

Fostering Update for Corporate Parenting Board

Fostering – Recruitment Statistics

Fostering Recruitment Statistics	2017-2018	2018-2019 [Feb]
Number of Adoption Enquires to date	644	483
Number of Initial Home Visits	264	185
Number of households passed to Assessment	104	52
<i>Number of assessments in progress to date</i>	29	25
Number Approved at Panel to date	41	26

Fostering – Events

[Feb 2018- Present 2019]



Month	Event	Information Packs
March	Fort Nelson Drop In - Quarterly Event	13
May	Sparsholt Country Side - County Show	9
May	Winchester University Strip Theatre - Quarterly Event	3
July	West Quay shopping centre - Recruitment Stand	13
July	New Forest Show - County Show [x3 day event]	41
August	Kite Festival - County Show [x2 day event]	29
August	Royal Victoria Park - Recruitment Stand	6
September	Alresford Show - County Show	11
September	Romsey Show - County Show	14
September	Eastleigh Holiday Inn - Quarterly Event	3
December	New Forest Xmas Market Fair - Recruitment Stand [x4 day event]	17
February	Winchester Library Drop In - Quarterly Event	6
February	Basingstoke Discovery centre - Drop in event	6

Total information packs given out at major events for 2018-2019

171

Fostering Review Work

Hampshire County Council's fostering households have declined from 372 households in March 2016 to 364 households in March 2019 (2% decline) which mirrors the position nationally (on 31 March 2018, there were 43,475 fostering households; a decrease of 1% compared to 31 March 2017). Whilst Hampshire has historically been a strong competitor in the market for support and finances, this is no longer the position. This, alongside a national decline in fostering households, means that the current recruitment and retention strategies need to be scrutinised to support the needs of Hampshire's children in care.

Fostering Review Work

Stage two of this review has commenced and is due to be completed by May 2019. This will focus on;

- Skills Fees paid to foster carers – a review of our current model and exploration of what skills fees model options there are?
- Staffing ratios (carer to supervising social workers)
- What is the current offer in terms of support to the whole family
- Where other LAs have less IFA usage, why?
- Should we specialise – if so, where?
- Where are the opportunities for share work between child's social worker and supervising social worker?

Foster Carers said, we did.....

These issues/questions have been raised from a variety of sources including CPB, Hampshire Fostering Network and the foster carer survey March 2018.

Foster Carers said, we did.....

Foster carers said 'Communication is poor from social workers, mainly children's social workers'

We did;

- Messages driven to social work teams regarding the need to be responsive to foster carers when they are making contact with the department.
- A presentation delivered to district managers in January 2019 to support understanding of the foster carers role, this included case studies of fostering situations and how they can be supported.
- A task and finish group set up to explore further ways of improving relationships between foster carers and social workers

Foster Carers said, we did.....

Foster carers said 'Social Workers are taking children out of school to speak to them'

We did;

District Managers were informed of this feedback. Statutory visits to children are monitored through data, case file audits, supervision and CLA reviews. Within work to increase children's input into their CLA arrangements there are also discussions being held regarding where they wish to be visited.

Foster Carers said, we did.....

Foster carers said 'Passports very late and difficult to get'

We did;

The process for applying for a passport should start at the time children come into care to ensure they are ready when a child needs it. Discussion regarding passport applications should start at the placement planning meeting and again at the initial CLA review

SW's and IRO's are aware of the need to discuss passport applications during the early stages of placement.

Foster Carers said, we did.....

**Foster Carers said 'Information not shared at point of placement'
This included information regarding medication and children's past
experiences and discussion of fostering house rules.**

We did;

Monitoring is required to ensure placement planning meetings are taking place and that Delegated Authority is provided to foster carers. Plans are being developed to allow for monitoring of placement planning meetings taking place.

Foster Carers said, we did.....

Foster Carers said 'carers are expected to facilitate contact'

We did;

All decisions regarding supervising contact are made at planning/CLA meetings and with consideration of foster carers views to ensure appropriateness.

Foster Carers said, we did.....

Foster Carers said 'Foster carers have HHR's not completed in timescale'

We did;

Progress and targets are discussed in the fostering service quarterly PAG data.

Foster Carers said, we did.....

Foster Carers said 'There is a lack of CAMHS support for CLA'

We did;

This will be explored further in phase 2 of the Hampshire Approach MDW rollout.

Foster Carers said, we did.....

Foster Carers said 'Training for foster carers not flexible can be repetitive'

We did;

Foster carers PDP's have been implemented which recognises the different learning that foster carers take part in

Training leads in the area districts to be identified by May 2019

Training co-ordinator role to be introduced to work alongside workforce development in collating participation and feedback data to inform future learning opportunities by April 2019.

Foster Carers said, we did.....

Foster Carers said 'Payments are delayed'

We did;

Payments review and improvement is being undertaken to support more timely payments to foster carers.