your supervising social worker?

Glossary

Words used about people and organisations

CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services: this service helps children and young people with their mental health and well-being and is usually provided by a multi-disciplinary team of mental health professionals.

Children’s Services: organisations that provide services to children, young people, their families and carers. Many Social Service Departments have re-organised into Children’s Services and Adult Services.

Designated teacher: all schools assign a senior member of staff as ‘designated teacher’ to act as a champion for looked after children and an advocate for the development of personal education plans for these young people. The role of designated teacher for looked after children sits alongside that of the designated teacher for child protection and the SENCO – the special educational needs coordinator in the school.

Family Placement or fostering manager: the person who is directly responsible for managing the fostering service and with responsibility for the staff. Independent fostering providers will often be managed by a Director.

Safeguarding Board: each local authority area has a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) made up of representatives of local authorities, health bodies, the police and other agencies. Their aim is to ensure that all agencies work well together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in their area.

Wider family, caring or social network: all those people who are significant people in the lives of children and young people. They are likely to include family members, friends and others in the local community, school and social networks.

Supervising Social Workers, Link Workers, Family Placement workers: The term ‘supervising social worker’ has been used throughout the guidance to mean the person who is responsible for supervising and supporting foster carers. They are also referred to as Link Workers or Family Placement Workers, and are key members of the fostering service.

Children’s Social Worker: this person is responsible for making plans, supporting the child or young person, contact with the child or young person’s family and coordinating the care plan. They also have legal responsibilities for visiting the child or young person and ensuring that their reviews are carried out.

Words used about work and work documents

Active listening: the process of actively seeking to understand the meaning of another person's communication, whether the communication is spoken or conveyed in a different way. Active listening includes the use of verbal and non-verbal skills (and may also involve use of technological or other aids).

Assess/Assessment: there are three types:

(a) The formal assessment of children and young people's needs. A 'core assessment' should have been completed for each looked after child or young person. This core assessment should include information about the child and their family, their care, health, behaviour, education, and their social and emotional well-being. The core assessment is the responsibility of the child's social worker although other professionals will also be involved. Specialist assessments (e.g. from an educational psychologist) may also have been requested.

(b) The assessment by supervising social workers to ensure that foster carers meet the *Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care*. Your supervising social worker will assess your understanding of, and your ability to meet, a specific learning outcome as set out in the standards. This will be based on evidence that you provide and from discussion with you.

(c) Your formal assessment for approval as a foster carer can also provide some of the evidence towards some of the learning outcomes in the standards.

Care Plan: a document which sets out in detail the plans for the child or young person including type of placement, plans for the future, health, schooling, and how daily care and support should be provided.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD): an on-going and planned learning process to help you keep up to date and improve and broaden your knowledge and skills, and further develop the personal and professional qualities needed to be an effective foster carer.

Empathy: the ability of yourself in somebody else's shoes and to understand how that person might feel (this definition is from a group of young people).

Healthy Care: this broadly refers to what children and young people should expect and what they are entitled to in a healthy care environment. The National Children's Bureau has developed the National Healthy Care Standard, on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills: A child or young person living in a healthy care environment is entitled to:

- Feel safe, protected and valued in a strong, sustained and committed relationship with at least one carer.
- Live in a caring, healthy and learning environment.

- Feel respected and supported in his/her cultural beliefs and personal identity.
- Have access to effective healthcare, assessment, treatment and support and have opportunities to develop personal and social skills, talents and abilities and to spend time in freely chosen play, cultural and leisure activities.
- Be prepared for leaving care by being supported to care and provide for him/herself in the future.

Outcomes: outcomes for children and young people.

Person-centred approaches: ways of working which involve and empower children and young people and their carers in deciding what they want to happen in their lives.

Personal development plan: a document for planning your own development based on where you are now and where you would like to be in the future. It should set out your learning needs as well as agreed training, learning and qualification opportunities to help you develop your knowledge and skills.

It is the responsibility of your supervising social worker to ensure that each foster carer has a personal development plan.

PEP – Personal Education Plan: it is now a legal requirement that all children and young people in public care should have a personal education plan. It is the responsibility of the young person's social worker to initiate the personal education plan by contacting the school's 'designated teacher' for children and young people in public care. The personal education plan should be in place within 20 days of the young person becoming a child or young person in public care or moving to a new school.

Resilience: a quality that helps children and young people resist and recover from adversity. Children can be helped to recover from adversities in early life through help with learning coping mechanisms, support from family and carers, good educational experiences and opportunities to develop self-confidence.

Social Model of Disability: the social model has been developed by disabled people in response to the medical model and the impact it has had on their lives.

Under the social model, disability is caused by the society in which we live and is not the 'fault' of an individual disabled person, or an inevitable consequence of their limitations. Disability is the product of the physical, organisational and attitudinal barriers present within society, which lead to discrimination. The removal of discrimination requires a change of approach and thinking in the way in which society is organised.

The social model has been developed with the aim of removing barriers so that disabled people have the same opportunity as everyone else to determine their own life styles.

A simple example is that of a wheelchair user who has a mobility impairment. They are not actually disabled in an environment where they can use public transport and gain full access to buildings and their facilities in the same way that someone without the impairment would do.

Transitions: children and young people naturally pass through a number of stages as they grow and develop. Often they will also be expected to cope with changes such as moving from primary to secondary school and for children and young people with disabilities or chronic ill health, from children's services to adults' services. Such changes are commonly referred to as 'transitions'.

Some children may have to face very particular and personal transitions not necessarily shared or understood by all their peers. These include: family illness or the death of a close relative; divorce and family break-up; issues related to sexuality; adoption; the process of asylum; disability; parental mental health; and the consequences of crime. All looked after children and young people will experience loss, separation and varying degrees of trauma when they come into foster care.

It is important to understand a child or young person in the context of their life, to recognise and understand the impact of any transitions they may be going through. It is also vital to recognise the role of parents and carers in supporting children and young people at points of transition, and to understand the need for reassurance, advice and support that parents and carers may express at these points.

Whistle blowing: raising concerns and reporting failures in duty about the way care and support is being provided, such as practices that are dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative.

Words used about knowledge and skills

Be aware of/have an awareness of: to know that something exists, for example legislation about promoting equal rights, and what it is concerned with at a general level rather than in detail.

Know/know how to: to have a clear and practical understanding of an area of work, with enough detail to be able to carry out any tasks or procedures linked with it.

Recognise: to understand a concept (e.g. equal opportunities) and how it affects the way work is carried out in practice.

Show/Respond/Share/Identify: (examples of 'doing' words). To be able to provide practical evidence in an area of work (e.g. in communication) at a skill level appropriate to what is required in the role.

Understand: to grasp the meaning of a concept and to grasp its broad purpose and principles (such as with legislation, policies and procedures).

Abbreviations and Acronyms

BAAF - British Association for Adoption and Fostering
CPD - Continuing Professional Development
CYPPC - Children and Young People in Public Care
DfE - Department for Education
HSC - Health and Social Care
NVQ - National Vocational Qualification
Ofsted - Office for standards in Education, Children's services and Skills
PDP - Personal Development Plan
PEP - Personal Education Plan
SSW - Supervising Social Worker
SCIE - Social Care Institute for Excellence
SFC - Skills for Care
tFN - The Fostering Network
UN - United Nations (as in UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

What next?

Further knowledge and skills

Essential learning for specific tasks

Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care demonstrates that you have the basic information and skills necessary for work as a foster carer.

There will be some tasks, however, that will need you to learn more before they can be performed safely because they are linked to the specific needs of children and young people or to a specialist role (e.g. working with disabled children and young people, handling medication, managing challenging behaviour).

Continuing professional development

Learning should continue throughout your career, and will enable you to develop new skills and open up career options. This will support your professional development, which will be beneficial both to your fostering service and for your career progression. In consultation with your supervising social worker, you should identify any additional training and development that will be beneficial to your role in the fostering service or your own aspirations.

Continuing professional competence

You may not wish or be required to develop skills in new areas. However it will still be necessary for you to keep your skills up to date. Additional training can provide an opportunity for you to ensure that you are working in accordance with current best practice.

Supporting flexible movement

Foster carers who are moving to a different foster care provider or another job with children and young people will have new things to learn so that they can understand how their practice may need to be adapted to the changed circumstances. Additional training can provide the learning necessary for them to make a successful transition into a different part of the workforce.

Further resources

Along with information that your SSW can provide, the following resources should provide you with any further information you may need:

[The Children Act \(1989, updated 2004\)](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

[Children Leaving Care Act \(2000\)](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/14/contents)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/14/contents>

[National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and Fostering Services Statutory Guidance and Regulations 2011](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/childrenincare/fostercare/a0071234/fostering-regulations-guidance-and-national-minimum-standards)

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/childrenincare/fostercare/a0071234/fostering-regulations-guidance-and-national-minimum-standards>

Organisations

The Fostering Network www.fostering.net

This is the UK's leading charity for anyone with a personal or professional interest in fostering. The Fostering Network provides a wide range of publications, training and resources to support foster carers and fostering services. It also produces The Skills to Foster training materials for prospective carers, key policy and recruitment materials, the Signpost series and essential good practice guides, and a wide range of training programmes.

British Association for Adoption and fostering www.baaf.org.uk This is a UK organisation made up of fostering and adoption agencies providing a range of books and other resources including training. It also publishes attractive books for children.

The Who Cares? Trust www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk

It promotes interests of children and young people in care and produces many useful publications.

Research in Practice - children and families research implementation project www.rip.org.uk

This has useful information and research findings relevant to fostering and looked after children and young people.

Social Care Institute for Excellence www.scie.org.uk

The institute provides up to date knowledge and summarises research and good practice in easy to read publications accessible on their website. There are some very good Practice Notes on what works in fostering.

National Youth Agency www.nya.org.uk

This youth work organisation produces useful publications and information on mental and emotional health, sex and relationships, drug and substance misuse, healthy lifestyles.

Skills for Care and Development -

www.skillsforcareanddevelopment.org.uk/home/home.aspx

Skills for Care & Development (SfC&D) is the sector skills council for people providing social work, social care and children's services to the people of the UK.

Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) <http://www.hpcp-uk.org/>

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) formerly the Health Professions Council is responsible for the regulation of social workers in England, following the abolition of the General Social Care Council (GSCC) on 31 July 2012.

Office for standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (known as Ofsted) www.ofsted.gov.uk

This organisation is responsible for inspecting and regulating the care and education of children and young people.

Policy and guidance www.unicef.org/crc

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, sets out the basic rights that every child should have. These rights underpin children's services in the UK.

National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and Fostering Regulations 2011 are the main regulations and standards relevant to foster care.

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/childrenincare/fostercare/a0071234/fostering-regulations-guidance-and-national-minimum-standards>

The Code of Practice on the recruitment, assessment, approval, training, management and support of foster carers (NFCA 1999). www.fostering.net

UK National Standards for Foster Care (NFCA 1999). The NFCA was the forerunner of the Fostering Network. www.fostering.net

Every Disabled Child Matters website gives details of support, resources and leaflets for disabled children. www.edcm.org.uk

Training and resource guides

The Skills to Foster: The Fostering Network's preparation training programme for pre-approval level carers, focusing on developing practical skills and linked to the Training, Support and Development Standards, the UK National Standards for Foster Care and the Skills to Foster assessment process. www.fostering.net

The Signposts in Fostering: a series of A5 information booklets for foster carers on crucial areas for foster care. The Fostering Network www.fostering.net

Prepared to Care (2006): a resource book for family and friends carers. The Fostering Network www.fostering.net

Living in Foster Care series: (2007) a guide for children and young people coming into care. The Fostering Network www.fostering.net

Preparation for Adult life (2003) a guide for those actively engaged in helping young people prepare to leave care. The Fostering Network www.fostering.net

Six 'Pathways through Fostering' publications which are practical and comprehensive guides written for foster carers on the following topics:

- Attachment (2008)
- Behaviour (2009)
- Contact (2008)
- Education (2008)
- Health (2009)
- Safer Caring (2012 The Fostering Network www.fostering.net)

Healthy Care Programme – a practical resource for improving the health and well-being of looked after children developed by the National Children's Bureau. www.ncb.org.uk

Diploma - Level 3 Diploma for the children and young people's workforce. Qualification for staff and foster carers working with children and young people. <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/>

Helpful websites

www.fostering.net

The Fostering Network website covers face to face and online training courses, publications, information and advice, and campaigns on issues affecting foster carers in the UK. Members can access a large range of fact sheets, reading lists and other practical resources on all aspects of foster care from the foster care Resource Centre at www.fostering.net/resources.

www.kidscape.org.uk

Advice, helpline and information about bullying and child sexual abuse. Helpline 08451 205204.

www.carelaw.org.uk

A guide to the law for young people in care. Created by National Children's Homes, this website explains in simple terms each aspect of childcare law and its implications.

www.chatdanger.com

An easy to use site on the potential dangers of interactive services online, e.g. chat, Instant Messenger (IM), online games, email and mobiles with useful resources for parents and carers.

www.kidsmart.org.uk

A website on Internet safety, run by the charity Childnet and aimed at schools, adults, young people and children. Provides plenty of advice, plus a section where carers can access a number of resources (including a special interactive presentation).

www.childnet-int.org

Online resources and leaflets for young people and adults to help make the Internet a great and safe place for children and young people.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Lots of information about staying safe on the Internet, with games for young people to download and replay.

www.parentsonline.gov.uk/safety

Department of Education and Skills online resource that provides information on the latest Internet safety issues, forums and a short safety presentation.

www.ace-ed.org.uk

The Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) is an independent registered charity, which offers information about state education in England and Wales for parents of school age children.

Useful numbers

Fosterline 0800 040 7675 (Freephone)

The confidential advice line, providing independent and impartial advice about fostering issues, funded by the Department for Education and run in association with the fostering Network (Mon-Fri 9am –5pm except Bank Holidays). Email: Fosterline@fostering.net
Text phone users dial 18001 before 0800 0407675 (for Typetalk service).

Childline 0800 1111

A free 24-hour helpline for children and young people to contact about any problem.

Useful Topics

In addition, as well as speaking to your SSW you may wish to look in more detail at the following topics.

Further information will be available from your fostercare provider.

Attachment www.fostering.net/resources/publications/attachment

Advocacy <http://www.voiceyp.org>

Anti-bullying policy and procedures of your fostering service

Anti-bullying training

Assessment and care planning

Benefits training

Carers own Children Training

Caring for children who have been abused

Caring for disabled children

Caring for separated refugee and asylum seeking children

Child Abuse: accusations against foster carer (Fostering Network Signposts) Child and adolescent mental health awareness

Child Development, Growth and Health

Child protection procedures

Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 DfE Children

Act 1989 and 2004 DfE

Children and Young People who engage other children in abusive activities

Children and Young People's Plan of your local authority

Children's Centres, Schools and designated teachers, and local children's information centres

Children's Rights and Participation Team

Choices: supporting active decision making with children and young people

Communicating with Children and Young People Communicating

with Disabled Children Counselling skills Complaints Leaflet for looked after children

Complaints procedure of your fostering service

Computer training

Confidentiality and Information Sharing Policy of your fostering service

Contact: supporting children's relationships with family and friends

Contact: supporting children's relationships with family and friends

Data Protection Act 1998 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents>

Dealing with Allegations Fostering network or BAAF Delegated

Authority www.fostering.net/delegated-authority

Disability equality training

Education Welfare Service

Educational Support www.fostering.net/resources/publications/education

Emotional abuse and neglect

Every Disabled Child Matters DfE

Examples of feedback given (annual review, consultation with children and young people)

Family and friends briefing days
 Feedback from SSW Fire
 escape plan
 First Aid Training
 First aid/Emergency Aid
 Foster Carer Handbook
 Foster Carers Charter DfE/ The Fostering Network
 Fostering Network document on the impact of fostering on sons and daughters
 Fostering Service Policy and Procedure
 Fostering service's policy on computer and mobile phone use
 Guidance about care, handling and use of restraint of your fostering service
 Guidelines for managing children's behaviour Health and Safety Act - see DfE website
 Health and Safety checklist
 Health, hygiene and first aid
<http://www.fostering.net/resources/publications/health>
 Healthy eating
 Helping children form good attachments
www.fostering.net/resources/publications/attachment HIV
 and Blood Borne Infections
 Induction file Foster Carers' Handbook
 Kidscape
 Leaflets on the Children Act 1989 and 2004 see DfE website
 Leaving Care Preparation
 Life Story Work
 Literature from community groups or the internet
 Local foster care association and the fostering Network
 Local safeguarding board website
 Managing challenging behaviour/A Proactive Approach to Conflict
<http://www.fostering.net/resources/publications/behaviour> Managing
 stress
 Meeting the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic Children
 Men in foster care
 Moving On
 Multi-agency child protection training
 Office hours of agency/out of hours arrangements
 Panel training
 Peer mentoring <http://www.fostering.net/resources/good-practice-guidance/foster-carer-peer-mentoring-good-practice-guidelines>
 Personal development plan
 Personal education plans
 Personal, Health, Social Education (PHSE)
 Planning for looked after children
 Policy and procedures on contact
 Policy and Procedures relating to allegations against foster carers (Local Safeguarding Board)
 Policy of your fostering service on keeping records
 Principles and Values for Training, Support and Development standards for foster care
 Promoting equality, diversity and rights
 Promoting health and well-being Promoting

self esteem
Promoting the positive mental health of looked after children and young people
Protecting children, supporting foster carers
Recruitment of foster carers
Reducing risk for teenagers in care
Reports for child's LAC review or planning meetings / consultation booklets / witness testimony from SSW or review chairs etc. Risk assessments
Safer Caring <http://www.fostering.net/resources/publications/safer-caring>
Safer Caring Family Policy
Separation and Loss
Sex and relationships for looked after children
Sex and sexuality
Sexual health
Sexual Offences Acts DfE websites
Statement of Purpose/leaflets produced by your fostering service
Substance misuse and the impact on fostering
Supervision policy of your fostering service Support groups for foster carers
Supporting gay and lesbian foster carers
Supporting gay, lesbian and bi-sexual young people in foster care The Common Assessment Framework CWDC and DfE websites Training around working with education
Underpinning training for Level 3 diploma
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child www.unicef.org/crc
Valuing Diversity
Websites of national children's charities
What can I say? Talking about sex and relationships
What to do if you suspect a child is being abused
<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/31815MIG2809.pdf>
Whistle-blowing' policy of your fostering service
Working together – the foster care team
Working Together to Safeguard Children
Working with Children and Young People to keep themselves safe
Working with children and young people who self-harm
Working with children, young people and their families
Working with families
Young people, substance use and foster care Your fostering service's use of 'risk assessments'
Your local Safeguarding Procedures

Books

A Child's Journey through Placement: Vera Fahlberg BAAF/Batsford 1994

Attachment, Trauma and Resilience – therapeutic caring for children: Kate Cairns BAAF reprinted 2004)

Promoting Resilience: a resource book on working with children in the care system: Robbie Gilligan (BAAF 2001)

Adopting or fostering a Sexually Abused Child: Catherine Macaskill (BAAF/Batsford reprinted 2004)

Time to Listen: experiences of young people in foster and residential care: Sally Morris and Helen Wheatley (Childline 1994)



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This document is also available from our website at:
www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/fostercare/fostercarestand