



Statement of Purpose

URN: 2845011



Rees
Parent & Child
Fostering

2025-2026

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Introduction

This Statement of Purpose outlines the services provided by Rees Parent and Child Fostering, an Independent Fostering Agency specialising in parent and child fostering arrangements.

Should it be required; we can provide this information in alternative languages and formats, please contact enquiries@reesfostering.co.uk.

Our Statement of Purpose has been developed in accordance with, and underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations – Volume 4: Fostering Services
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
- Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (2011)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2015.

Our Statement of Purpose provides a range of information and is available to:

- any person working for the purposes of the fostering service
- any foster carer or prospective foster carer of the fostering service
- any child placed with a foster carer by the fostering service, and
- the parent of any such child.

Our Senior Leadership Team will review and update our Statement of Purpose at least annually. If the Statement of Purpose is revised, we will notify Ofsted within 28 days.

Our Senior Leadership Team has extensive experience in social care, fostering, and supporting vulnerable children and adults. The Senior Leadership Team at Rees Parent and Child Fostering have extensive experience in social care settings, in fostering and caring for vulnerable children and supporting vulnerable adults. We know what excellence in fostering looks like.

There are many reasons why families may require a parent and child arrangement. Parents may need additional support and advice as a new parent or there may be significant concerns regarding their ability and motivation to care for their children. Many of the vulnerable young mothers and fathers who need our help have not always received a stable, nurturing childhood, and therefore lack the skills and knowledge they need to care for their own children. Parent and child arrangements give parents a chance to learn how to care for their children in a safe and nurturing home environment.

We aim to provide an outstanding fostering provision where parents and their children are well cared for, supported, encouraged and loved in order to achieve their full potential.

At Rees Parent and Child Fostering, we will take a strength based, trauma informed approach in order to help reduce the impact of trauma and to prevent the re-traumatisation of those in our care.

We will empower parents to learn and develop skills, improving their parenting capacity and developing into confident and capable parents. Ultimately, our aim is to provide a safe environment for their children without disrupting the interactions with their parents. This approach will promote secure attachments, optimal development, with a goal of keeping parent and child living together. Where this is not possible, our aim is to make a positive contribution to reaching a timely assessment of parents' capacity and ensuring positive endings for both parent and child, regardless of the child's care plan.

We believe every child and parent in our care has the right to a safe, happy, and healthy experience. This Statement of Purpose sets out how we commit to making that a reality.

Children's Guide

To support children in care, we provide a Children's Guide that is provided at the time of placement, where they are of sufficient age and understanding. The guide is designed to help children understand what it means to be fostered, the role of social workers, and what to do if they feel unhappy or have any concerns about their foster home. It includes information on how children can contact their Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), the Children's Commissioner for England, and Ofsted, as well as how to access an independent advocate if needed. The guide is reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant, accessible, and up to date.

Status & Constitution

Rees Parent and Child Fostering is an Independent Fostering Agency registered in England (and Wales) as a private limited company 15563276 under the Companies Act 1985.

In accordance with the Companies Act 1985 and 1989, Rees Parent and Child Fostering has produced a Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association. Copies of these are available to the government commissions, which regulate Independent Fostering Agencies and children's social care throughout the UK.

Registered office information

Our registered office is

Prestige House,

De Salis Drive,

Droitwich,

Worcestershire, WR9 0NX.

Values, aims and objectives

Values



Respect

By providing a safe, nurturing, and protective environment, we treat children and their parents with dignity and respect, delivering the highest quality care. We commit to operating with openness and honesty, treating everyone fairly, regardless of their status or background. We promote equality and celebrate diversity across our workforce and with the families we serve. Our goal is to ensure that every individual feels valued and heard.

Empathy

We actively listen and understand the unique experiences and emotions of our carers, children and parents. We create a safe and nurturing environment where everyone feels heard and valued, ensuring that their concerns and needs are prioritised. We engage in regular training to enhance our emotional intelligence and communication skills, allowing us to respond sensitively to challenges and celebrate successes together. We empower our carers, children and their parents, helping them navigate their journeys with respect, kindness, and unwavering support.

Empowerment We empower parents to develop a positive sense of identity, self-worth, and resilience, enabling them to navigate challenges effectively and build strong foundations. We provide accessible and high-quality training for foster carers to develop their skills, knowledge, and practice. We encourage a culture of ongoing learning and development for our staff, regularly reviewing and updating agency policies and procedures to reflect best practices. We support and contribute to effective and evidence-based parenting assessments, ensuring our services are continuously improved and developed through reflective practice and feedback from children, parents, foster carers, local authorities, trusts, and other relevant stakeholders.

Support We are committed to providing high-quality support to carers, children and parents. Our proactive approach involves identifying needs, offering appropriate interventions, and continuously monitoring welfare. We create a safe space for children to express their feelings and experiences, ensuring they receive the emotional support they need. We believe that protecting families' well-being is essential to creating a nurturing and secure environment.

Aims

The primary aim of Rees Parent and Child Fostering is to provide high quality, safe and well supported parent and child fostering arrangements. The agency aims to always ensure that:

- We adhere to our values: Respect, Empathy, Empowerment, Support.
- We will ensure that we recruit and retain a diverse team of foster carers that are suitably placed to meet the diverse and individual needs of parents and their children.
- We will operate and deliver our services having achieved and exceeded the requirements set out in the National Minimum Standards, legislation, regulations and guidance.
- We aim to continuously improve and develop our services through reflective practice and through seeking out feedback from children and their parents, foster carers, local authorities and trusts and other relevant individuals or organisations.

Our Objectives

- Prioritise the safety and well-being of children and ensure the welfare of the child is paramount.

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- Ensure that the individual needs of each child are met as outlined in their care plans.
- Provide children and their parents with a safe, nurturing and protective environment where they are treated with respect and dignity and receive the highest quality care.
- Provide 24-hour support, 365 days a year for foster carers.
- Promote equality and recognise and celebrate diversity across our workforce and with foster carers, children and their parents.
- Empower parents and children to develop a positive sense of identity, self-worth and resilience, enabling them to effectively navigate challenges and build a solid foundation for their well-being.
- Equip parents with the necessary skills and knowledge to care for their child and achieve independent living, in accordance with their individual care plans.
- Support and contribute to an effective and evidence-based parenting assessment.
- Implement a holistic support system that ensures the child's health and well-being are promoted, including their physical, mental, and emotional health needs.
- Promote educational achievements and continuous learning for children and parents.
- Promote, support and maintain contact with family and significant others as appropriate.
- Seek and validate the opinions of children, parents and carers and maintain ongoing communication with children, parents, carers and stakeholders about how we can improve our services.
- When making matching decisions, consider the unique and individual needs of children and their parents, taking into consideration: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership. Provide accessible and high-quality training for foster carers to continuously develop their skills, knowledge and practice.
- Encourage a culture of ongoing learning and development for our staff.
- Regularly review and update agency policies and procedures to reflect best practices.

Management Structure

Board of Directors

Jan Rees OBE - Director

Jan Rees OBE has passionately dedicated four decades of her life to transforming the lives of children in care and those who have experienced it. Through her experience as a foster carer, Jan has cultivated a profound understanding of the complexities and challenges faced by vulnerable children and their families.

This insight drove her to create therapeutic foster care services and specialised support programs designed to uplift both children and families alike.

Jan and her fellow foster carers from around the globe were concerned about the uncertain futures of young people transitioning out of care, as such Jan took decisive action by founding the Rees Foundation in 2013. This groundbreaking charity provides comprehensive, lifelong support to care leavers across the nation, fuelled by Jan's unwavering belief that no individual should ever confront life's challenges in isolation.

In 2024, Jan's continued commitment to empowering care leavers as they become parents themselves led her to establish a state-of-the-art family assessment centre in Worcestershire, further exemplifying her dedication to nurturing the next generation of families.

Additionally, Jan has been a formidable force behind the inception of The Rees Centre, launched in April 2012 within the University of Oxford's Department of Education. The Centre is committed to enhancing life opportunities for all young people in the care system through cutting-edge research, driven by Jan's relentless pursuit of positive change in this critical area. Through her tireless efforts, Jan Rees stands as a beacon of hope and transformation for countless children and families in need.

Melody Douglas - Director

Melody Douglas brings over 25 years of invaluable experience in fostering, social care, and charity leadership, with a focus on developing exceptional support services for foster carers. Her career commenced at Foster Care Associates in 1995, where she became instrumental in family finding, forging strong partnerships with local authorities to secure optimal placements for children. Under her leadership, she successfully directed a family finding team that supported over 200 foster families, implementing service improvements and championing best practices across the board.

Understanding the pressing need for independent support for foster carers, Melody boldly founded FosterTalk Ltd, a UK-wide membership service that delivers expert advice and advocacy. As Managing Director, she transformed the organisation, expanding its reach to support 21,000 foster carers, significantly enhancing carer retention, and ensuring robust compliance with National Minimum Standards. Notably, she also established a dedicated service for carers facing allegations, which became a vital resource widely commissioned by fostering services throughout the UK.

Since 2019, Melody has been at the helm of the national charity Rees Foundation, dedicated to supporting care leavers. Under her visionary leadership, the organisation's turnover skyrocketed from £340K to nearly £1M within just four years, ensuring sustainable, lifelong support for those who have experienced care.

Melody's unwavering passion for fostering and commitment to improving outcomes for children ensure that she remains a pivotal force in the sector. She tirelessly advocates for high-quality support services that deliver the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

Senior Leadership Team

Hannah Taylor - Head of Service (Registered Manager)

Hannah Taylor joined the service in December 2024 as the Head of Service. She is a registered social worker with Social Work England (SW102281).

Qualifications:

- BSc in Forensic Science and Criminal Justice
- Masters in Social Work
- Practice Educator Stage 1 at Masters Level

Professional Experience:

Hannah is an accomplished social work manager with over a decade of experience in children's social care. Qualifying in 2014, she embraced her first management role in 2016 and over the years, Hannah has worked across several statutory and private sectors and has developed expertise in various areas, including child protection, children looked after, children with disabilities, residential family assessment and fostering.

Hannah has previously managed a regulated fostering service where she focused on delivering high-quality services and ensuring effective safeguarding measures.

Hannah is known for her effective leadership style, characterised by high support and challenge, fostering strong relationships with her team and multi-agency partners. Her emphasis on quality assurance and staff development drives best practices within the organisation. A proactive learner, Hannah continuously seeks opportunities for professional growth to enhance her skills and the quality of services she provides.

Having grown up as a birth child in a fostering household and served as a foster carer for eight years alongside her husband, who is also care experienced, Hannah brings a unique and compassionate perspective to the agency, demonstrating her commitment to ensuring positive outcomes and experiences for children, young people, and their families.

Luke Chapman - Pending Responsible Individual

Luke Chapman joined the service in March 2025 as the Responsible Individual. He is a registered social worker with Social Work England (SW117676).

Qualifications:

- Diploma in Social Work
- Managing Quality in Social Care - Level 7
- Association of Project Managers Qualification Fundamentals (SQCF Level 6)

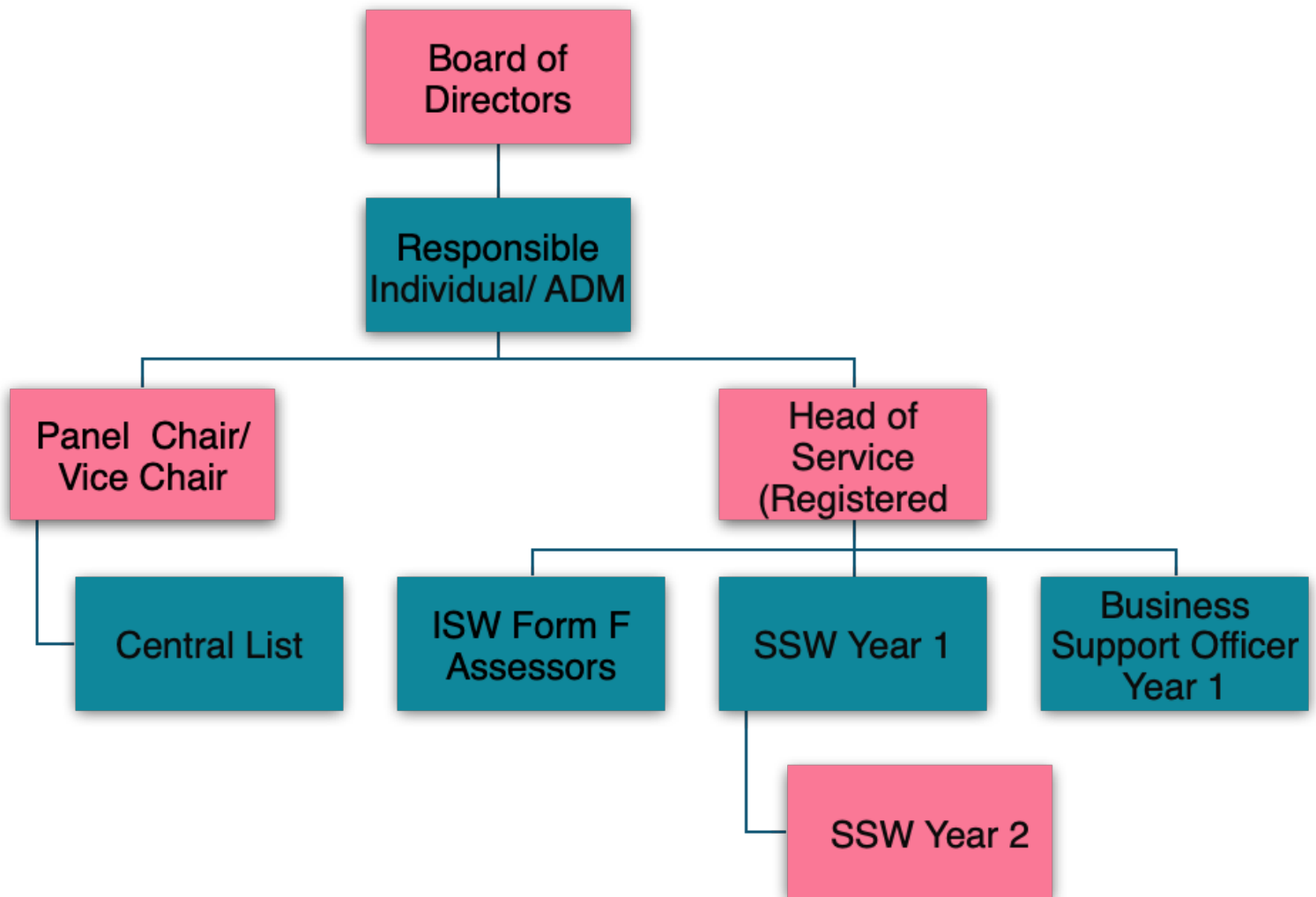
Luke is committed to lifelong learning and has completed a comprehensive suite of relevant training.

Professional Experience:

Luke has over three decades of experience in children's social care, with more than 25 years in managerial roles. He has managed regulated services for 12 years at the service manager grade or equivalent. His experience includes overseeing and delivering statutory services such as regulated fostering and residential services, as well as early intervention community-based provision. Additionally, Luke has over 25 years of experience in fostering and related fields, delivering effective services in both statutory and commercial sectors.

Luke has also worked in the third sector, where he developed and delivered innovative services.

Management Structure



Roles and responsibilities

Our Board of Directors and Senior Leadership Team has a wealth of experience in the field of fostering and social care.

The Board of Directors will meet regularly, at least monthly, along with our Finance Director and are responsible for the corporate governance of the agency.

The Board will be responsible for the development and ongoing review of the agency's annual business plan, strategic direction, legal compliance and financial management and performance.

The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that the agency maintains a clear vision, achieves its aims, operates in accordance with the relevant legislation and standards, and maintains a healthy, positive and caring culture.

Our Responsible Individual supervises and supports the Head of Service/Registered Manager. Both are registered social workers with Social Work England.

The Head of Service will be responsible for the overall operation of the agency and will be responsible for the supervision and management of Supervising Social Workers (SSW).

All social workers will be professionally qualified and registered with Social Work England, and experience related to fostering and parent and child intervention and/or assessment.

Family support workers will be qualified to a minimum level 3 childcare qualification along with relevant experience for working with children and young people in foster care.

Rees Parent and Child Fostering - Extended Team (These people may be recruited on an independent, freelance, casual or employed basis subject to the agency's ongoing requirements).

- Business Support, HR, Finance and Administration
- Form F Assessors
- Fostering Panel members
- Supervising Social Workers
- Family Support Workers

In addition to our permanent and extended team members, we will recruit the services of a number of independent, self-employed professionals in a variety of roles and consultancy services as and where required including;

- Independent Social Workers specialising in Parenting Assessments
- Sessional Social Workers offering placement support
- Sessional, experienced, family support workers
- Therapeutic Support, Qualified Counsellors, Psychologists
- Medical Advisors
- Marketing Officer
- Education and Employment Advisor, who can provide advice, practical support and guidance on educational and employment issues for parents in placement.

The team around the child will work closely to support placement stability and work to promote the highest quality, safe fostering placements for parents and their children.

Safer recruitment

All members of our team, whether permanent, self-employed or casual or will be suitably qualified, and hold relevant qualifications and memberships and will be subject to appropriate checks and referencing in line with safer recruitment guidance.

Services provided

All members of our team, whether permanent, self-employed or casual or will be suitably qualified, and hold relevant qualifications and memberships and will be subject to appropriate checks and referencing in line with safer recruitment guidance.

Rees Parent and Child Fostering seek to provide the following types of arrangements for parents and their children:

1. Pre-birth arrangement: Pre-birth arrangements are designed for expectant mothers, particularly young women or those who have a learning disability to prepare them for motherhood. The focus is on equipping them with the knowledge necessary for childbirth, understanding their newborn's needs, considering their child's health and development, and learning safe parenting practices. These arrangements provide a secure environment where mothers can build confidence in their parenting abilities while also developing independence and life skills.

2. Support arrangement: These are designed for parents who require assistance in providing basic care and guidance for their children. This type of support can also be available for those who need a safe space to live. These arrangements focus on helping parents learn essential childcare skills, including feeding, bathing, and nurturing their child, ensuring they understand the developmental needs of their young ones.

Younger parents may need to be supported with their formal educational needs and Rees Parent and Child Fostering places a high level of importance on a young persons' education. We believe every child has the right to access an educational provision that is appropriate and beneficial; enabling them to develop, build confidence and reach their full potential.

Subject to the proposed length of a foster placement; our agency will work with the placing local authority to source an appropriate educational/ employment provision for those parents that are Looked After in line with their Personal Educational Plan (PEP). For parents who are post compulsory education, we will support and can assist parents to access further education, employment or training.

3. Assessment arrangement: These arrangements usually last around 12 weeks and at the request of the local authority or Court, involve completing an assessment of the parent's ability and motivation to care for their child. The focus of the assessment will be on enabling and supporting the parent to parent their child, recognising and building on strengths, as well as identifying and addressing any deficits.

We will have a pool of Independent Social Workers trained in delivering ParentAssess, which is a specialised assessment framework available for any parent, including those with learning disabilities or issues relating to mental health, trauma, exploitation, domestic abuse or drugs/ alcohol misuse. ParentAssess is based on the Assessment Framework within Working Together to Safeguard Children.

Reports will be produced during and after the initial 12-week assessment period and other reports will be produced for statutory meetings and the Courts as required.

Whilst Rees Parent and Child Fostering specialises in parent and child arrangements, we recognise there may be occasions when an alternative supplementary placement may be required. This can include:

Short term/ bridging: this can include caring for a child overnight or for longer periods. These placements are not considered the child's permanent placement and provide a temporary place to stay until the child can return home to their own family or a longer-term fostering placement or adoption arrangement can be made.

Planned breaks: Also known as 'short stay' or 'respite foster care', our planned breaks are a type of short-term foster care where the child/ young person is placed with a foster family in order to provide new experiences away from their family or foster home, whilst also offering parents and carers an opportunity to take a break. Planned breaks can last as little as a weekend to a weeklong break. Planned breaks will only be provided when it is in the child's best interests and in agreement with the placing authority.

Long-term: Sometimes children will not be able to go back to live with their own families for a number of years, if at all. Long-term fostering allows children and young people to stay in a family where they can feel safe and secure, often while maintaining relationships with their birth family.

Tailored Support

Placements/ arrangements may be tailored to include a personalised support package as identified and agreed with the local authority during the agreement stage and pre/ post-placement planning. Additional commissioned services may be provided such as comprehensive parenting assessments and supervised family time. We recognise that enhanced support and guidance may provide a greater likelihood of achieving successful outcomes for the parent, child and/or family.

We will always encourage and involve the parent in the processes and ensure a high level of written and verbal communication takes place between the relevant parties in respect of any progress and/ or concerns.

Recruitment, assessment and approval of foster carers

Who can apply?

At Rees Parent and Child Fostering we have high expectations of ourselves and our foster carers. We will recruit individuals and families from all cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, and from all parts of our local communities.

These arrangements are complex and demand foster carers to be experienced, skilled and able to work closely as part of a team. Whilst it is useful to have experience of previous parent and child fostering it is not essential as the agency will recruit only those with evidencable, relevant and transferable experience. Such experience might include teaching, social work, caring for babies and children, child health or medical care or supporting/working with vulnerable adults.

When assessing applicants, the agency will be looking for qualities such as heightened child protection awareness and an ability to ensure the safety of children within their home. The ability to work with birth parents and to accept "good enough" parenting. Understand attachment and how to promote and support attachment between the parent and child placed. Have excellent communication skills and an ability to keep excellent written records.

Due to the requirements and complexities of the parent and child fostering role, the foster carer is likely to provide 24- hour observation, supervision and support and therefore the demands of these arrangements are high. With this in mind, the agency requests that there is at least one carer available and present at all times to support and supervise. It would not be possible for the main carer to work or have other significant family commitments.

As with all fostering placements/arrangements, prospective foster carers must have a spare bedroom. It is important for parent and child fostering that the room is big enough to accommodate the family and the necessary equipment and furnishings. If the requirement is for the baby to sleep in carer's room, then this room must have sufficient space to provide for reasonable living space for a cot/ sleeping arrangements for the baby.

Our foster carers will come with a variety of life experiences and skills; aiding our approach to ensuring we match parents and their children to the right foster carer who is best placed to meet their individual needs.

We will provide the necessary training and support to our foster families to meet the requirements of the parent and child fostering task.

Carers with birth children

Given the specialist nature of parent and child fostering, including the emotional and logistical demands, the agency will consider whether the applicant has enough time, support system and resources in place to adequately meet the needs of any other children living in the home alongside that of the parent and child. The age of children living in the household will be a crucial factor that we consider, for example the demands and challenges of a carer parenting their own infant or baby will be different to the care needs of an older child.

The agency will explore this thoroughly during the assessment process, at the matching stage and reviewed and supported on an ongoing basis.

Carers Who Transfer To Us

Rees Parent and Child Fostering understands that some foster carers choose to move to a different fostering agency or service. Where this happens, our agency will follow the Transfer of Foster Carers Protocol as set out by The Fostering Network. Should a potential transfer coincide with a parent and child in placement; we will aim to work closely with the responsible and placing local authorities and agencies to ensure the care experiences, and standards of care for the parent and child are not adversely affected by the transfer.

Initial enquiry

Rees Parent and Child Fostering website (www.reesfostering.co.uk) will provide prospective foster carers with information about fostering with our agency and confidential enquiries can be made through our website, via telephone or in person.

We will provide a Foster Carer Information Pack in digital or printed format, and we can produce these in a language or format to suit individual requirements.

Basic information will be gathered to ensure that the enquirer can potentially fulfil the agency's fostering requirements to provide high quality and safe parent and child arrangements.

Initial visit

Prospective foster carers will initially be contacted by a Senior Manager who will be happy to discuss a range of topics including but not limited to;

- Motivation to foster
- Household composition
- Rooms available
- Experience relevant to the application

During the initial visit we will provide more information about fostering and specifically highlight information about fostering parents with their child(ren); this also enables the agency to gather further detailed information in respect of their suitability to be parent and child foster carers.

The agency and the prospective foster carer will then decide if fostering could be a suitable option.

Initial visits normally last around 2-3 hours. If the prospective foster carers wish to continue with the fostering journey and the agency has assessed and concluded that they potentially meet the various requirements to be a parent and child foster carer, the applicants will be invited to complete an Application Form.

If the decision is not to proceed, the applicant(s) are informed verbally, and this is followed up in writing.

Assessment Stage 1

Prospective foster carers will be required to agree to have all of the required statutory checks undertaken including appropriate medical and DBS checks. They will need to provide the details of two referees for us to approach, provide the details of any ex-partners who we will contact to interview, provide details of any children they have, and agree to an employer (or former employer) reference request.

Assessment Stage 2

The full assessment may take between three and six months to complete and will involve visits to the applicant's home on approximately 6-8 occasions. The agency will use the CoramBAAF Form F Assessment report and the Parent and Child Fostering Assessment report.

Note that stages 1 and 2 of the assessment process can be carried out concurrently. However the stage 1 information must be sought as soon as possible and the decision about whether an applicant has successfully completed stage 1 must be made within 10 working days of all the information required in that stage being received.

Preparation Training

Following positive DBS checks, the applicants will be required to attend a preparation training programme; aimed at preparing them for the role of a foster carer. This training must be completed in full prior to approval.

Prospective foster carers will also begin to build their personal training portfolio and will complete further online training courses pre-approval to enhance their knowledge and understanding of parent and child fostering.

Fostering Panel

The assessment is then presented to the agency's fostering panel. In accordance with fostering legislation, Rees Parent and Child Fostering will hold a "central list" of panel members who have been selected to reflect the community that the panel serves. We aim to recruit a diverse group of panel members who work or have worked in children's social care, health or education. Panel will also include representation from those adults who have lived experience of being fostered or in residential care. Panel will always be made up of at least 5 panel members, with a minimum of a panel chair, social worker with 3 years post qualifying experience and 3 other members. We will have access to medical expertise and legal advice as required.

The function of the panel is to provide an independent quality assurance role and makes its recommendations on the suitability of a prospective foster carer to foster with the agency. To assist in the decision-making process, all applicants and their assessing social worker must attend panel.

The decision maker

Following panel presentation, panel will make a recommendation regarding the applicants' suitability to foster and terms of approval to the decision maker. The final decision as to the applicant's approval will be made by the Decision Maker, more commonly known as ADM (Agency Decision Marker). Applicants are informed verbally and in writing of the ADM's final decision within seven working days of receiving the final panel minutes.

If, following consideration by the fostering panel, and a review of case papers and the final panel minutes, the ADM considers that an applicant is not suitable to act as a foster carer, the ADM will write proposing not to approve them together with reasons (qualifying determination) and will invite them to submit written representation within 28 days of the notice or to request a review by an independent review panel through the Individual Review Mechanism (IRM) (further details can be provided).

If the agency does not receive any representation within the above said period and there is no referral to the IRM, it may proceed to make its decision.

If the agency receives written representation, it will refer the case to its fostering panel for further consideration; and the ADM will make its decision, taking into account any fresh recommendations made by the fostering panel, and will notify their decision to the applicant in writing.

If the agency receives any recommendations from an independent review panel through the IRM, the ADM will take this into account and then make their decision and will notify their decision to the applicant in writing.

Post approval

The applicants become known as newly approved carers and will receive written confirmation of their terms of approval. In addition, they will receive a Foster Carer Agreement detailing their responsibilities, and the agency's responsibilities, which must be signed. The agency will allocate a dedicated Supervising Social Worker to each fostering household, who will have responsibility for completing a new carer induction and training plan, and for supporting the carers with completion of the Training, Support and Development Standards (TSDS) which must be completed within the first 12 months post approval.

Review and Terminations of Approval

We will undertake a review of foster carers approval on an annual basis in accordance with the legislation, fostering regulations and guidance.

Reviews are an opportunity to reflect over the previous year, consult others, acknowledge what has gone well, consider any challenges and what support needs there may be. A review report will be written by the SSW, and will include the views of the foster carer, the foster carers child/ren, any parent and child placed or previously placed and the child's social worker as a minimum. The review will consider whether the foster carer is suitable to continue to foster, their household continues to be suitable, and the terms of approval are appropriate.

In addition to the requirements to conduct reviews annually, the agency will bring forward annual reviews following a significant event (such as a serious allegation or complaint) or significant change in circumstances or household.

All first reviews will be presented to fostering panel and every three years thereafter. However, any review that the agency considers necessary in between these intervals will also be presented to panel. The ADM makes the final decision on the carers ongoing suitability to foster. Foster carers are informed of the decision in writing.

If applicants are unhappy with the ADM decision, they have a right of appeal, which can be made direct to the agency, or the Independent Review Mechanism within 28 days (See Decision Maker section for further details).

Referrals and Matching

Rees Parent and Child Fostering is committed to delivering the highest standards of care to the parents and children placed with our foster carers. We recognise the importance of creating a nurturing and stable environment, where the experience is positive and empowering for parents and their children. When matching a fostering household, the agency will consider factors such as the child's needs, the parents needs and preferences and the foster carer's skills and experiences.

We believe in the importance of gaining a full picture so that we can work to ensure that we match the needs of the parent and child, with a foster carer who is well placed to meet these.

Our agency will receive referrals for parent and child arrangements during normal office hours, and out of hours from local authorities and Trusts.

Referrals can be made via telephone and secure email. We will gather as much information as possible about the parent and child's circumstances, before working closely with the social worker and manager to consider any potential matches with foster families.

Rees Parent and Child Fostering understands the importance of information sharing with our foster carers. Our foster carers will be provided with all information made available to the agency from the placing local authority; ensuring the foster carer is able to make an informed decision as to whether they feel they are able to meet the needs of the parent and child in line with the care plan.

Caring for our foster families

We believe that whilst the fostering role can be incredibly rewarding; it can also present challenges. That's why we aim to provide unrivalled support to our foster carers and their own children.

We view our foster carers as members of our team. We will actively encourage good relations between foster carers, their SSW and the wider team. We aim to maintain a culture where carers feel comfortable talking openly and honestly about any challenges, or issues they have, and how the agency can support them in managing, or overcoming them together.

We will actively encourage good relationships and open and honest dialogue between our foster carers and their SSW. We believe in the importance of foster carers feeling able to speak up if they have any concerns or feedback about the agency as well as seek advice, guidance and support from their designated SSW.

Where problems or concerns are identified, these will be openly addressed where appropriate. We believe that working together as a team helps to overcome challenges and helps to achieve a satisfactory resolution in accordance with fostering regulations and the agency's relevant policies.

Foster carers will be expected to maintain detailed written records of events and information pertaining to the parent and child in their care. The agency will utilise a secure online record keeping system, CHARMS™ which enables foster carers to efficiently meet these requirements.

Support

The following supervision and support will be available to our foster carers:

- Each of our foster carers will have a named SSW.
- A minimum of monthly supervision visits from the SSW, the frequency of supervision can be increased as and when required.
- At least one unannounced visit per year and two unannounced visits to newly approved foster carers during their first year of approval.
- Regular contact in between formal supervision sessions.
- Out of hours Support - We will provide a full 24/7, 365 days a year on-call support service. The support system will be staffed by our social workers and support workers who have appropriate fostering experience, and access to senior management is provided to those on-call.
- We will provide all foster carers with a Foster Carer Handbook in digital form; the handbook contains everything they need to know about working with Rees Parent and Child Fostering agency along with all necessary contact details.
- Access to a comprehensive training programme some of which will start during the assessment period (See Training Section).

- Support Groups and Forums - We will organise a mix of online and in person support groups, where our foster carers can meet and socialise with others. Support group focus, location and timings will be led by our foster carers. We believe our support groups will encourage good practice sharing between our carers; in addition to also developing peer support. We will aim to link less experienced foster carers with more experienced peers.
- We aim to organise fun and enjoyable events for all members of the fostering household including birth children. We understand that fostering affects the whole household and acknowledge the impact that fostering can have on foster carers own children.
- Allocation of Family Support Worker, if required.
- One off/ regular consultation with an independent therapist as and when required. This provides carers with the opportunity to talk confidentially when the experience and task of fostering is having an effect on a foster carer personally.

Membership

- FosterTalk Membership - We will join all foster carers to an annual membership of FosterTalk which provides independent, professional advice and guidance as well as access to legal advice, and legal expenses insurance in the event of the foster carers needing to obtain legal representation in respect of an allegation against them.

Financial Support

- A generous weekly fostering allowance and fee.
- A discretionary start up payment to assist newly approved carers with reimbursing their initial fostering equipment purchases.
- Up to 3 weeks paid holiday (pro-rata) per year. The agency understands that foster carers undertake an important and often challenging role and believe in the importance of self-care and taking a break from the role to rest and re-charge.
- A discretionary bridging payment between placements/arrangements for full time carers.

Insurance

- The agency holds the following insurances:
- Personal and Public Liabilities (indemnity limit £5 million)
- Employer's Liability Insurance (indemnity limit £10 million)
- Professional Indemnity (indemnity limit £5 million)
- Foster Carer's Public Liability (limit £100,000 for one occurrence)
- Directors and Officers Insurance (indemnity limit £5 million)

Each fostering household is expected to have appropriate household buildings and contents insurance and must evidence that they have informed their insurer that they are fostering. If they drive, they should have fully comprehensive car insurance (including business use) on vehicles used to transport children and their parents.

Training

The agency's training programme will be designed to support carers to develop specialist and therapeutic knowledge and skills that carers need to support vulnerable adults and their children. Training opportunities will enhance their skills in observation, recording and assessing parenting capacity.

We will work to equip our foster carers with the knowledge and expertise to enable them to support parents on how to keep a child safe, understand child development and attachment. They will be confident in being able to identify gaps in a parents' knowledge as well as identifying the parent's strengths.

Foster carers will model good enough parenting and will reinforce child focused behaviours with praise. Our foster carers will be confident in offering appropriate challenge on poor parental behaviours, whilst ultimately ensuring that the parent and child remain in a safe, nurturing and positive family environment.

We believe it is important that foster carers are trained to make concise, factual, non-judgmental records and reports during their observations of and interactions with parents and their children.

Rees Parent and Child Fostering will encourage all our foster carers to continuously broaden their skills base and develop their knowledge. We will encourage our foster carers to engage with further training and skill development opportunities through a number of different mediums.

All applicants will be required to complete a mandatory training programme pre-approval. Newly approved foster carers are required, as part of their approval, to complete all the mandatory training within the designated timescale of approval, in line with our training policy. Each foster carer should be able to evidence through their workbook how the Training, Support and Development (TSD) has been achieved within a year of approval.

The agency will provide relevant training for foster carers, through a combination of in-house and externally sourced training both pre and post approval.

Pre and Post Approval training may include, but not be limited to:

- Introduction to parent and child fostering
- Safe Care
- Diversity and Equality
- Safeguarding
- Training in ParentAssess™

- Attachments
- Understanding distressed behaviour
- Therapeutic parenting PACE
- Secure Base Model
- Therapeutic Play
- Paediatric First Aid
- Administering medicine to children in care
- Raising Teenagers in Care
- Promoting Education
- Caring for a child of a different ethnicity
- Foster Carer Records

Additional support and specialist training will be available.

Caring for parents and children in placement

We believe that every child should be supported to thrive, and parents offered the opportunity to gain safe and effective parenting skills and therefore our agency aims to work flexibly and responsively to maximise the chances of a positive outcome for the child and their parent.

Support for children and young people:

- education/ early years support
- leisure activities including outings and trips
- support with family time arrangements
- children will be seen by a midwife/health visitor
- children's participation- we will encourage children and young people to get involved and have their say
- developing life skills to enable young people to develop into responsible adults
- access to online courses to help children and young people overcome challenges and develop important life skills. memory box and life journey work
- therapeutic life story work* – As an additional commissioned service we will help to prepare the child for transition to permanency where applicable and requested by the placing local authority.
- therapy and counselling*.

(*additional service to be agreed between the agency and local authority)

Support for parents:

- family support workers where required.
- supporting the family to register with and visit local health and early years services.
- travel - we will support the parent and child's transport arrangements for external services, appointments and meetings.

- education, employment and training - Where appropriate, we can offer education, training or careers advice, including practical support with CV's and interview skills for parents in placement.
- social networks and connections - We can organise social events for the families in placement in a relaxed environment. These will offer an opportunity for the parents and children to forge social connections and peer support with other parents with shared experiences.
- access to online group sessions to build connections and online mental health and well-being sessions.

Parents' Guide

We provide a Parents' Guide to all parents involved in parent and child fostering arrangements. This guide is designed to help parents understand what to expect from the fostering service, their rights and responsibilities, and the support available to them. It aims to be clear and reassuring, helping parents feel informed and involved throughout their placement journey. The guide is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant and helpful.

Additional benefits for parents:

Ask Jan membership which includes:

- 24/7 access to a mental health professional
- 8 sessions of counselling*
- access to well-being information and support
- financial advice
- legal advice helpline
- life coaching
- rewards platform offering discounts on high street and national services
- an e-birthday card.
- (*subject to an initial assessment)

Family time

Rees Parent and Child Fostering recognise the importance of parents having friends and a support network. We will actively encourage parents to maintain contact with those most important to them and the agency and foster carer will work with the placing local authority to ensure parents have an opportunity for some "time off" (subject to risk assessment and care planning).

Family time arrangements form part of the parent and child placement agreement or care plan. Transport to and from family time sessions will usually be provided by the foster carer.

Safeguarding Procedures

Rees Parent and Child Fostering have robust safeguarding procedures in place which are in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children to safeguard and protect the welfare of all children. All staff and foster carers are required to fully adhere to these procedures.

The agency's safeguarding procedures identify a clear format for the reporting of any child or adult safeguarding matter to the Registered Manager. The overriding aim is to ensure the protection of children/young people and adults. The Registered Manager will seek to ascertain accurate details of any safeguarding concern, and the agency will liaise with the child's placing authority, the area authority in which the foster carer(s) reside and the Local Authority Designated Officer. A joint decision will be made about whether there is a need for further safeguarding action in respect to protecting a parent or child.

We will operate a stringent anti-bullying policy which aims to protect children and vulnerable adults. Our foster carers will receive training on how to recognise the signs of bullying, and management strategies they can use to both support and keep the child and parent safe.

Unauthorised Absence or Missing

Rees Parent and Child Fostering is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all parents and children in our care. In the event of a child or young person (under 18 years) going missing, we have clear policy and procedures in place to deal with the situation promptly and effectively. All foster carers will have access to the agency policy which outlines the procedures to be followed when a child or young person in our care goes missing. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all efforts are made to locate the missing child or young person as quickly as possible, and to prevent future occurrences of absences.

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If there are issues of risk, vulnerability or child sexual exploitation, then a strategy will be discussed and agreed with the child's social worker, young person and foster carer. This is to ensure appropriate safeguards and supervision are in place, to further improve risk awareness and facilitate risk reduction. The agency will request the local authority conducts Return Home Interviews following all missing episodes, but if this is not carried out, the agency SSW or support worker will visit to further explore the reasons for going missing and provide appropriate support.

Complaints, Comments and Feedback

Every individual has the right to make a complaint or represent their views (positive or negative) and Rees Parent and Child Fostering will aim to pro-actively seek out and acknowledge feedback from those we engage with.

Rees Parent and Child Fostering is committed to delivering exceptional standards of care to the parents and children placed with us. We understand the importance of identifying any arising issues, addressing issues promptly and learning from them.

Parents and children placed with us will be provided with a copy of our complaints procedure and will be offered verbal guidance (relative to their understanding) on how to make a complaint or who they can speak to about anything they are unhappy with.

The aim of the Rees Parent and Child Fostering complaints process is to resolve a complaint at the most informal level possible in the first instance, with the opportunity to escalate their concerns through more formal stages should the matter not be resolved informally. Complaints can be made in writing or orally to any member of staff and a log of all complaints and representations will be maintained by the agency and available for inspection by Ofsted. Details of the complaint's procedure will be found in the Foster Carer Handbook and on the Rees Parent and Child Fostering website.

Useful contact information

Name	Contact Details
Children's Commissioner for England	<p>Children's Commissioner for England Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street London SW1P 3BT</p> <p>Tel: 020 7783 8330 Email: cco.communications@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk</p>
Ofsted	<p>Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD</p> <p>Tel: 0300 123 1231 / 0300 123 4666 Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk</p>
Coram Voice	<p>Coram Voice, Coram Campus, 41 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AZ</p> <p>Tel: 020 7833 5792 Email: info@coramvoice.org.uk</p>
NYAS	<p>Tower House 1 Tower Road Birkenhead Wirral Merseyside CH41 1FF</p> <p>Tel: 0808 808 1001 Email: help@nyas.net</p>

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