



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Family Placement Services

Region: North East

Date: October 2017

Registered: Fostering Agency

Registration Body: Ofsted

Registration Number: SC042759



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Introduction

Legal Framework

This Statement of Purpose has been developed in accordance with regulations, statutory guidance and National Minimum Standards as applying to fostering providers, including:

- The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011; Regulation 3 and Regulation 4
- The Children Act 1989 Guidance & Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services (2011)
- Fostering Services National Minimum Standards (2011); Standard 16
- The Care Planning Placement and Case Reviews and Fostering services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013 govern the work of fostering providers throughout England.

As part of the regulatory requirement, a copy of the Statement of Purpose will be provided to Ofsted and will be placed on Barnardo's website. The document is also available on request to: staff, Placing Authorities, foster parents, prospective foster parents and children.

This Statement of Purpose has been prepared in accordance with these requirements and will be a useful source of information to Barnardo's staff, foster carers and prospective foster carers, children and young people who are placed with the fostering service, and also to colleagues from other agencies.

This Statement of Purpose is reviewed and updated on a regular basis, and at least annually.

Barnardo's status and constitution

Barnardo's is a company limited by guarantee (registered in England under number 61625) and a registered charity (numbers 216250 and SC037605). It was also registered as a trust corporation on 16 December 1926. Its governing instrument is the Memorandum and Articles of Association, most recently amended by special resolution passed on 17 July 2001.

Barnardo's North East Family Placement Service is part of the Barnardo's Family Placement Business Service.

The Head of Service is Brenda Farrell

Head Office Address:

Barnardo's
Tanners Lane
Ilford, Essex
IG6 1QG

Telephone: 0191 2404800

Fax: 0191 240 4801

Aims, objectives and outcomes

Barnardo's North East

Aims

Barnardo's Fostering Service is a leading national independent fostering agency, providing fostering and short break services across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

We aim to achieve high quality, stable placements for children and young people by ensuring that foster carers are appropriately recruited, assessed, trained and supported within the required regulations and national minimum standards.

Objectives and outcomes

1. To protect children and young people from abuse and neglect.
2. To recruit, assess, support and train carers to provide a range of fostering placements for children who are unable to live with their birth families.
3. To provide short break care for children and young people with a learning and / or physical disability or complex health needs living with their birth families.
4. To ensure that foster carer recruitment strategies and initiatives are targeted appropriately so that children and young people have the opportunity of living within a family which values, recognises and supports their ethnic origin, cultural heritage and religion.
5. To provide support, regular supervision and training opportunities to equip foster carers in meeting the complex needs of children placed.
6. To ensure that all regulatory and minimum standard requirements are met in relation to the approval, review and supervision of carers and placement of children, and to monitor that they are being met via quality assurance processes.
7. To provide an out of hours contact service for foster carers.
8. To promote secure attachments and placement stability for children and young people in order to achieve better outcomes for children's health, education, employment and future independence.
9. To prepare young people adequately for when they leave their foster family and create lifelong attachments with foster carers.

10. To maintain and promote contact between children placed and their birth families and or significant others and communicate effectively with parents as appropriate.
11. To promote positive working relationships / partnerships between Barnardo's fostering, adoption and short break services and local authorities or trusts to facilitate communication and promote good practice for the benefit of children and young people who are placed by the service.
12. To ensure that the Fostering Panel operates according to guidelines laid down by legislation and regulations in relation to carer approvals, reviews, allegations and complaints.
13. To ensure that the way in which the Service develops takes into account the views and wishes of its carers, the foster children in placement and staff by encouraging feedback from staff, foster carers, looked after children and birth children.
14. To ensure continuous improvement and development of the fostering services through regular training for staff around changes to legislation and regulations and identifying the needs and type of specialist placements required.

Service registration details

Name and address of the Registered Provider

Ann-Marie Henderson

Barnardo's Fostering and Adoption North East
1 Lumley Court
Drum Industrial Estate
Chester-Le-Street
Co. Durham
DH2 1AN

Name and address of the Responsible Individual

Alison Rowland

Barnardo's Fostering and Adoption North East
1 Lumley Court
Drum Industrial Estate
Chester-Le-Street
Co. Durham
DH2 1AN

Any conditions of registration on the Registered Provider

None known

The relevant qualifications and experience of the Registered Manager; **Ann-Marie Henderson**

Since qualifying as a social worker in 2007 the registered manager has gained a wealth of experience in working with children, young people and their families. She began her social work career working in residential homes caring for some of the most vulnerable children in our society.

The registered manager went onto work for a Local Authority Child Protection team before securing a permanent position at a Family Assessment Centre ran by a charity.

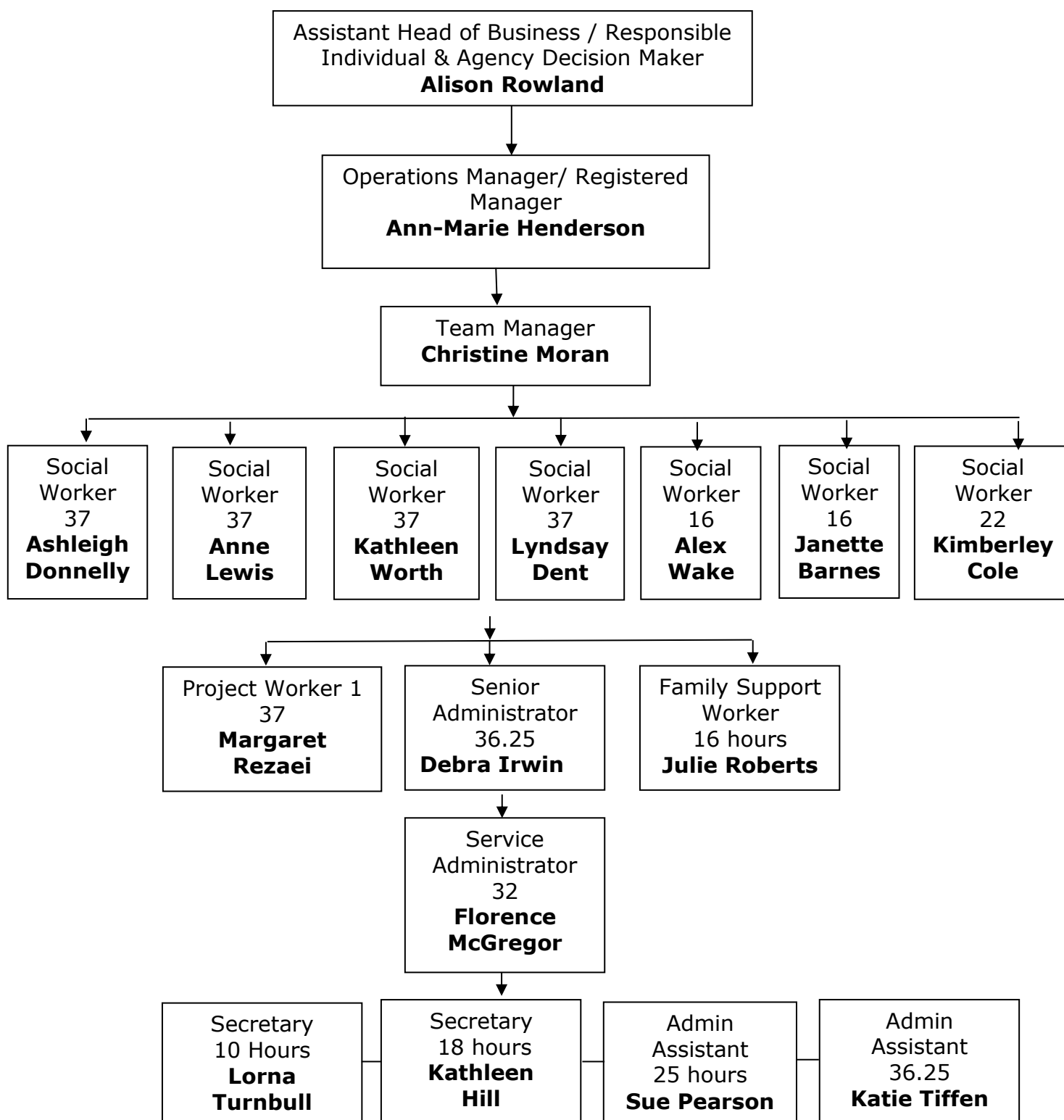
In 2008 the registered manager began work at Barnardo's firstly at Sungate Parenting Project, working intensively to provide support to families subject to child protection plans as well as children identified as in need.

Management of this specific type of service:

The registered manager was seconded to fostering and adoption North East in 2011 as a Supervising Social Worker and in 2013 she was successful in applying for the Team Manager post. In 2015, the registered manager acted up in to the Operations Manager role for before being appointed in March 2017.

Service staff structure

Service, management and staffing structure



Job roles and qualifications

Operations Managers / Registered Managers

Are professionally qualified Social Workers registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) and hold management qualifications. Operations Managers / Registered Managers are responsible for the overall operation of the fostering services to foster carers, children and young people.

The Operations / Registered Managers are responsible for budgetary control and involved with the development and implementation of the strategic aims and objectives of the organisation. The Operations / Registered Managers are responsible for the management of Team Managers, sit on Panel as Panel Advisor, ensure all policies and procedures are up to date, complete audits of the service to ensure a high standard, and monitor and advise on serious complaints and allegations ensuring appropriate procedures are followed and safeguards are in place.

Team Managers

Are professionally qualified Social Workers registered with the HCPC and are responsible for the supervision and management of the Social Workers and Support Workers. Team Managers take responsibility for developing training and supporting services for foster carers. They coordinate training alongside responsibilities for recruitment and assessment.

Supervising Social Workers (SSW)

Are qualified Social Workers registered with the HCPC and undertake the assessment, support and annual review of foster carers. SSWs work in partnership with the looked after child's Social Worker to promote good outcomes. SSWs also support training, coordinate support groups and cover the out-of-hours support service.

Support Workers

Are qualified social care workers with a minimum level qualification at NVQ Level 3 in Health and Social Care (or equivalent). Support Workers provide a range of support services to children placed with foster carers, including transport, supervising contact and supporting the development of independence skills.

They are also involved in support groups for carers and provide support around the completion of the Training Support and Development Standards (TSDS) as well as running activities for both looked after children and birth children and assisting in carer recruitment activity.

Service Administrators

Service Senior Administrators undertake financial duties in the fostering service including invoicing, carer payments, credit control and accounts payable. They are responsible for health and safety and ensure that the office remains a safe working environment with appropriate risk assessments completed by staff. Service Administrators supervise the Administration team.

Admin Assistants

Undertake a wide range of admin tasks to support the work of the service such as inputting and monitoring of statistical data, coordinating training, ensuring all checks and repeat checks are completed.

Summary of current staffing

This section details the number of staff, hours worked, range of numbers of years' experience in each job role.

Within Barnardo's Fostering Service there are 7 qualified Social Workers registered with the HCPC which equates to 5.46 full time equivalent posts.

There is 1 Family Support Worker who works part-time 16 hours.

There is a range of experience in the team with over 25 years' experience in fostering and social care including child care social work and safeguarding.

The Team Manager has over 25 years' social work experience and the Operations Manager has 10 years' social work experience and holds a Level 4 Individual Leadership and Management qualification.

There are 6 administration staff equating to 36.25 full time equivalent.

Services provided

Placement types provided

Emergency

We have carers who can provide unplanned / emergency placements for individual children or sibling groups. Referrals are required to be made within office hours.

Short Breaks (respite)

We have foster carers who provide short break / respite placements either on a regular basis or one off holiday breaks. These can be for children living at home with their birth parents, children within our full time placements or children from other fostering agency placements.

Short-term

Short-term placements can last for up to two years, while long-term plans are being formulated.

Bridging

We provide placements with foster carers who are experienced in 'bridging' children to adoption placements, permanent placements or independence. Bridging placements form part of a long-term plan for the child and can last up to two years.

Long-term/permanency

Placements are available with long-term foster carers who can take individual children or sibling groups. Long-term placements are matched in accordance with placing authority procedures.

Disabled children and young people

We provide specialist placements for children and young people who have a severe learning difficulty, a physical disability or who need complex medical care. The team has extensive experience in making successful long-term placements as well as supporting children on a Short Breaks basis.

Parent and Child

We are able to provide placements for parents who are under 18-years-old, so that they can receive support in developing parenting skills. Foster carers can assist local authorities with their assessments by providing information relating to parenting capacity/capabilities.

Remand

For young people who are remanded by the court or bailed, placements will normally last about three months but this can vary.

Solo Placements

Solo placements are offered to children who could be a risk to other children and young people, or whose behaviour is so challenging that carers cannot offer enough support if other children are present.

Assessment Placements

Specific assessments can be carried out to a local authority's requirements. Typical assessments include the child's development, current/long-term needs and therapeutic requirements.

Sibling Placements

Many of our carers are able to care for large sibling groups to enable children to stay together.

Specialist Placements

Our carers also provide placements for children who are at risk of sexual exploitation, trafficking, and /or display harmful sexualised behaviours. These carers provide with additional support and training.

Unaccompanied Children

Several of our foster carers are very skilled in providing placements for children/young people who are unaccompanied from overseas.

Staying Put Arrangements

These are to enable young people to remain in their foster placement post 18 to support their transition into adulthood.

Recruitment, approval, review and support for foster carers

This section provides information on the procedures for recruiting, preparing, assessing, approving and supporting prospective foster carers.

Barnardo's policies, procedures and standards for the recruitment and assessment of foster carers are in line with required regulations and standards for fostering services in Regulation 26 (a).

Enquiries

On receiving an enquiry from a prospective foster carer, the Service requests basic information and sends out an information pack containing material about Barnardo's, the Service and fostering generally. An initial home visit is then arranged by a fostering social worker from the Service to discuss in more detail the work of the Service and to answer any queries or concerns the enquirer may have. A decision will be reached as to whether the prospective foster carer wishes to and is suitable to proceed.

Assessment and Approval

If a prospective foster carer is deemed suitable and wishes to proceed, an Application to be assessed / Registration of Interest form will be completed together with written consents to enable the Fostering Service to ascertain their suitability to foster.

The process for assessing a person's suitability to foster consists of two parts. This is referred to as **Stage 1** and **Stage 2**.

These stages can be carried out concurrently, but the information for **Stage 1** must be sought as soon as possible, and the decision about whether an applicant has successfully completed Stage 1 must be made within 10 working days of all the information required in that stage being received by the fostering agency.

Stage 1

In accordance with Regulation 26 (1A) the information gathered in Stage 1 includes:

- Full details of the applicant(s) and all household members as well as any children of the applicants living elsewhere.
- Checks undertaken with the police via the DBS / Police Checks/ Access NI on all household members 16 years and over, as well as with the Department of Health, Social Services and any other relevant agency, for example Health, Education, NSPCC, Ofsted, previous fostering and adoption agencies.
- DBS checks may also be undertaken on any other regular visitor to the household who may have care of foster children when placed. Some checks are repeated every three years.
- The applicant is required to have a medical examination which is completed by their GP, who sends the completed Medical Report to Barnardo's Regional Medical Adviser for comments about the applicant(s)' health.
- The applicant is also asked to name three to six personal referees from which a minimum of three will be selected to provide written references and who will also be interviewed as part of the approval process. Where appropriate we also ask for permission to approach the applicant's current or past employer. Adult children and previous partners will also be contacted.

Stage 1 of the assessment process is intended to provide the decision maker with basic information about the applicant's suitability (or not) to proceed to Stage 2 of the assessment in which more detailed information is collected.

Stage 2

If it is decided to undertake Stage 2 of the assessment, regulation 26(2) requires the fostering service to obtain the information about the applicant set out in Part 2 of Schedule 3:

- Details of personality and life experiences.
- Religious persuasion and capacity to care for a child from any particular religious persuasion.

- Racial origin, cultural and linguistic background and capacity to care for a child from any particular racial origin or cultural or religious background.
- Past and present employment or occupation, standard of living, leisure activities and interests.
- Previous experience (if any) of caring for their own and other children.
- Skills, competence and potential relevance to their capacity to care effectively for a child placed with them.

A qualified and experienced Social Worker will carry out the assessment by visiting the applicant(s)' home and meet with all members of the family and collate information about the applicant(s)' experience and skills. The information from the Social Worker's visit will be collated and forms the basis of an assessment report (BAAF Form F). This report is shared and discussed with the applicants.

During the assessment preparation period, training – Skills to Foster - is provided by the Service. This training includes the role and responsibilities of foster carers, working with different agencies, and child development. All applicants are required to attend.

The completed assessment report is presented to the Barnardo's North East Fostering Panel. Applicants are expected to attend the Panel.

The Panel will then make a recommendation about the suitability of the applicants to be approved as foster carers. These will be passed to a Senior Manager in Barnardo's, who is nominated as the organisation's 'Agency Decision Maker', who has the final decision about approval on behalf of Barnardo's.

Applicants are informed verbally and in writing of the Agency Decision Maker's final decision.

Foster Carer Reviews

Reviews take place by Barnardo's Fostering Service, in line with regulatory requirements of a foster carer Regulation 28 (2).

A first review must take place within 12 months after approval and subsequent reviews take place every 12 months thereafter. Barnardo's must be satisfied that the foster carers continue to meet the required standards as set out in Regulation 28 (4).

Reviews may also take place at other times for example as a result of a request to change the terms of approval; following a serious complaint, allegation of abuse, or other matters of serious / safeguarding concern; in response to a significant change of circumstances, such as a carer's adult child returning home, relationship problems or separations, significant health issues, pregnancy, etc.

Foster carer support

Barnardo's Fostering Service values the work that foster carers do and the contribution they make to the lives of children and young people in their care. The key to a successful placement is the quality of support that foster carers receive. Barnardo's Fostering Service offers the following support to all our carers:

- Supervision and support from a named qualified and experienced Social Worker Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.
- Access to a specialist fostering help and advice out of office hours support telephone line.
- Frequent visits, (minimum of once per month), negotiated with the carer and regular telephone contact from the supervising social worker. Including at least two unannounced visits per year.
- Regular support group meetings and / or Buddy Support.
- Events for children in placement, carers children and carers.
- Support/activity groups for carers children.
- A comprehensive post-approval training programme which is linked to (TSDS) Training, Support and Development Standards.

- Where appropriate, and where in line with the child's care plan, a short break service to provide alternative experiences / respite for the child and a short break for the main carer.
- Good quality liaison and working arrangements with local authorities including attendance at relevant meetings such as Education (PEP) and Looked After Child reviews.
- A level of financial support that values and recognises carer's skills, achievements and time including a foster care fee and fostering allowance.
- A buddy system for carers to share experiences and receive advice and support.

Foster carer training

Barnardo's Fostering Service recognises that fostering is an extremely complex and demanding job and we are committed to providing high quality training that is accessible and relevant to all our foster carers.

Training is provided to help foster carers develop their fostering role, to improve knowledge and to define and refine the skills they already have. The training is delivered within an explicit value base which promotes equality of opportunity and recognises and celebrates diversity. It seeks to ensure that all carers are competent and confident in providing safe care and in protecting children from harm.

Foster Carers are supported to complete Training Support and Development Standards for foster carers (TSDS) within 12 months of Approval for full time and 18 months for Short Break / respite foster carers.

Training is offered throughout a carer's career with Barnardo's Fostering Service and incorporates a range of topics which evolve with changes in practice, legislation and needs, examples of which are:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ▪ child protection | ▪ resilience building |
| ▪ recording | ▪ self-esteem & identity |
| ▪ first aid | ▪ life story work |
| ▪ managing difficult behaviour | ▪ managing and promoting contact |

- attachment
- bereavement and loss
- health and safety
- relationship and sexual health
- sexual exploitation
- child development
- equal opportunities
- drugs and alcohol awareness
- education and health
- anti-radicalisation

Monitoring and evaluation

There is a range of systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision of Barnardo's fostering services, to ensure they are effective and that the quality is of an appropriate standard.

The following mechanisms are in place to monitor and evaluate the service:

- Carer(s)' Annual Reviews
- Carers' Consultation Forms
- Children's Feedback Forms
- Children's feedback from individual and group participation sessions
- Annual staff appraisals
- Monthly supervision of carer(s)
- Regular supervision of staff
- Feedback from carers regarding training
- Feedback from carers via annual service satisfaction questionnaire
- Feedback from other professionals
- Feedback from local authority/ trust workers at children's LAC reviews
- Feedback from local authority/ trust workers prior to carer(s) reviews
- Evaluation of carers by trainers
- Feedback from panel members
- Panel Attendees Form
- File Audit
- Service Quality Assessment, annual assessment undertaken by the Assistant Head of Business
- Quarterly performance reviews by the Assistant Director
- External Monitoring via LA / Trust / Framework monitoring processes
- External monitoring via regulatory bodies Ofsted.

Complaints, allegations and whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the reporting of a concern in the public interest that something is happening within Barnardo's that should not be, or not happening that should be. It is based on the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA).

Barnardo's is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity, accountability and practice and concerns can be raised via the Whistleblowing process.

For details on where to report a concern see Section 8 – Other Contacts.

Complaints

The aim of Barnardo's complaints process is to resolve a complaint at the most informal level possible.

Complaints can be made in writing or orally to any member of staff up to and including the CEO.

Complainants and staff subject to complaints are kept informed of the progress of the investigation and any associated procedures subject to normal staff confidentiality.

The stages to managing any complaint are:

- Stage 1 Local Resolution
- Stage 2 Independent Investigation
- Stage 3 Review of Process

Stage 1 Local Resolution

This stage will be conducted by the line manager of the person or service being complained about. At the outset the complainant must be asked for their desired outcome.

Stage 1 should normally be completed within 10 working days.

Stage 2 Independent Investigation

The investigation should be completed within 25 work days from the date of agreement that it should take place. Extensions can be given if agreed by the lead manager, the Complaints Officer and complainant and the reasons for delay must be recorded.

Stage 3 Review of Process

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the independent investigation (Stage 2) they or their advocate can request review of how this was undertaken and their representation considered.

For details on where to report a concern see Section 8 – Other Contacts.

Other routes of complaint

Where a service is registered with an external body (e.g. Ofsted or CSSIW), complainants may directly approach the relevant regulatory body at any stage. The regulatory body has the power to investigate the complaint itself or require Barnardo's or the relevant local authority / trust to do so.

For details on the relevant regulatory body and their contact details see section 9.

Allegations against foster carers/staff

Allegations made by a child (or on behalf of a child) will be followed up via Safeguarding Procedures under 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015'.

As part of Working Together procedures, there is a section on Managing Allegations against People who Work with Children.

This applies to all people who work with children and includes foster carers. Further information can be provided if such a situation should to arise.

Regulation and inspection of services

Barnardo's Fostering Services are regulated under the Children Act 1989, the National Minimum Standards and Regulations for Fostering Services regulations 2011 and Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 as amended by the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013.

Barnardo's Fostering Services are registered and inspected as an independent fostering agency with Ofsted.

Ofsted is responsible for inspecting the fostering agency. They will also receive and investigate any complaints about the fostering agency.

Significant Incidents are reported to Ofsted under Schedule 7 of the Care fostering Services Regulations 2011.

Fostering agencies are now being assessed at one of four levels: -

Outstanding / Good / Adequate / Poor

The last inspection of the North East Fostering Service was in June 2015 was assessed with a Judgement Outcome of Good

Contact details

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Ofsted Information Helpline: 0300 123 1231

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

Other relevant contact details

Whistleblowing

Contact the whistleblowing hotline run by Barnardo's Independent Corporate Audit and Inspection Unit (CAIU) on:

Telephone: 020 8498 7311

Email: whistleblowing@barnardos.org.uk

Complaints

Barnardo's Head Office

Tanners Lane

Ilford

Essex

IG6 1QG

Telephone: 020 8550 8822

Mobile: 07917 187718 (*for text or voice mail about complaints*)

Email: cs.complaints@barnardos.org.uk

Children's Commissioners

www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/