

DRAFT

STANDARD FOR FOSTER CARE

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Part one: Guidance

1.0 Introduction

This guidance supports:

1. the development of a shared Standard or framework for foster care
2. the development and delivery of programmes of learning that will enable foster carers to demonstrate they have the values, skills and knowledge defined in the Standard for Foster Care.

It's recognised many foster carers in Scotland are already well placed to meet a significant part of the Standard.

1.1 Purpose of the Standard

The Standard specifies the learning and development expectations for foster carers at the following career stages:

1. pre-approval
2. post-approval
3. continuing professional development (CPD).

It also outlines the values, personal commitment, skills, abilities, knowledge and understanding which learning programmes will deliver and assess.

While the Standard does not constitute a formal qualification, it is a benchmark for the guidance of learning providers and is closely linked to the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for foster carers, which are in the Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) Social Services (Children and Young People) SVQ 3 Award. Attainment of the Standard can provide foster carers with valuable learning to support the achievement of an SVQ, in this way facilitating access to formal qualifications (if foster carers want).

If there is a decision to develop a qualification specifically tailored to the learning and development needs of foster carers, the Standard would provide a basis for advancement.

2.0 Vision

The Standard is based on a vision of foster carers in Scotland, who, having demonstrated their values, knowledge and skills meet the specifications for their career stage, will be:

1. competent and confident to work flexibly and in partnership with others, to ensure the children and young people receiving foster care are; Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included (SHANARRI, Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC))
2. known to have shared and recognised values, skills and knowledge which can promote the best possible outcomes for children and young people in their care
3. knowledgeable about and able to promote the rights of children and young people within the context of current laws, policies and guidance
4. respected and recognised as champions for the children and young people in their care
5. able to positively influence policy and practice at local and national levels
6. recognised (by themselves and others) as a key part of social service child care sector
7. able to encourage and support new foster carers as they enter their role.

Having attained the Standard, foster carers will also be well placed to support children and young people towards achieving the positive outcomes, outlined in section 6.

3.0 Foster carers' values and commitment

Through attainment of the Standard foster carers will demonstrate they are committed to: inclusion, diversity, social justice, anti-discrimination and the provision of protection and care for children and young people. This will include:

1. respecting and upholding the rights of all children and young people, without discrimination, as identified in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992), the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, the National Care Standards for Foster Care and Family Placement Services (2005), the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
2. respecting and valuing children and young people as individuals and promoting their right to participation and consultation within planning and decision making processes, using methods appropriate to their age and understanding
3. supporting the wellbeing and development of children and young people
4. having high expectations for children and young people and working to ensure they can achieve their full potential
5. working to promote and support the Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards (Scottish Executive, 2004)
6. representing the views of children and young people by advocating on their behalf (when this is their wish).

4.0 Policy context

The following documents are relevant to and inform the Standard.

4.0.1 Fatal Accidents and Sudden Deaths Inquiry 2015 into the circumstances of the death of a foster carer as a result of a violent incident in the foster care environment. Recommendations arising from the inquiry included proposals to enhance learning in preparation for foster care placements.

<http://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/search-judgments/judgment?id=eb67e6a6-8980-69d2-b500-ff0000d74aa7>

4.0.2 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 contains several changes to the way children and young people in Scotland will be cared for. These changes will come into force in Scotland over the next two to three years. The act includes provisions that will:

- i. ensure better permanence planning for looked after children and young people, by entitling all eligible 16 year olds, who are in care, the right to stay until they reach the age of 21 (from 2015)
- ii. extend the support available to young people leaving care for a longer period (up to and including age 25) and support the parenting role of kinship carers
- iii. enshrine elements of the Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach in law, by ensuring there is a single approach to planning for children who need additional support from services
- iv. provide a single point of contact for every child and promote a holistic understanding of wellbeing
- v. create new duties in relation to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and strengthen the role of the Children's Commissioner
- vi. strengthen existing legislation that affects children, including a number of amendments to the process for school closure proposals under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

In particular:

Part 9 covers the duties of corporate parents and details what looked after children and young care leavers should be able to expect

Part 10 covers aftercare and the extension of entitlement to young care leavers

Part 11 introduces the concept of continuing care provisions, clarifies the eligible group, and details the entitlements of looked after children.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted>

4.0.3 Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Code of Practice for Social Service Workers (2003)

Details the expectations placed on members of the social service workforce and specifically states:

'As a social service worker, you must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your skills' (Code of Practice for Social Service Workers – Code 6)

<http://www.sssc.uk.com/about-the-sssc/multimedia-library/publications/37-about-the-sssc/information-material/61-codes-of-practice/1020-sssc-codes-of-practice-for-social-service-workers-and-employers>

4.0.4 SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Employers (2003) details the expectations placed on social service employers and specifically states:

'As a social service employer, you must provide training and development opportunities to enable social service workers to strengthen and develop their skills and knowledge' (Code of Practice for Social Service Employers – Code 3)

<http://www.sssc.uk.com/about-the-sssc/multimedia-library/publications/37-about-the-sssc/information-material/61-codes-of-practice/1020-sssc-codes-of-practice-for-social-service-workers-and-employers>

4.0.5 Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013

Self-directed support represents a significant shift in approach across social care provision. It aims to make sure necessary care and support is delivered in a manner that promotes freedom, choice and control and is respectful of everyone's right to take part in society. The act relates to all age groups and contains guidance specific to children and families; including provision for them to take greater control over the support they receive (children who are supported under

the legal duties specified in the 1995 and 2014 Acts are included). In particular, there is provision for:

- i. a named person who will be the first point of contact for children and families
- ii. integrated approaches to self-directed support alongside the implementation of GIRFEC and associated legislation
- iii. a range and level of services appropriate to the needs of individual children, young people and their families.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2013/1/contents/enacted>

4.0.6 National Foster Care Review (Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS), 2013)

The review report made recommendations on issues relating to placement descriptors, a national foster carer database, placement limits, learning and development, allowances and fees.

<https://www.celcis.org/knowledge-bank/search-bank/foster-care-review-final-report/>

4.0.7 Step into Leadership (SSSC, 2012) says:

'it can be easy to think that vision is the role of chief executives and management boards. While they have responsibility for developing the overall direction of the organisation, as a frontline worker, you are in a good position to see what could be achieved by the individuals, families and communities you work with every day'

<http://www.stepintoleadership.info/index.html>

4.0.8 Common Core of Skills, Knowledge, Understanding and Values for the Children's Workforce in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2011)

The Common Core identifies a common core of learning for the children's workforce. The core specifies no levels and takes account of the different roles of workers in the context of necessary knowledge and understanding. The skills, knowledge and understanding are referred to as 'essential characteristics' and are set out in two streams; relationships with children, young people and families, and relationships between workers. They are explicitly cross-referenced to the guiding principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0039/00395179.pdf>

4.0.9 Children's Hearing Act (2011)

Identifies the key role foster carers can have in the children's hearing and court system. Foster carers may be deemed 'relevant persons' in view of having, or having had, significant involvement in the upbringing of the child.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2011/1/contents>

4.0.10 Joining the Dots: A Better Start for Scotland's Children (Deacon, 2011)

Focuses on the early years' workforce and recognises the need for better integration and joint working to support children and families.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/343337/0114216.pdf>

4.0.11 Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010) which says:

'providing the right support at the right time can help build resilience, enabling individuals, and families to find their own solutions to problems as they arise'

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/PreBirthToThreeBooklet_tcm4-633448.pdf

4.0.12 Early Years Framework (Scottish Government, 2008) which says:

'At the heart of this framework is an approach which recognises the right of all young children to high quality relationships, environments and services which offer a holistic approach to meeting their needs. Such needs should be interpreted broadly and encompass play, learning, social relationships and emotional and physical wellbeing. This approach is important for all children but is of particular benefit in offering effective support to those children and families requiring higher levels of support'

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/257007/0076309.pdf>

4.0.13 These Are Our Bairns (Scottish Government, 2008)

Identifies a guide for community planning partnerships on being good corporate parents. The introduction says:

'Our underpinning theme is working together, one of the key themes identified in Looked After Children and Young People – We Can and Must Do Better (Scottish Executive, January 2007). We are already seeing some excellent work being achieved across Scotland to deliver the actions outlined in that report. This guidance emphasises the key role that local authorities have as corporate parents, and the vital contribution of community planning partners as members of the wider corporate family. It aims to demonstrate the part you can play to make a difference to the lives of children in care, and care leavers, and what you can do to make sure that they have positive experiences that will prepare them for a successful future; one in which they contribute positively to their local communities, and to a successful Scotland.'

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/236882/0064989.pdf>

4.0.14 Getting it right for every child (Scottish Government, 2008)

The GIRFEC approach is designed to support practitioners to focus on what makes a positive difference for children and young people and how this can be delivered. It provides consistent methods of working with children and young people and defines the key values, principles and practice models required. There are specific core components, values and principles which are relevant across all children's services and can be applied in every setting. In particular GIRFEC promotes a partnership approach that:

- i. builds solutions with and around children, young people and their birth families
- ii. enables and supports children and young people to get the help they need when they need it
- iii. positively supports a shift in culture, systems and practice
- iv. involves working to improve life chances for children, young people and their birth families.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>

4.0.15 Equally Well (Scottish Government, 2008) which says:

'some relevant education and training is already taking place, for example equality and diversity training, leadership preparation and partnership working. Much of this education tends to focus on particular practitioner groupings and is sometimes

specific to policy areas and types of services. In reality, there are many common aspects where learning could be shared.'

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/06/25104032/0>

4.0.16 The Framework for Continuous Learning in Social Services (SSSC, 2008) which says:

'it is important that each individual social service worker takes responsibility for their own learning and development throughout their career, and that employers provide opportunities for continuous learning and improvement in practice.'

<http://www.continuouslearningframework.com/>

4.0.17 21st Social Work Review: Changing Lives (Scottish Executive, 2006)

Identifies workforce planning as important for 'building the capacity and making full use of the whole workforce'.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/resource/doc/91931/0021949.pdf>

4.0.18 National Care Standards; Foster Care and Family Placement Services (Scottish Executive, 2005) which says:

'You know that the agency provides opportunities for prospective foster carers to improve their understanding of fostering through training and contact with experienced carers' (Standard 5.6).

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/resource/doc/349461/0116830.pdf>

4.0.19 Curriculum Review Group – A Curriculum for Excellence (Scottish Executive, 2004) which says:

'all children should be enabled to develop their capacities as a successful learner, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society.'

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/11/20178/45862>

4.0.20 Children (Scotland) Act 1995

The act centred on the needs of children and their families, it defined parental responsibilities and rights in relation to children and set out the duties and powers available to local authorities to support them and to intervene, where necessary, for the child's welfare. The act placed a responsibility on local authorities to protect

and promote children's welfare and to prepare children's services plans. It gave local authorities duties and powers to respond to the requirements of children 'in need' and 'looked after' by them. The act also set the framework for the children's hearing system and measures relating to compulsory care and supervision. The act was accompanied by detailed regulations and guidance and linked closely to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992. The following principles are integral to the act:

- i. each child should be treated as an individual
- ii. each child who can form a view on matters affecting him or her has the right to express those views if they wish
- iii. parents should usually be responsible for the upbringing of their children and should share that responsibility between them
- iv. each child has the right to protection from abuse, neglect or exploitation
- v. where it is consistent with safeguarding and promoting the child's welfare, public authorities should promote the upbringing of children by their families
- vi. any intervention by public authorities in the life of a child must be justified and should be supported by services from relevant agencies working together.

The following three themes are also identifiable throughout the provisions of the act:

- i. the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration when his or her needs are being considered
- ii. courts should not make orders relating to a child and children's hearings should not make supervision requirements; unless the court or hearing considers this would be better for the welfare of the child than not making an order or supervision requirement
- iii. the views of the child should be taken into account whenever decisions are being made about their future.

There is a further requirement to have regard for religion, ethnicity, culture and language.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/36/contents>

4.0.21 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1992

The UNCRC guarantees that all rights must be available to all children and young people without discrimination of any kind (Article 2). It is based on the following principles:

- i. the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children (Article 3)
- ii. every child has the right to life, survival and development (Article 6)
- iii. that the child's views must be considered and taken into account in all matters affecting him or her (Article 12).

<http://www.unicef.org.uk/UNICEFs-Work/UN-Convention>

5.0 National standards

The Standard is further informed by the following relevant national standards and initiatives.

1. National Occupational Standards - Children's Care, Learning and Development
<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/47047.html>
2. Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework <http://scqf.org.uk/>
3. National Occupational Standards Health and Social Care
<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/57448.html>
4. National Occupational Standards for Leadership and Management in Care Services <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/72533.html>
5. National Foster Carers Initiative: Higher Aspirations, Brighter Futures Workforce Report <https://www.celcis.org/knowledge-bank/search-bank/higher-aspirations-brighter-futures/>
6. National Framework for Child Protection Learning and Development in Scotland
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0040/00409124.pdf>
7. Standards for Social Work, Teaching and Childhood Practice and the Competences for Community Learning and Development
 - The Framework for Social Work Education in Scotland
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/47021/0025613.pdf>
 - Competencies for Community Learning and Development
http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/?page_id=8
 - Standard for Childhood Practice
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Scottish-Subject-Benchmark-Statements-Standard-of-Childhood-Practice.pdf>

- General Teaching Council for Scotland
<http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/standards.aspx>

6.0 National learning context

6.1 Priorities in Scottish further education

The Standard for foster carers will take account of priorities in Scottish further education which include:

1. lifelong learning
2. progression between levels of learning
3. relevant vocational progression
4. recognition of prior learning (RPL).

These priorities are outlined in Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy (Scottish Government, 2007): <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/09/06091114/0>

6.2 Practical attainments for foster carers

Learning programmes leading to attainment of the Standard will support foster carers to demonstrate their values, skills and knowledge and have a positive impact on their practice. The standard constitutes a body of learning that is potentially transferable to other areas of employment; in social services and elsewhere. This is implicit in the attainments successful learners will demonstrate.

In attainment of the Standard, foster carers will show they are able to:

1. build meaningful relationships based on dialogue, trust and reflective practice, with children, young people and other key individuals
2. engage with and support children and young people as they grow and develop
3. draw on shared and recognised values and knowledge to inform their practice
4. recognise the importance of communication and listening
5. lead and work with others, including partnership work with children and young people, birth families, social networks, carers, professionals and other key individuals
6. practice in awareness of the rights of children and young people and represent their views by providing advocacy (where appropriate)
7. minimise risks to children, young people, self and others and contribute to crisis prevention

8. recognise the issues around safe use of social media and contribute to making sure devices used by children and young people are as safe as possible.

6.3 Positive outcomes for children and young people

In a statement relating to the implementation of the Children and Young Person Act (Scotland) 2014 the vision for children and young people is clarified as follows:

‘We want Scotland to be the best place in the world for them to grow up. A place where rights are respected and where children can access all the opportunities and support they need, when they need it.’ (Aileen Campbell MSP, Minister for Children and Young People).

The Standard supports this vision and also aims to uphold the principles highlighted in Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) and the Curriculum for Excellence (CFE) as identified in the following paragraphs.

Getting it right for every child

Foster carers who are working towards, or have attained the standard, will be well placed to provide a supportive environment, in which the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators from GIRFEC will be upheld for all children and young people:

- **Safe** – protected from abuse, neglect or harm
- **Healthy** – high standards of physical and mental health, with support to make healthy, and safe choices
- **Achieving** – support and guidance in learning, which can boost skills, confidence and self-esteem
- **Nurtured** – having a nurturing and stimulating place to live and grow
- **Active** – opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities
- **Respected** – having a voice and being involved in the decisions that affect their wellbeing
- **Responsible** – taking an active role within their schools and communities
- **Included** – getting help and guidance to overcome inequalities and being full members of the communities in which they live and learn.

Curriculum for Excellence

Foster carers who are working towards, or have attained the Standard, will be well placed to provide an educationally rich environment in which children and young people receive positive experiences and are supported to work towards the four capacities contained in CFE, which are to enable each child or young person to be:

- a successful learner
- a confident individual
- a responsible citizen
- an effective contributor.

Achievement of these capacities will enable children and young people to flourish and become active members of society.

7.0 Guidelines for the development of programmes

In accordance with the National Foster Care Review (CELCIS, 2013) and the subsequent Scottish Government response, the Standard includes mandatory expectations at pre-approval and post-approval stages, plus an ongoing programme of continuing professional development (CPD) to further enhance the values, skills and knowledge of experienced foster carers.

The Standard applies to all foster carers and fostering agencies operating in Scotland. It establishes minimum criteria in respect of the provision of learning and supervision for this group. Good practice suggests fostering agencies should be prepared (where appropriate) to set goals for their carers which are above the minimum specified in the Standard.

All programmes leading to the attainment of the Standard for Foster Care will:

1. enable learners to work towards meeting the Standard and assess their attainment
2. include work based learning, along with self-reflection, personal study or research and group engagement (use of online learning materials and virtual learning environments may be appropriate to programme development)
3. offer appropriately blended learning relating to values and personal commitment, skills, abilities, knowledge and understanding
4. accept the need for flexibility and be prepared to take the learning to the learners
5. have effective processes for the recognition of prior learning (RPL)

6. include arrangements for quality assurance
7. include collaborative arrangements with other providers, such as partnerships between foster care agencies, local authorities and further education colleges (where appropriate to effective programme development and delivery)
8. include provision for maintaining the currency of learning in accordance with national developments.

7.1 Audience

The primary audience will be foster carers and foster care agencies and the target recruitment group will include:

1. foster carers who are already providing a care service and may have already undertaken relevant learning (where this is the case RPL may be appropriate)
2. new foster carers who have not previously undertaken relevant learning
3. new foster carers who may already have relevant qualifications and learning (RPL may also be appropriate in these circumstances)
4. new foster carers who may hold qualifications in different disciplines.

It is anticipated the Standard will also be helpful to the following individuals and groups:

1. potential foster carers
2. learning providers
3. individuals involved in designing, approving, validating and accrediting or re-accrediting learning programmes
4. assessors and others who are working with the Standard and supporting learners
5. professionals who support foster carers as part of their work
6. children and young people who are experiencing foster care, or who have experienced it, their family and friendship networks
7. the children and families of foster carers
8. corporate parents
9. professionals who have an interest in the learning and development of foster carers
10. those with a responsibility for the development of policy, including the Scottish Government.

7.2 Learning in foster carer career stages

The Standard provides a framework for foster carer learning at pre-approval, post-approval and CPD career stages and specific expectations relating to values, knowledge and skills are established for each stage.

Pre-approval stage: foster carers need to be aware of the areas covered by the list of indicators for each element and able to relate this to future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: foster carers need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the list of indicators for each element and skilful in applying this to their practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: foster carers need to keep their knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the list of indicators for each element and be consistently skilful in applying this to their practice with children and young people. They also need to show they are actively working towards enhancing their knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas which may include adding to their learning in areas such as:

- augmentative communication
- crisis intervention
- substance misuse
- managing violence and aggression
- supporting children and young people who have specific health or care needs (such as children and young people on the autistic spectrum or who have an eating disorder).

7.3 Support needs arising at all foster carer career stages

Support needs can arise at all foster carer career stages and addressing these can help promote continuous safe practice and minimise the possibility of placement disruption. For example when foster carers are asked to consider a placement for a child or young person who has presenting needs out with their current experience, they should be provided with appropriate support before the placement.

Examples of such support needs are:

- when foster carers are asked to consider a placement for a child or young person in an age range they have not previously cared for, or do not feel confident to care for
- when foster carers are asked to consider a placement for a child or young person who has a particular need (or range of needs) they have not previously cared for, or do not feel confident to care for.

Please note this is not an exhaustive list and other areas of pre placement support may also be necessary depending on individual circumstances.

It is further recognised that foster carers should be as well informed as possible about a child's or young person's background before agreeing to a placement and it is likely this will be achieved through contact between the foster carer and the supervising social worker. The provision of information will enable foster carer support needs to be identified and addressed, either through continued support provided by the supervising social worker, or another identified method, before the placement starts.

Provision of information and support can help ensure the foster carer has the best possible understanding of the child's or young person's needs and help minimise risk; however it is noted to be impossible to prepare for unanticipated future behaviours and events.

7.4 Learning for others within the foster care context

In recognition of the important contributions made by those who live in or are otherwise part of the foster care setting (though not the primary foster carer) programmes of learning based on the Standard will be provided to adults, children and young people who support foster placements. Programmes designed for this purpose will be appropriate to the age and understanding of those taking part. There will not be a 'one size fits all' approach. Ideally, as a minimum, learning appropriate to the pre-approval stage will be offered.

The learning needs of staff who supervise, or otherwise engage with the foster placement must also be taken into account and learning opportunities will be provided for these individuals to promote their ongoing, relevant, learning and development.

7.5 Shared areas of practice

The Standard for Foster Care has areas of commonality with the National Occupational Standards for relevant SVQ awards and HNC unit descriptors, the Standards in Social Work Education (SISWE), the Standard for Childhood Practice, learning requirements for initial teacher education, nursing, midwifery, public health and community learning and development. This approach is designed to promote identification of the shared learning required for these professional groups, inform integrated learning initiatives and encourage flexibility and movement within and across child care services. It will also support opportunities for RPL.

8.0 Possible forms of delivery

Possible forms of delivery for programmes which support the attainment of the Standard for Foster Care are:

1. programmes that address the full learning requirements specified in the Standard
2. programmes that build on prior learning (such as relevant SVQ, HNC, degree and higher degree achievement) and supplement this to address the full learning requirements specified in the Standard
3. part time, full time or a blended approach.

8.1 Principles

All programmes leading towards the attainment of the Standard will be founded on work based learning and effectively take the specified learning to learners. The principles underpinning delivery are as follows. Programmes will:

1. embrace work based learning alongside learner reflection (as noted in 8.2)
2. provide flexible and adaptable learning experiences, which can be inclusive of online learning, that meet the needs, learning styles and preferences of foster carers and recognise their commitments
3. be supportive of all learners
4. be stimulating and thought provoking
5. provide consistent and integrated assessment of learner attainment
6. always recognise prior achievement (such as a relevant SVQ, HNC, degree or higher degree)
7. be delivered through partnership arrangements, which can include children and young people who have experienced foster care.

8.2 Work based learning

Work based learning is defined as; that which takes place in the context of the learner's work role and environment. In the case of foster carers, this will necessarily include their home, which is the work setting for all foster carers. Work based learning needs to be tailored to the learning styles, preferences and needs of learners. This approach will necessarily involve spending time with foster carers in their home environment, to enable and assess their individualised learning. The amount of time needed for this will depend on learners' circumstances. However, it should be sufficient to enable learning to take place, involve negotiation with foster carers and recognise their commitments. The outcome of this negotiation could be recorded in a learning agreement. Consideration

should be given to use of online learning or virtual learning environments, as an approach to work based learning, however this should not be to the exclusion of real life approaches.

8.3 Other delivery methods

A range of other delivery methods should be considered to take account of foster carers' individual learning styles and preferences, their naturally arising foster care commitments and factors such as rurality. Methods for consideration include a mix of the following: personal reflection, research and self-study, tutor lead group activity, peer support or a study buddy system, action learning sets, assignments or projects, online learning and virtual learning environments.

This is not an exclusive list and it is not required or expected that programmes will use all of the methods. It is the responsibility of programme providers to determine the most suitable mix to meet the learning needs, styles and preferences of the foster carers they are working with.

8.4 Accessibility

Programmes of learning must be available to all foster carers, including those who:

1. live in urban and rural environments
2. have many commitments to balance
3. share protected characteristics as outlined in equalities law and policy.

No foster carers will be disadvantaged in accessing learning programmes and the requirements of equalities law and policy will be adhered to.

8.5 Time and support for study

It is acknowledged foster carers will require time and support to achieve the learning involved in attainment of the Standard. Foster care agencies are encouraged to use a range of strategies to promote learning, enabling foster carers to strengthen and develop their values, skills and knowledge, as well as nurturing continuing professional development (CPD).

8.6 Academic level and relationship to formal qualifications

The Standard has been developed in line with Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 7, which is equal to the qualifications required by practitioners in children's services for purposes of registration with SSSC.

Key indicators for attainment of the standard at SCQF level 7 are as follows:

1. having a shared knowledge base with an understanding of relevant theories and concepts as well as areas of specialist knowledge
2. being able to apply this knowledge within a work based context
3. being able to present information to a range of audiences
4. being able both to exercise initiative and work effectively in partnership with others
5. contributing to the management of ethical issues in accordance with current relevant codes, practices and ethical frameworks.

While the Standard is closely linked to HNCs and SVQs there are, at present, no required national qualifications specific to the foster care role. Attainment of the Standard is therefore recognised in its own right, for purposes of career progression. In the future, the Standard may be developed as a national qualification and this progression would be subject to approvals from relevant accreditation and quality assurance bodies.

9.00 Collaborative practice

The delivery of learning programmes for foster carers will necessarily involve collaborative or partnership arrangements between foster care agencies, local authorities and/or dedicated providers of learning such as colleges of further education. These arrangements will help to design, promote and sustain effective, realistic delivery routes. All collaborative arrangements must involve shared planning, in which the roles and responsibilities of the partners are clearly specified. The nature and quality of these arrangements must be regularly evaluated by the partners through self-evaluation and other quality assurance mechanisms.

10.00 Assessment of the Standard

Effective assessment processes are essential to ensure foster carers are practicing in ways that demonstrate their attainment of the Standard. The term assessor has been used to address roles which involve the assessment of values, skills and knowledge specified for this purpose. Individuals who are potentially well placed to fulfil the assessor role are likely to be those who have naturally occurring contact with foster carers, such as, supervising social workers, experienced peers, corporate parents, health service colleagues, dedicated learning and development staff from foster care agencies, local authorities or colleges of further education (this is not an exclusive list). Due to the nature of foster care roles, the involvement of more than one assessor is possible however there will be an identified assessor for each foster carer.

Cooperative practices between assessors and learning programme providers will help promote the consistency and integration of assessment processes.

10.1 Assessment methods and processes

Due to the wide range of learning styles and preferences which are likely to exist among foster carers, a variety of assessment approaches will be necessary. Examples are listed below:

1. observation of foster care practice, carried out and recorded by a suitably qualified, skilled and experienced assessor
2. reflective accounts of practice recorded by the foster carer and assessed by the assessor
3. products of work, such as written reports that have been prepared by the foster carer and can be available for assessment purposes
4. critical incident analyses involving the foster carer, that can be available for assessment and learning purposes
5. witness testimony or peer assessment relating to foster carer practice
6. case studies, projects, role play, to which the foster carer has contributed and which have been assessed by the assessor
7. assignments or responses to questions submitted by the foster carer and assessed by the assessor
8. online and virtual learning assessment opportunities that have been assessed by the assessor.

This is not an exclusive list and it is not necessary or expected that all of the above assessment methods are used within any single programme or individual assessment.

It is the responsibility of programme providers to design and implement robust assessment processes which can determine attainment of the Standard. However, assessments must be recorded and it is likely assessment materials will be collated to form a paper based or electronic portfolio.

As noted above, cooperative practices between assessors and learning programme providers will help promote consistency.

The information provided about assessment methods and processes is closely linked to the assessment strategies for the Health and Social Care and Social Services and Health Care suites of SVQ awards, which have been developed through the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

10.2 The assessor role

In order to ensure assessment of the values, knowledge and skills specified in the Standard are valid, accurate, reliable and consistent; the assessor role requires to be fulfilled by people who are suitably skilled, qualified and experienced (this approach conforms to SQA guidance). Assessor competencies can be tested through attainment of formal qualifications such as the award for SVQ assessors and the practice learning qualification, however, they will also be held by people who have not presented for these awards, such as supervising social workers, experienced foster carers and others who, as noted above, are well placed to take on the assessor role. For practical purposes it is required that assessors share the following characteristics.

Assessors for the foster care technical standard should be:

1. qualified/experienced to SCQF level 7, or equivalent, or above in a relevant discipline
2. experienced in foster care, either as a practitioner or in the support or supervision of foster carers
3. able to show they have maintained their own currency of learning
4. skilled and experienced in assessment of learning
5. skilled and knowledgeable relating to the following:
 - i. laws, policies, principles and guidance relevant to foster care practice, such as the SSSC Codes of Practice and the National Care Standards for Foster Care and Family Placement Providers
 - ii. the concepts and theories that underpin foster care practice
 - iii. how to promote application of knowledge in practical contexts
 - iv. how to build and develop relationships that are appropriate to demonstration of learning
 - v. National Occupational Standards relevant to the foster care role.

10.3 Support for assessors

Assessors will require time and other supports to fulfil their roles.

10.4 Additional supportive roles

Additional supportive roles are likely to develop for purposes of enabling foster carer's learning and development. For example, formal or informal mentorship could provide a route to support individual foster carers, towards attainment of the Standard. Should a mentorship approach be adopted it is recommended that mentors share the same

characteristics as assessors for the Standard (outlined in 10.2). Mentors should consult the Guidance for Mentoring in Childhood Practice document:

<http://www.sssc.uk.com/about-the-sssc/multimedia-library/publications/70-education-and-training/193-childhood-practice/194-mentoring/1792-guidance-for-mentoring-in-childhood-practice>

10.5 The role of foster care organisations

The role of foster care organisations (inclusive of all organisations which are involved in the provision and support of foster care services) in supporting learning and assessment processes is central to the provision of an environment in which foster carers can demonstrate the values, skills and knowledge specified in the Standard. Foster care organisations will actively facilitate these processes and take steps to support the progress of individual foster carers as required.

10.6 Necessary levels of performance and consistency

The Standard describes the minimum expected of foster carers, who must demonstrate their competence in all of the specified areas at their current career stage. All programmes must be designed to enable foster carers to attain the standard, and encourage the development of particular strengths in relevant areas. For reasons of consistency, assessments must be exclusively based on the areas specified in the standard and must involve the practical application and integration of values, skills and knowledge within the foster care context. As noted above, cooperative practices between learning programme providers and assessors will help ensure consistency of approach.

11.0 Quality assurance

Approaches to quality assurance will depend on the chosen method of implementation.

11.1 Possible approaches to quality assuring the standard

Should it be decided to develop a qualification administered by an organisation such as the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), quality assurance will be implicit within qualification arrangements and necessary approval, credit rating and levelling processes will be pursued as a matter of course. If the Standard is to be established as an overarching set of learning and development principles, quality assurance methodology will require to be considered separately.

During the implementation phase, the following quality assurance issues will be considered:

1. methods of ensuring consistency of approach in delivery and assessment
2. methods of ensuring changes will be responded to and learning materials updated
3. processes to be following should individual foster carers be assessed as not yet meeting the standard.

12.0 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Where foster carers have already undertaken significant amounts of relevant learning (such as an SVQ, HNC, degree, or higher degree) full account will be taken of this and processes to enable RPL enacted. These processes will enable RPL to count towards demonstration of the learning specified in the Standard and may confer advanced standing.

RPL must be assessed by an assessor for the Standard for Foster Care and may be formative or summative in nature. Assessors should take steps to ensure materials recognised for purposes of RPL are current (they must reflect up to date law, policy and guidance and the values, skills and knowledge involved must stay with the learner) and comply with SCQF level guidance, as well as the principles underpinning RPL (as outlined in the Recognition of Prior Learning Resource Pack developed by SSSC and SQA <http://www.sssc.uk.com/about-the-sssc/multimedia-library/publications?task=document.viewdoc&id=645>).

12.1 Formative RPL

Where a foster carer claims learning that is relevant to the Standard and/or may require only minimal refresher opportunities, this is to their advantage. However if the learning is not assessed, it is not proven. If there is material which can be assessed by the assessor, it may be possible for this to count in a summative manner (see following paragraph) otherwise this prior learning may usefully inform assessment (and therefore reduce the work the learner has to do) but is not acceptable for purposes of advanced standing.

Example

The foster carer has attended a half day workshop on child development, there is no certification and there has been no follow up assessment. The knowledge and understanding gained from the workshop can be used by the foster carer to help them show their competence against the Standard but they will still be required to fully address all the specified areas.

12.2 Summative recognition of advanced learning

Where a foster carer claims learning that is relevant to the Standard and/or may require only minimal refresher opportunities this is to their advantage. If the learning has been assessed and is proven, it may be accepted for advanced standing, at the discretion of the assessor.

Example

The foster carer has attended a half day workshop on child development, this was followed up through an assessed assignment, which the foster carer successfully completed and is able to provide to their assessor for the foster care standard. After seeing the assignment, the assessor may be able to credit the foster carer with advanced standing which meets identified parts of the Standard.

12.3 RPL towards formal qualifications

It will be open to foster carers and learning providers to use the learning achieved through attainment of the Standard, as part of the necessary learning required for formal SVQ or HNC qualifications (where the foster carer wants this). Access to these qualifications and use of RPL will require negotiation with an approved provider. In these circumstances RPL will be entirely at the discretion of the approved provider and the above guidance about summative and formative recognition is likely to apply.

All RPL processes will demonstrate compliance with SCQF guidance and principles.

Part two: The Standard

1 Introduction to the Standard

The Standard for Foster Care in Scotland will inform all relevant learning and development programmes.

The Standard reflects the stages of foster carer development, inclusive of: pre-approval, first year post-approval and continuing professional development (CPD).

Each element addresses the three stages, with the nature and complexity of learning and assessable values, skills and knowledge tailored for the named career stages.

Each element contains the following.

Number, title and explanation: each element is numbered and the number has a title and explanation that specifies the expectations placed on foster carers who achieve the standard.

Foster carer guidance: specifies the expectations for foster carers at each of the named career stages and clarifies that it is essential methods of working are consistent with the age and understanding of the children or young people involved.

Indicators: that specify aspects of foster carer competence which learning programmes will enable foster carers to work towards and attain.

There is a section relevant to all foster carers, with additions to reflect the named career stages.

Programme providers will use the indicators to design learning and assessment processes which can enable foster carers to work towards and show they have attained, the Standard.

Attainment

To meet the Standard, foster carers are required to demonstrate their values, skills and knowledge against all elements and address all of the indicators for their current career stage.

Links between different areas of the Standard

There are natural overlaps between different areas of the Standard. These reflect the interconnected nature of foster care practice. Programme providers will find methods of linking or cross referencing these overlaps, to address the essential contextual requirements and promote effective learning and assessment processes.

2 Index of elements

1	The rights of children and young people
2	Ethical framework, values and principles
3	Law, policy and guidance
4	Building positive relationships
5	Effective communication
6	Assessment and planning
7	Promoting wellbeing and resilience
8	Stages of child development
9	Foster carer development
10	Child protection and safeguarding
11	Health and wellbeing
12	Record keeping and information management
13	Educational development and achievement of potential
14	Leading and working with others
15	Promoting positive behaviours and managing behaviours that challenge
16	Recreation and leisure
17	Managing conflict and crises
18	Social media and the internet
19	Supporting children and young people with contact visits

3 Glossary

Pre-approval

The stage of prospective foster carer development before approval and the placement of children and young people.

Post-approval

The stage of foster carer development following approval and covering the first 12-24 months of post-approval practice.

Continuing professional development (CPD)

The stage of foster carer development following approval and the first 12-24 months of practice and beyond.

Aware

The foster carer needs to be alert to the areas covered by the indicators and mindful of how they will relate to foster care practice.

Knowledge and knowledgeable

The foster carer needs to be familiar with the areas covered by the indicators and have a good level of understanding relating to them, including aspects of advanced professional thinking.

Skilled and skilful

The foster carer needs to show they are able to put their knowledge into practice in a competent way.

Discuss

The foster carer needs to show they can consider and explore the area in question and exercise a level of critical analysis.

Consistent or consistently

The foster carer needs to show they reliably and regularly carry out a set of actions or apply their knowledge and understanding to their practice.

Practice

The foster carer's work with children and young people.

Reflect and reflection

The process of focussing on lived experience so that it becomes an opportunity to learn and grow through practice.

Confidence or confidently

The foster carer needs to show that they are assured and on familiar ground.

4 Standard

1. The rights of children and young people

Your understanding of, and commitment to, the rights of the children and young people who are, or will be, in your care (the values and understanding outlined in this element should be visible within all areas of the Standard).

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. The rights of children and young people to be supported, nurtured and cared for in ways that recognise their strengths, meet their needs, take account of their choices, and provide necessary protection.
2. Methods of working that respect, nurture and value the individuality of every child and young person.
3. The primary importance of the interests and wellbeing of children and young people.
4. Methods of working that promote the rights, of children and young people to participate in decision making.
5. Methods of working that help encourage children and young people to understand their own rights and respect the rights of others.
6. Methods of working that take account of the child's or young person's cultural needs and expectations.
7. Methods of working that can help and support children and young people who experience bullying or discrimination.
8. The support services available to children and young people who have additional needs, including where these might be found and how to obtain them if needed.
9. How and where to seek out support in relation to the rights of children and young people and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you need to achieve the following indicator:

10. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice

To meet the CPD stage you need to address the following indicator:

11. approaches you can use to actively enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

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2. Ethical framework, values and principles

The ethical framework, values and principles of foster carers and the social service workforce (the values and understanding outlined in this element should be visible within all areas of the Standard).

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding, and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. Issues of equality, relating to your future or current work with children, young people and others.
2. How to be mindful of the power that is part of your foster care role.
3. What foster care values and beliefs are and where you can find out more about them.
4. Methods of working that reflect foster care values and beliefs.
5. Why it is important to reflect on possible differences between foster care values and beliefs and your personal values and beliefs and what this means for your future or current practice as a foster carer.
6. The complex relationships there can be between children and young people's needs, rights and responsibilities.
7. Ethical awareness as an ongoing process in your foster care practice.
8. How and where to seek support in relation to ethics, values and principles, and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you need to address the following indicators:

9. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice
10. how you can promote equality and power sharing in your foster care role to achieve the best possible outcomes for the children and young people in your care (including how power can be used or misused)
11. how you can use the relevant Codes of Practice and guidance to help resolve dilemmas you may encounter and also to enhance your foster care practice.

To meet the CPD stage you need to address the following indicators:

12. how to work towards resolving the tensions and complexities that can arise from differences between personal and foster carer values and beliefs (including acknowledgement of when support might be necessary)
13. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

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3. Law, policy and guidance

The law, policy and guidance relevant in the foster care context

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. How the work foster carers do is governed by law, policy and guidance.
2. The principle laws, policies and guidance documents relevant to your role as a foster carer, including your ability to name them and explain why they are important.
3. The principle laws, policies and guidance documents relating to equalities, including your ability to name them and explain why they are important.
4. Methods of working that can reflect your knowledge and understanding of these laws, policies and guidance documents.
5. How and where to seek out support in relation to law, policy and guidance and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

6. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice
7. keeping abreast of changes in laws, policies and guidance.

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicator:

8. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

4. Building positive relationships

How to build positive relationships with children and young people, their birth family and friendship networks (where appropriate) and other professionals.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. Methods of working with the supervising social worker to ensure you have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the child or young person and their needs before agreeing to a placement.
2. Methods you can use to prepare for working with children and young people on placement and why this is important.
3. Methods you can use to build up and sustain trusting relationships with children and young people which promote and support their rights (including where children and young people have specific health and wellbeing needs) and why this is important.
4. Why stable adult and peer relationships are important to children and young people and the importance of consistent care.
5. How and why it is important to encourage continuing birth family contacts, where this is part of the child's or young person's plan (these contacts may be direct or indirect).
6. How and why it is important to promote and sustain positive relationships developed in previous care placement(s) and why this is important.
7. How and why it is important to encourage and sustain positive friendship networks.
8. What parental responsibility means in the context of your future or current foster care role, including how this relates to accommodated or Looked After Children and young people and what it means on a day to-day basis.
9. The likely impacts of disruption, transition, loss and change and methods you can use to manage this (taking into account the possible impacts on children and young people, their family and friendship network, yourself and your family).
10. How and why placements can break down and methods you can use to potentially sustain them (where safe, possible and appropriate to the needs of the child or young person).
11. Methods you can use to support children and young people who are moving on.

12. Methods of working to safely support children and young people who have moved on and need to maintain contact with you, or who have returned to you.
13. Support services available for children and young people who have additional needs and how to recognise when these may be appropriate.
14. How to work with other professionals to support children and young people who will be, or are in, your care.
15. How and where to seek out support in relation to building positive relationships, and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to meet the following indicators:

15. putting the above methods and knowledge into your practice with children and young people
16. your own growing knowledge of the principle models and theories relevant to building positive relationships and your ability to apply this to your foster care practice (you should be able to name and discuss relevant models and theories at the post-approval stage and show increasing confidence at the CPD stage).

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicator:

17. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area, and support the learning of others.

5. Effective communication

How to communicate appropriately with children, young people and those significant to them (using methods consistent with the child's or young person's age and understanding).

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. Factors that can promote or hinder communication.
2. Methods and styles you can use to support communication.
3. The importance of effective communication to the self-esteem and wellbeing of children and young people (and others).
4. Methods of working which show you respect the child's or young person's cultural and language needs and wishes, including where English is not their first language, or where other methods of communication may be preferred (such as Makaton).
5. Methods you can use to evaluate your own communication methods and change them, when necessary, to promote effective communication.
6. Methods you can use to communicate with the birth families and friendship networks of children and young people (where appropriate) and why this is important in the foster care context.
7. The supports for communication available to children and young people who have additional needs and know how to recognise when these might be appropriate.
8. Methods you can use to communicate with other professionals to promote effective information sharing, and seek support for communication when it is needed.
9. How and where to seek out support in relation to effective communication and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

11. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice

12. your own growing knowledge of the principle models and theories relevant to effective communication and your ability to apply this to your foster care practice (you should be able to name and discuss relevant models and theories at the post-approval stage and show increasing confidence in relation to this at the CPD stage).

To meet the post-approval CPD stage you also need to address the following indicator:

13. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

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6. Assessment and planning

How to support children and young people to express their wishes, needs and preferences and act on them as part of the assessment and planning process (including representing the views of children or young people, or advocacy, if required).

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. What it means to be child centred in your practice (in the context of assessment and planning).
2. Methods of working which can enable you to consult with children, young people and those significant to them (such as their birth family, where appropriate) to encourage them to express their wishes, needs, expectations and aspirations.
3. Why it is important to respond positively to what children and young people say, and act on it (where safe, realistic and possible) and methods you can use to do this.
4. Why it might not always be safe, realistic or possible to act on what children and young people have said how to recognise when this is the case and methods of explaining the situation to the child or young person.
5. Why you might sometimes need to represent the views of a child or young person by acting as an advocate (where appropriate to their wishes) and methods of doing this.
6. The role of birth family relationships and support networks in assessment and planning processes, the importance of partnership working and methods you can use to do this.
7. How loss, transition, change and disruption can impact on the wellbeing of the children and young people who will be, or are, in your care (in the context of assessment and planning) and how to work with children and young people in these circumstances.
8. The support services available for children and young people who have additional needs and how to recognise when these might be appropriate.
9. How and where to seek out support in relation to assessment and planning and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

- 10.putting the above methods and knowledge into practice
- 11.why acting as an advocate can be an important part of your foster care role
- 12.your own growing knowledge of the principle models and theories relevant to assessment and planning and your ability to apply this to your foster care practice (you should be able to name and discuss relevant models and theories at the post-approval stage and show increasing confidence in relation to this at the CPD stage).

To meet the post-approval CPD stage you also need to address the following indicator:

- 13.approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area, and support the learning of others.

7. Promoting wellbeing and resilience

How to promote the wellbeing and resilience of children and young people.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. What it means to be child centred in your practice (in the context of promoting wellbeing and resilience).
2. What resilience is, factors that may affect resilience in children and young people (such as transition, loss and change).
3. The links between resilience and wellbeing and the abilities of children or young people to relate to others.
4. Methods of working that can encourage children and young people to understand, express and manage their own feelings and why this is important,
5. The connection between children and young people stretching and testing and resilience and self-esteem.
6. Methods you can use to support children and young people when things do not work out.
7. Methods of working that can show your empathy and understanding to children and young people, and how to manage your own feelings (such as sometimes not feeling confident).
8. Support services available for children and young people who have additional needs and how to recognise when these might be appropriate.
9. How and where to seek out support in relation to wellbeing and resilience and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

10. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice
11. your own growing knowledge of the principle models and theories relevant to resilience and wellbeing and your ability to apply this to your foster care practice (you

should be able to name and discuss relevant models and theories at the post-approval stage and show increasing confidence in relation to this at the CPD stage).

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicator:

13. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

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8. Stages of child development

The stages of child development (0-21 years).

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. The developmental stages and milestones all children and young people go through (from pre-birth onwards).
2. How the needs of children and young people change as they move through the developmental stages and methods of adapting your practice to meet these needs.
3. Factors that may impact on the developmental stages of children and young people (such as trauma and attachment issues).
4. How a child's experiences in their earliest years can affect their outcomes later in life and particularly the impact of trauma.
5. The links between child development and the impact of transition, trauma, loss, change and resilience and wellbeing, together with methods of working with children and young people where these factors are significant.
6. Methods you can use to nurture and promote a positive sense of identity (including gender, sexuality, language, culture and ethnicity) how this links to the self-esteem of children and young people and impacts on their development.
7. How children and young people who have additional needs and developmental delay may have specific developmental needs and methods you can use to respond to them.
8. The way the disadvantage or discrimination faced by children and young people who are looked after or accommodated can impact on aspects of their development and self-esteem and methods you can use to support them.
9. Support services available for children and young people who have additional needs and how to recognise when these might be appropriate.
10. How and where to seek out support in relation to child development and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

- 11.putting the above methods and knowledge into practice, including your ability to discuss developmental stages and milestones all children and young people go through
- 12.specific child development issues relating to the children and young people in your care
- 13.your own growing knowledge of the principle models and theories relevant to stages of child development and your ability to apply this to your foster care practice (you should be able to name and
- 14.discuss relevant models and theories at the post-approval stage, and show increasing confidence in relation to this at the CPD stage).

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

- 14.taking action to develop specialisms that are relevant to the children and young people in your care as part of your continuous foster carer development
- 15.approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

9. Foster carer development

Your commitment to your own ongoing foster carer development and ability to be supportive of the development of others.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. Your personal responsibility and that of others, to develop your values, skills and knowledge relating to the foster care role.
2. What it means to be a reflective practitioner, including methods of reflecting on your own thinking and background and why this is important to your future or current foster care practice.
3. The learning and support opportunities available to you and how to access them.
4. Methods you can use to access information and support relating to best practice in foster care.
5. The high emotional impact working as a foster carer can have on yourself and your family.
6. Why it is good practice to seek support if or when you feel your own emotional responses may impact on your foster care practice and/or personal wellbeing, including who to contact when it is needed.
7. The responsibilities others have to support you and your responsibility for supporting others.
8. The processes to follow if an allegation or complaint were to be made against you and how to implement them if necessary.
9. Know how to and the importance of, keeping records of your own learning and development and using them to show how you are working towards, or are already meeting the standard for foster carers.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

- 10.putting the above methods and knowledge into practice
- 11.taking action to fulfil your responsibility for developing your values, skills and knowledge relating to the foster care role
- 12.making regular use of the learning, development and support opportunities open to you (such as self-reflection, research, personal study, group activity and day to day experience)
- 13.being self-aware and recognising when to seek support in relation to the high emotional impact of foster caring
- 14.being receptive to supervision processes and being able to act more independently, where this is appropriate to your foster care role.

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

- 15.taking action to develop specialisms that are relevant to the children and young people in your care as part of your continuous foster carer development
- 16.approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

10. Child protection and safeguarding

How to provide necessary protection and safeguarding for the children and young people who will be or are in your care (see also 18. Social media).

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. Methods of safe caring, relating to your future or current role in the protection and safeguarding of children and young people in your care, yourself and others.
2. Factors that may contribute to risk of harm for children and young people (such as self-harm and substance misuse).
3. Physical and emotional indicators of harm or risk (such as self-harm and substance misuse).
4. Methods you can use to respond appropriately to disclosures of harm or risk.
5. Who to contact and processes to follow when you have concerns about protection and safeguarding (such as self-harm and substance misuse) and what it means to share information appropriately in these circumstances.
6. The records you need to keep in relation to protection and safeguarding.
7. Support services which can be accessed by children and young people who have additional needs and how to recognise when this might be appropriate.
8. How and where to seek out support in relation to protection and safeguarding (such as self-harm and substance misuse) and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

9. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice
10. implementing the necessary processes when you have concerns about protection and safeguarding issues, including appropriate information sharing and record keeping
11. your own growing knowledge of the principle models and theories relevant to child protection and safeguarding and your ability to apply this to your foster care practice

(you should be able to name and discuss relevant models and theories at the post-approval stage and show increasing confidence in relation to this at the CPD stage).

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicator:

12. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

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11. Health and wellbeing

How to support the health and wellbeing of children and young people and promote a healthy and safe foster care environment.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding, and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. The importance of maintaining up to date knowledge about the health and wellbeing history and needs of the children and young people who will be, or are in your care, together with methods you can use to do this.
2. Methods of working that help ensure the children and young people who will be or are in your care receive the physical and emotional support they require to promote their health and wellbeing, inclusive of how to support children and young people who have specific health and wellbeing needs (such as substance misuse or bed wetting).
3. Approaches you can use to promote a realistically health aware environment for children and young people.
4. Methods you can use to encourage children and young people to develop strategies for maintaining their own health and wellbeing (such as how and when to seek health advice and how to follow advice and guidance regarding a healthy life style).
5. Your future or current role in contributing to decision making in relation to matters of children's and young people's health and wellbeing (in consultation with others as necessary).
6. Your future or current role in supporting children and young people with medical, therapeutic or specialist appointments.
7. The importance of balancing risk assessment, reasonable precautions and development opportunities in the context of children's and young people's health and wellbeing and methods you can use to manage and minimise risk.
8. What it means to provide safe support with medications and methods you can use for this.
9. First aid measures that are appropriate to the different ages of children and young people.
10. Good food hygiene practices in a foster care environment.

11. General good hygiene and infection control practices in the foster care environment.
12. Good moving and handling practices in the foster care environment both in the context of safe caring and specific moving and handling requirements where children and young people have additional needs.
13. Good housekeeping practices in the foster care environment (such as safe use of equipment and fire risk awareness).
14. How factors such as faith and culture may have implications for the health and wellbeing of children and young people and methods you can use to respond when this is the case.
15. Support services which can be accessed by children and young people who have additional needs, and how to recognise when this might be appropriate.
16. How and where to seek out support in relation to issues of health and wellbeing and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

17. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice
18. supporting children and young people with necessary follow up actions in the light of advice received during medical, therapeutic or specialist appointments
19. your own growing knowledge of the principle models and theories relevant to health and wellbeing and your ability to apply this to your foster care practice (you should be able to name and discuss relevant models and theories at the post-approval stage and show increasing confidence in relation to this at the CPD stage).

To meet the post-approval CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

22. your commitment to refreshing your knowledge and understanding of first aid measures, food hygiene, general hygiene and infection control, moving and handling and safe housekeeping as required to maintain safe foster care practice
23. taking action to develop specialisms that are relevant to the children and young people in your care as part of your continuous foster carer development
24. approaches you use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

12. Record keeping and information management

How to manage record keeping and information in accordance with the requirements of your foster care role.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators, and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. The rights children and young people have to confidentiality of personal information, including methods you can use to ensure these rights are upheld including verbal, written and electronic information.
2. What it means to share information appropriately and methods you can use to do this.
3. When and why issues of safe caring might override the principle of confidentiality.
4. The records you are required to maintain as part of your future or current foster care role relating to the children and young people in your care and methods you can use for this (including health related records).
5. Records you are required to maintain, relating to your employment status as a foster carer and methods you can use for this.
6. How and where to seek support in relation to record keeping and information management and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or stage you also need to address the following indicators:

7. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice.

To meet the post-approval CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

8. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

13. Educational development and achievement of potential

How to promote children's and young people's personal and educational development and support them towards achieving their potential.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. Methods of working that promote an educationally rich and nurturing environment.
2. The links between play and learning or educational development and methods you can use to promote positive experiences for children and young people.
3. Methods you can use to provide support for literacy and numeracy.
4. How factors such as disruption, loss, change and transition can affect the educational development and achievement of children and young people and methods you can use when this is the case.
5. Methods you can use to enable birth families to contribute to the educational development of children and young people and how to support them in accessing helpful information on child development and education.
6. The links between birth family expectations for children and young people and how they might view their own educational experiences.
7. How educational expectations can vary in accordance with factors such as culture, gender, faith and background.
8. Support services available for children and young people with additional needs and how to recognise when this might be appropriate.
9. How and where to seek support in relation to educational development and achievement of potential and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

10. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice

11.adapting the methods you use to provide an educationally rich and nurturing environment in accordance with the needs and preferences of the children and young people in your care.

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

12.taking action to develop specialisms that are relevant to the children and young people in your care as part of your continuous foster carer development

13.approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

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14. Leading and working with others

How you can lead and working with others, in the context of your future or current role as a foster carer.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. Why your ability to lead and work with others is important to your foster care role and methods you can use to do both.
2. Your growing confidence about the nature of your future foster care role.
3. What it means to be supportive of the developing awareness of other foster carers and/or professional colleagues and methods you can use to do this.
4. When it is appropriate to lead and work with others (at the pre-approval stage this will relate to discussion and other activities, at the post-approval and CPD stages foster care practice will be included).
5. Different methods you can use to present information to a range of audiences and for different purposes.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

6. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice
7. being a champion for the children and young people in your care and in this way influencing policy and practice.

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicator:

8. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area, and support the learning of others.

15. Promoting positive behaviours and managing behaviours that challenge

How to promote positive behaviours and manage behaviours that challenge.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. The importance of valuing the diversity of family cultures and structures and how this can impact on expectations, boundaries and behaviours, including methods of working with these factors.
2. The role of relationships and support networks in promoting the wellbeing of children and young people and encouraging positive behaviours.
3. Key indicators of problem behaviour in the context of children's or young people's emotional, physical, intellectual, social and communicative development.
4. Why it is important to be observant of the behaviours of children and young people and to notice small changes that may be indicators of significant issues, together with methods of doing this.
5. The impact of stress and distress on the behaviours of children and young people, the frustrations that may result and methods of working when these are factors in the lives of children and young people.
6. The concepts of positive and unwanted behaviours and how these can vary according to context.
7. The concepts of positive and negative reinforcements and how these can affect the child's or young person's confidence, identity and self-esteem.
8. Methods you can use to enable children and young people to understand what positive behaviour is and how they can achieve it.
9. Methods you can use to help defuse situations that may lead to unwanted behaviour.
10. The importance of boundary setting and being consistent in your expectations of children and young people, including methods of setting appropriate boundaries and

showing your consistency and the impact this may have on the child's or young person's health and wellbeing.

11. 'Hands on' methods you may need to use in your future or current foster care practice (such as safe holding) to support the management of behaviours that challenge.
12. Methods you can use to respond to and cope with very challenging and aggressive behaviour, including the supports you can access and how to protect yourself and others from harm.
13. Support services that can be accessed by children and young people who have additional needs and how to recognise when this might be appropriate.
14. How and where to seek support in relation to promoting positive behaviours and managing behaviours that challenge, and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

14. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice, including how to recognise and respond to key indicators of problem behaviour in the context of the children's or young person's emotional, physical, intellectual social and communicative development
15. your own growing knowledge of the principle models and theories relevant to promoting positive behaviours and managing behaviours that challenge and your ability to apply this to your foster care practice (you should be able to name and discuss relevant models and theories at the post-approval stage, and show increasing confidence in relation to this at the CPD stage).

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicator:

16. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

16. Recreation and leisure

How to support children and young people in their recreational and leisure pursuits.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. Why play, recreation and leisure opportunities are important for children and young people.
2. Methods of working you can use to provide opportunities for play, recreation and leisure, that are appropriate to the developmental stages of children and young people, such as:
 - a. play dates and friendships
 - b. visits to swimming and other facilities/services
 - c. support for memberships of clubs/associations
 - d. necessary equipment (eg sports equipment)
 - e. structured and unstructured play or activities, which are both planned and unplanned
 - f. transport.
3. Why it is important for you to participate in play, leisure and recreation activities alongside the children and young people who will be or are in your care.
4. Support services available for children and young people who have additional needs and how to recognise when this might be appropriate.
5. How and where to seek support in relation to recreation and leisure and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

5. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice

6. your own growing knowledge of the principle models and theories relevant to recreation and leisure and your ability to apply this to your foster care practice (you should be able to name and discuss relevant models and theories at the post-approval stage and show increasing confidence in relation to this at the CPD stage)

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicator:

7. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

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17. Managing conflict and crises

How to contribute to the management of conflict and crises in the context of your future or current role as a foster carer.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. Methods you can use to recognise situations likely to lead to crises or conflict between, children, young people and others.
2. Methods you can use to prevent crises and defuse conflict when it arises.
3. Methods you can use to facilitate negotiation and mediation as a method of resolving conflict.
4. Methods you can use to enable children and young people to acknowledge the feelings and priorities of others and your understanding of why this may be difficult for them.
5. Methods you can use to encourage and promote compromise between individuals where conflict has arisen.
6. Support services available for children and young people who have additional needs and how to recognise when this might be appropriate.
7. How and where to seek support in relation to managing conflict and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

8. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice
9. your own growing knowledge of the principle models and theories relevant to promoting managing conflict and your ability to apply this to your foster care practice (you should be able to name and discuss relevant models and theories at the post-approval stage and show increasing confidence in relation to this at the CPD stage).

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicator:

10. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area and support the learning of others.

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18. Social media and the internet

How to contribute to the safe use of social media and the internet in agreement with those involved in developing the care plan for the child or young person.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. Awareness of the mobile phones and other digital devices used by children and young people and the benefits, risks and threats that can be encountered when using online social media and the internet.
2. Methods for promoting safe use of online social media and the internet, such as privacy and parental control settings, how to operate them and how to check that a child's or young person's profile cannot be seen publicly and other details (such as their lists of friends) remain hidden.
3. Methods used by predators to target children through social media and the internet (such as grooming and posing as children or young people).
4. How to openly discuss the risks involved in use of social media and the internet with children and young people (and others) and work together to come up with solutions, inclusive of the risks associated with:
 - a. accepting contact from unknown people (such as accepting unknown people as friends)
 - b. making information public that could identify them, such as their date of birth or address
 - c. use of profile pictures
 - d. use of their real name (an online nick name could be an alternative)
 - e. tagging children and young people in photographs
 - f. joining groups or networks that identify where they live or go to school.
5. How to make sure children and young people know how to block so that if they do receive unwanted contact it can be managed.
6. Why children and young people may wish to use the internet and online social media to trace people and the risks associated with this, inclusive of:

- a. the child or young person not fully understanding why they came into care and therefore not being aware they are potentially putting themselves in at risk
 - b. birth parents being unprepared for and unable to deal with an approach from the child or young person
 - c. birth parents having kept the birth a secret and not wishing for the secret to come out due to the potential impact on their current family or community
 - d. birth parents not wishing to be contacted and potentially rejecting the child or young person.
7. Support services that can be accessed by children and young people who have additional needs, and how to recognise when this might be appropriate.
8. How and where to seek support in relation to safe use of social media and the internet and how to recognise when it is needed.

Due to the importance of this area of practice, the above indicators are considered applicable across all career stages. Foster carers at the post-approval and CPD stages will be required to put their knowledge and understanding into their day to day practice with children and young people, ensure the currency of their knowledge and understanding and expand their awareness of both risks and methods of promoting safe online social media and internet usage.

19. Supporting children and young people with contact visits

How to support the children and young people to cope with contact visits and the impact these may have.

Foster carer guidance

All methods of working must be consistent with the children's or young people's age and understanding and you need to meet the indicators at your current stage.

Pre-approval stage: you need to be aware of the areas covered by the following list of indicators and able to relate this to your future practice with children and young people.

Post-approval stage: you need to be knowledgeable about the areas covered by the following list of indicators and skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people.

CPD stage: you need to keep your knowledge up to date in relation to the areas covered by the following list of indicators and be consistently skilful in applying this knowledge to your practice with children and young people. You also need to show you are actively working towards enhancing your knowledge, supportive of the learning of others and working to develop relevant specialist areas.

Indicators relevant to all foster carers

1. How to identify the priorities for children and young people in relation to contact visits and how to balance their needs and wishes with those the birth family may have.
2. How to identify the circumstances in which contact may not be in the best interests of the child.
3. How to contribute towards planning for contact visits (such as working with the supervising social worker and contributing to the practical arrangements necessary for the contact to take place).
4. How arrangements for contact can best be made and the adverse consequences children or young people might experience when things do not go well.
5. The range of positive and negative experiences of contact children and young people may have (including witnessing different kinds of actions, events and communication).
6. The social and emotional impacts contact visits (and the removal of these) may have on children and young people.
7. The impact separation from siblings may have on children and young people.
8. Support services that can be accessed by children and young people who have additional needs and how to recognise when this might be appropriate.
9. How and where to seek support in relation to contact visits and how to recognise when it is needed.

To meet the post-approval or CPD stage you also need to address the following indicators:

11. putting the above methods and knowledge into practice
12. your own growing knowledge of the principle models and theories relevant to contact visits, such as attachment and separation (you should be able to name and discuss relevant models and theories at the post-approval stage and show increasing confidence in relation to this at the CPD stage).

To meet the CPD stage you also need to address the following indicator:

13. approaches you can use to be active in working to enhance your own learning in this area, and support the learning of others.

DRAFT