



TIME OUT
fostering

valuing individual needs

TIME OUT FOSTERING

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

MARCH 2011

CSCI REGISTRATION: H60002893

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1. MISSION STATEMENT AND INTRODUCTION

Time Out Fostering's philosophy is based upon passionate ideals about alternative and traditional ways of working with long term families (birth, kinship or adoptive) who risk separation due to their existing behaviour and skills. Time Out Fostering will provide high quality, good value traditional Foster Care. It is our ideal to stay as a small agency unit working with a maximum of 25 families with placements which can therefore offer excellent personal support to our carers, their families and the children and young people placed with them. The size of our agency also dictates the nature of our organisation as one where communication, creativity, reflection and positivism allow for effective and efficient service delivery.

Time Out Fostering is developing a specialism in working with parent and child and non residential foster placements.

Time Out Fostering recognises the importance of children and young people experiencing family life which is nurturing and allows for positive change. The Foster Carers should act as a parental figure and the child as an active agent of change.

We aim to equip Foster Carers and staff with the knowledge and skills to enable an excellent quality service to the children and young people placed with us.

Children are entitled to grow up in a loving environment that can meet their developmental needs.

Each child should be valued as an individual and given personalised support in line with their individual needs and background in order to develop their identity, self confidence and self-worth.

The particular needs of disabled children and children with complex needs will be fully recognised and taken into account

The significance of contact for looked after children, and of maintaining relationships with birth parents and the wider family, including siblings, half-siblings and grandparents, is recognised, as is the Foster Carer's role in this.

Children in Foster Care deserve to be treated as a good parent would treat their own children and to have the opportunity for as full an experience of family life and childhood as possible, without unnecessary restrictions.

The central importance of the child's relationship with their Foster Carer should be acknowledged and Foster Carers should be recognised as core members of the team working with the child.

Foster Carers have a right to full information about the child.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Time Out Fostering aims to:

- provide a high quality, flexible and professional service.
- Put the child's welfare, safety and needs are at the centre of their care.
- Ensure that every child should have his or her wishes and feelings listened to and taken into account.
- Provide children with an enjoyable childhood, benefiting from excellent parenting and education, enjoying a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills leading to a successful adult life.
- offer good value for money.
- work with families and children where there is a likelihood of family breakdown if respite fostering is not available.
- Promote the following for children and young people;
 - Be healthy
 - Achieve economic wellbeing
 - Stay Safe
 - Make a positive contribution
 - Enjoy and achieve
- conduct advertising and recruitment campaigns that will encourage a diverse range of potential carer(s).
- have regard to the needs of excluded young people working towards inclusion, using strong links to Springboard Education where appropriate.
- organise a supportive care package that is designed to strengthen the long-term outlook for child and her/his family.
- Improve the mental health of children, young people by offering high quality carers and therapeutic intervention.
- promote good mental health in permanent families.
- offer a sensitive matching service to meet the needs of the individual child
- provide an ongoing training programme to enable Foster Carer(s) to develop the skills required to cater for the needs of the children placed.
- ensure an integrated service with children, young people, their families and friends, carers, Social Workers, health care workers and local authorities.
- offer a service that respects and responds to the needs of a diverse range of children and families including racial, religious, cultural and language issues.

- provide placements that acknowledge the importance of disability, gender, special needs and sexuality.
- promote social inclusion by preventing family breakdown and giving children positive role models and experiences through Foster Care.

3. STATUS AND CONSTITUTION OF THE AGENCY

Name of organisation	Time Out Fostering
Status	Limited Company
Registered Office	254 Upper Shoreham Road Shoreham by Sea West Sussex BN43 6BF
Company Registration No	0523 9451 (incorp. 23/09/04)
PAYE Ref. No.	334/ KZ61902
Accounts Office Ref.	334/ PF00188921
Office Address	The Ropetackle Centre Little High Street Shoreham West Sussex BN43 5EG

Time Out Fostering is governed under English law and conforms to relevant legislation.

Time Out Fostering is insured by Walter Wright, insurance brokers ensuring the best value for money cover. Time Out Fostering has Employers liability cover, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity cover.

Time Out Fostering will brand all policies, procedures and marketing material; copyright will be considered if appropriate.

4. Standards and Principles

The organisation ensures that there is financial support to fulfil the needs of children young people parents, carers and staff.

Time Out Fostering;

- values and respects the rights and needs of each individual concerned in any way with the organisation.
- makes every effort to enable the child or young person in the foster/support home to reach their maximum potential within a nurturing and caring environment.
- works alongside permanent families with respect and a non-judgmental approach.
- will ensure that each child's well being is promoted in all areas including personal development, emotional development, health and educational development.
- gives due consideration to the wishes and feelings of children and young people and their families.
- makes all efforts to safeguard the welfare of children and young people through thorough attention to the Health & Safety Policy and Procedures, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, training for staff and carers, and a commitment to constant vigilance in monitoring standards of care.
- recognises the complex demands of family life and therefore recognises the need to offer a variety of placements.
- supervising social workers/ family link workers and family support workers are allocated a case responsibility that reflects Time Out Fosterings values and principles.
- supervising social workers/ family link workers allocate time to listen and discuss progress with carers on an individual basis at least every ten weeks when a child is in place, in an appropriate environment, record and follow up concerns and wishes and feed back responses within four weeks.
- young people and children are given information about how to access independent agencies and advocacy services.
- To promote sponsorship through 'Children in Need' and other positive local causes for Foster Carers and children and young people placed with Time Out Fostering.

5. MANAGEMENT AND STRUCTURE

Director *Director*
Judy Packham *Jeremy Cross*

Registered Provider

Jeremy Cross

*Registered Manager
Alison Young*

*Family Link Workers
Judy Packham and Jeremy Cross*

*Supervising Social Workers
Alison Young and Lucy Cornish*

*Assessing Social Workers
freelance assessors, Alison Young and Lucy Cornish*

*Family Support
Taiya Smith*

*Administrator
Georgina Rickwood*

Directors and Management have monthly business meetings. The directors have business planning meetings twice a year. Quality Assurance Meetings take place every three months alongside quarterly business update report.

6. STAFF

Jeremy Cross

Director and Registered Provider

Jeremy has worked with young people and families for the last twenty years as a care officer, family Centre worker and teacher.

He is a qualified teacher and has worked in both primary and secondary settings, specialising in working with children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

As well as working in schools, he spent many years working to support families and young people in Whitehawk and Moulscombe family centres in East Sussex. He has set up and managed projects for families and young people, which continue to support the community.

He was a founder member of the Domestic Violence Forum in Brighton & Hove and trained with the Everyman Group in London, working with adult males involved in domestic violence.

He is trained in Safeguarding Children and Child Protection and has qualified as a C.P.I. Non Violent Intervention Instructor.

He has completed the NVQ level 5 in Management course.

He is committed to the educational and emotional well being of young people and was the founder of Springboard Education and Therapeutic Activity Trust, an independent organisation and charity, set up to work with young people who could not access these services elsewhere. He is currently a Director and Manager of this organisation where

he has continued to specialise in working to support children in care and in foster homes.

He is also director of 'Company Paridiso' an award winning production company specialising in telling peoples stories.

Judy Packham

Director

Judy has extensive experience in fostering management and a keen interest in the education of Looked After Children. She has set up and managed independent schools for young people who have difficulties accessing Local Authority provision. She works alongside Jeremy continuing to develop Springboard Education.

Judy is determined to promote quality care within Independent Fostering and has been a foster panel member and chair for several agencies.

Judy is a local magistrate and is passionate about improving life chances for vulnerable young people.

Judy has a diploma in management, a degree in English and Education and a diploma in special needs Education.

Alison Young DipSW

Registered Manager

Alison has worked with children and young people for many years. She was a school counsellor in a secondary school in Southeast London for five years. She worked extensively as a family assessment and support worker for a charitable voluntary agency specialising in supporting families where a parent had a diagnosis of a mental health illness. Whilst working for this agency Alison worked directly with children and parents supporting them to understand and address the issues that mental health difficulties raised within their families. Alison worked in a Family Centre where she carried out assessment work, report writing and supervised contact for the local Authority.

Alison was employed as a senior worker for a project that offered housing and support for 23 adults with severe mental health problems. She worked in this project for ten years.

Alison's particular interest lies in maximising the positive mental health of children and families through support, education and counselling/therapy.

Alison Young has a Diploma in Social Work, a Social Work Practice teaching award and a Diploma in Humanistic Counselling. She has completed the NVQ level 5 in Management course. Alison is undertaking a Post Qualifying Award in social work.

Lucy Cornish

In 2006 Lucy undertook a degree in Social Work. Following her degree she worked for West Sussex County Council in an Intensive Family Support Team working with children and families on child protection plans, child in need plans and accommodating children when necessary. Lucy is currently employed by Time Out Fostering as a Supervising Social Worker and will have completed the consolidation module at the University of Chichester in June 2011 in order to undertake a Post Qualifying award in social work. Lucy has three children and is dedicated to the wellbeing of young people.

Taiya May

Since leaving school Taiya has undertaken a variety of roles within varied workplace settings including, administration, health and social care, assistant manager of a retail outlet, NVQ assessor and Education Project Worker for Springboard Education. Whilst working at Springboard Taiya worked alongside young people with social, emotional and behaviour difficulties encouraging them to engage in education and appropriate interaction with their peers. Taiya also liaised with parents, carers and professionals to help maintain school placements and participated in PEP, LAC, CP and Annual Review meetings on a regular basis. She was able to communicate effectively with parents and carers; this enabled her to build positive relationships. Taiya now holds the position of Senior Family Support Worker for Time Out Fostering. Taiya has had extensive training with regards to all aspects of fostering including Child Protection and Safeguarding, Skills To Foster and First Aid.

Georgina Rickwood

Georgina has worked in Social care since 1996, both as a Foster Carer and as a family support worker, trainer and administrator for independent fostering agencies. Georgina has worked with Time Out Fostering since January 2009 in a variety of roles and now focuses on the training of NVQ and administration. Georgina has undertaken numerous training courses, both as a Foster Carer and as a support worker, and continues to update her CPD regularly.

7. STAFFING ISSUES

The organisation at present comprises of two directors (one of whom is a registered provider) a Registered Manager and supervising social worker, a social worker, a family support worker, qualified trained assessing social workers to be contracted as necessary, a family support worker and an administrator. In addition we have contact supervisors and community based assessors (to manage non residential foster placements) to be contracted as necessary.

The organisation has Supervising Social Workers and Family Link Workers who will supervise 20 families for full time workers. Family Link workers and the Registered Manager who have other responsibilities will case work on a maximum of 10 families for full time workers. Part time or contracted social workers shall be offered cases on a pro rata basis. Family support work will be provided in addition to complement and extend the level of support provided to placements. Administrative staff have been appointed initially on a part time basis.

The Registered Manager and directors will be supervised by an independent appropriately qualified senior social worker on a minimum eight weekly basis for a minimum of 1.5 hours and records shall be kept, agreed and signed by both parties. Informal supervision will be provided to the management team (Registered Manager and directors) during office hours, phone calls and meetings. The Registered Manager will supervise full time social workers and Family Support Workers formally on a four weekly basis for a minimum of 1.5 hours, records shall be kept and agreed and signed by both parties. Informal supervision will be available during office hours as appropriate. Other staff working with families or contracted social workers shall be offered supervision on a pro rata basis, however informal support shall be offered during office hours. There will be 24-hour support including a back up service for on call staff.

All staff and carers applications will be monitored for the purposes of ensuring that Time Out Fostering is offering equal opportunities.

In the extended absence of the Registered Manager Judy Packham will take on the responsibilities of the role until the Registered Manager returns. In the event of staff shortage Time Out Fostering has a bank of casual staff that are appropriately trained and checked to work in place of absent staff.

8. RECRUITMENT OF CARERS

Assessment and Approval Process

Following interest from a potential carer(s) Time Out Fostering will request some basic information if appropriate. An introductory letter and an information pack about Time Out Fostering will be forwarded to the prospective carer together with a declaration of interest form within two weeks. Contained in the information pack is:

- Basic information about Foster Care
- Description of Foster Carer
- Specification of Foster Carer
- Equal Opportunity document
- Complaints Procedure
- Assessment and approval process
- Declaration of Interest/application form
- Child Protection Policy (shortened)
- IRM information

Once interest and application has been confirmed a Time Out Fostering Social Worker will visit the home of the potential carer(s) within three weeks if possible with the applicant. The Social Worker will assess whether the carer(s) meets the necessary criteria. Once mutual suitability and understanding of shared values has been established the Social Worker will arrange for a second visit form another staff member.

Following a successful second visit the applicants will fill in the following forms with assistance where necessary;

- The Criminal Records bureau including POCA/ ISA check
- Department of Health
- Local Authority checks
- Other Relevant Agencies
- References 3 personal and 1 family member (a minimum of 2 references to be interviewed later)
- Ex Partner references
- Employers reference requested on headed paper
- Reference from birth children's schools

Once the application form has been received by Time Out Fostering the service manager will allocate a qualified Social Worker to assess the prospective Foster Carer.

The assessment will be carried out in compliance with the National Standards for Foster Care, and the BAAF Form F.

The allocated Social Worker will arrange times and dates for the assessment visits to take place. This will involve between 6-8 visits by the Social Worker to the prospective carer's home. The purpose of these visits is to meet and collate information about the household members, and to assess the prospective carer's knowledge and competence with regard to fostering. This information will then be used to complete the F form by the Social Worker. The Social Worker will assess whether the carer(s) meets the necessary criteria.

The Social Worker will then carry out an assessment of the prospective carer's pre and post approval training needs. Pre approval training will cover responsibilities pertaining to being a carer(s).

The Social Worker will assist the prospective carer to accumulate written evidence of their abilities with examples to demonstrate their appropriateness for being a carer(s).

If at any point in the assessment the prospective carer appears to be failing to meet the requirements then the Social Worker must inform their supervising manager. If it is decided that preparation, training and support cannot redeem the situation then they must be informed by the Social Worker within 48 hours. Potential carers must be given a clear explanation of the decision in writing.

The prospective carer will have access to the F form excluding references and will be asked to provide comments on their assessment.

The Social Worker will invite the prospective carer to attend the panel meeting, inform the prospective Foster Carer about the panel, how it operates and what will be expected of them. The Social Worker will also attend the panel.

Following the panel meeting, the panel will present a recommendation, possibly with a conditional request for further work or information. The Social Worker will inform the prospective carer both verbally and in writing and arrange for any additional work to be done within an agreed timescale.

The assessment procedure takes between three and six months to complete. Once approval is recommended by the panel the agency decision maker undertakes a thorough assessment of the Form F Checks and references and makes the final decision on approval. Once this is completed the process of matching a child or young person to the household will begin.

Appeals

If prospective carers are dissatisfied with the decision they can appeal. They must arrange to meet with the panel chair within 14 days of receiving the written decision.

The appeal of decision can go ahead only if there has been an error of fact or an issue of discrimination.

Foster Carers will be informed of the IRM in their initial interest pack.

The appeal procedure should then be sent to the applicants.

Following a positive decision a fostering agreement will be sent to the new carers. This will set out the procedures of joint working between Time Out Fostering and the carers.

9. TRAINING FOR CARERS

Time Out Fostering sees training as a vital part of a carer's support and education. Training is also a way of valuing and nurturing Foster Carers. A range of training will be regularly offered to expand the skills of carers and their families to promote their ability to form positive relationships that in turn enhance the parenting capacity of the families with whom they are involved.

Time Out Fostering will provide training to:

- Ensure that disadvantage and discrimination are recognised by Time Out Fostering carer(s). Consequently, carers will be given skills to challenge and address disadvantage and discrimination.
- Promote the professional qualities of the carer(s), enabling them to feel able and supported in their demanding role.
- Expand carer(s) knowledge, to keep up with any developments and to put this into practice.
- Implant an overall philosophy and standard of values throughout all Time Out Fostering placements, running through this will be the promotion of equality of opportunity and valuing of diversity.
- Ensure that Time Out Fostering carers are competent to provide safe and nurturing environments.

- Equip Time Out Fostering carer(s) to give the children placed with them a professional, positive, caring experience.
- Improve the crucial work the carer(s) undertake.

The training will operate on an informal and formal level. General support and information can be given by the supervising social worker or another experienced Foster Carer. Support groups and other events will offer an informal information session. Group training will give the Foster Carers a more formal experience.

Some of our training will be on a 1:1 basis. This will allow for intensive individualised work, where specific difficulties can be addressed with the carer.

In order to remove barriers from training, in certain circumstances Time Out Fostering may assist within reason the costs of attendance of compulsory training.

Foster Carers are encouraged to request any training they feel would be beneficial to them. There will also be training available to the daughters and sons of Foster Carers.

A variety of training options will be offered, including access to online training.

Remuneration Scheme

Carers who attend five completed training sessions throughout 2011 will receive £100.00. At least one of these days should be a Saturday Training Course.

Implementation

All prospective carers are expected to attend Skills to Foster training provided by the organization. This will include additional input from the assessing social worker with regard to Safe Caring, Safeguarding Children and Equality and Diversity.

A training programme has been developed in line with local demands and research findings. The following courses are our current mandatory courses;

Mandatory courses within the first three years

Managing challenging behaviour- Including self esteem and emotional and social development
 Missing from placement
 Safeguarding children and child protection
 Attachment and resilience
 Safer Caring
 Equality and diversity
 Basic First Aid

Education of looked after children
Record keeping
Health and safety
Health
De escalation
Listening to children
Pathway plans
Contact
Assessment including risks
The management and administration of medication

These courses must be completed during the first three years for the primary carer and four years for the secondary carer. All courses must be refreshed with five years following completion of mandatory training.

It is Time Out Fostering's minimum expectation that the content of courses must be provided and discussed with all carers within the first two years following the placement of a child or young person with them if they cannot attend training.

The following issues will be additionally woven through training:

- Recording Information and contributing to meetings
- Direct work with children and young people
- Working with children and young people who have suffered abuse
- Safer Care
- Identity and esteem
- Valuing diversity and equal opportunities
- Empowering children and young people
- Positive working relationships with permanent families

CWDC Standards

It will become an expectation that newly approved carers will complete this training manual within twelve months of their approval. Existing carers will be expected to complete before 2013. This will initially be aimed at primary carers but ideally both carers if they are in partnership. This is now being provided online as an alternative to using the workbook.

NVQ 3

When carers have completed the CWDW standards there may be an option of undertaking the NVQ level 3. The NVQ 3 training will be offered to carers with at least six months experience of foster or support caring at the discretion of Time Out Fostering. This allows for professional recognition of the carers work and may lead to an increase in payments for fostering. Carers should discuss this option with their supervising worker.

Carer development

Time Out Fostering is committed to the provision of quality training courses to its approved Foster Carers. Each carer has a record of training attended and training needs to be monitored during review and supervision. Each carer has a PDP.

All carers are invited to all training courses.

10. SUPPORT FOR CARERS

Time Out Fostering believes that support is an essential element of successful fostering placements. Support will be offered in a variety of ways. A supervising Social Worker/Family support worker will be allocated to each family. Their role will be to supervise the carer(s). A Family Support Worker will be made available to each family for additional work where it is appropriate. Additionally staff will offer support via telephone calls, visits, email, referral allocation, and liaison with the Local Authority and training/development work.

Time Out Fostering will promote more creative forms of appropriate support, such as an optional network of peer support among carer(s) or group meetings. Time Out Fostering respects the knowledge and direct experience carer(s) have of the difficulties that may arise during a placement, and therefore they may at times be the best source of support for another carer(s). The ultimate responsibility however, lies with Time Out Fostering staff.

The Social Worker or another member of their team will be contactable by the Foster Carer during office hours. Out of office hours there will be an on call telephone number and an additional back up telephone number. There will be access to a member of Time Out Fostering staff 365 days a year, 24 hours a day.

Carers will also have financial support, which respects and values the work provided.

11. REVIEW OF CARERS.

Reviews of the carer(s) will take place annually, unless circumstances dictate otherwise. The review will be organised by a Social Worker/ Family Link Worker who is not supervising the carer. The review will focus on the experiences of the carer(s) and their future development or training needs. If any issues arise which affect their approval then this may be reassessed. The review report will be presented to the panel for their comments.

12. ADDITIONAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY TIME OUT FOSTERING

We will offer Foster Care for children and young people between the ages of 0-18 and supported lodgings.

Foster Care - Our services offer

- Respite placements- short-term regular stays, ideally with the same Foster Carer.
- Short term- up to three months
- Long term
- Emergency
- Bridging

- Assessment
- Parent and child
- Siblings

Additional Supporting Services Time Out Fostering can offer;

Non Residential Fostering Placements will be offered to provide support or assessment of a family in the community.

Education is considered by Time Out Fostering to be a vital part of a child's development and inclusion in society. When children are unable or unwilling to access their usual school, links with Springboard Education will be used where appropriate.

Therapy is an important way of addressing the emotional needs of the child; it recognises the huge impact of separation from the long-term carers and allows an objective space in which the child or young person can feel heard. One hour weekly counselling with a counsellor who is approved by Time Out Fostering can be offered. This could be play or art therapy depending on the age and understanding of the child. In appropriate cases pre placement counselling may also be offered.

Supervised contact will be offered when it is in the child's best interest. The location and level of supervision will be negotiated with the child's local authority social worker. Contact is recognised as vital in most cases for the child's psychological well being and the agency has access to a variety of venues and supervisors for contact.

Advocacy will be offered for children and young people who are in a situation where having an independent advocate would be beneficial. Time Out Fostering will assist the child or young person to find an independent advocate bearing in mind their age, understanding and wishes.

We will:

- recruit a diverse range of carers.
- assess the carers using the BAAF form 'F' .
- match children with the most appropriate carer family.
- carry out the statutory and reference checks.
- work in line with placement agreements.
- assess and address the carers training needs.
- use a fostering panel to recommend approval of potential carers.
- offer access to support at all times.
- provide ongoing training and development for our carers and staff.
- maintain professional contact with our placing authorities keeping them up to date with placements.
- maintain effective partnerships with the individuals involved in placing children and young people.
- oversee, review and support the placements we arrange.
- attend relevant meetings, reviews and conferences.
- continue to monitor and assess the progress of the placement.

- provide Foster Care and Non Residential Fostering Placements as an integrated, tailor made package based upon the unique needs of the individual family.
- offer quality placements in a nurturing/loving environment.
- educational and other activities may be offered within a placement.
- prepare young people for adulthood and independence

Time Out Fostering's customers are;

Local Authority Social Services departments

13. NUMBER OF FOSTER/SUPPORT CARERS

We currently have fourteen approved Foster Carer households. Eleven of these households are couples. Three of these are single carer households.

14. NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PLACED

Time Out Fostering is currently providing 10 placements. Two of these placements are comprised of two siblings. Three of these placements are parent and child. The rest are single children.

15. COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND REPRESENTATIONS

Everybody who encounters Time Out Fostering is entitled to a professional response. All complaints, representations and compliments will be treated seriously. Both adults and children are entitled to advocacy. Looked After Children will be assisted to find a suitable advocate. Any complaint relating to Child Protection will be referred to the Local Authority.

Time Out Fostering's overseeing organisation is Ofsted.

In the case of a complaint against social worker then Ofsted should be contacted (In the case of a registered person they must be notified).

The contact details for Ofsted are:

Ofsted
 NBU, 3rd Floor
 Royal Exchange Buildings
 St Ann's Square
 Manchester
 M2 7LA
 Tel 0845 404040

Email:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Time Out Fostering has a comprehensive complaints, compliments and Representations policy and procedure, both for children and adults.

During the last year (Jan 2009 –Jan 2011) Time Out Fostering has received no formal written complaints.