



SWAN  
FOSTERING

Foster Placements with Positive Outcomes

## Statement of Purpose



## Introduction

The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 govern the work of fostering services throughout England and is in use when inspecting and registering fostering agencies.

Standard 1 of the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services and Regulation 3 (1) of the Fostering Regulations 2002 require a fostering agency to produce a statement of purpose.

This Statement of Purpose is a useful document for staff, foster carers, children/young people, local authorities and other individuals or agencies who may wish to find out more about **SWAN Fostering**. The Agency reviews this document annually.

**SWAN Fostering** is registered with OFSTED (no: SC063404), and is regularly inspected.



## Aims, objectives and principles

**SWAN Fostering** is an independent fostering provider that provides foster carer services for children who are looked after by local authorities. The Agency recruits foster carers from different backgrounds, cultures and religions to ensure that more choice is available to local authorities when seeking suitable placements. Emphasis is placed on supporting carers for them to complete their tasks to high standards.













The Agency aims to work closely with local authorities and families to ensure that wherever possible, children remain at home with their families, and should accommodation be necessary, that a range of placements are provided to cater for their needs. **SWAN Fostering** works towards returning children to their birth families, when and if it is safe and appropriate to do so.



The Agency Director is a qualified social worker with extensive experience in all areas of child care including child protection. The Agency is staffed by highly qualified professionals, who are experienced, motivated and above all, child focused. The team at **SWAN Fostering** is committed to ensuring that disadvantaged children not only have the best service possible, but also the same opportunities as other children.

**SWAN Fostering** believes that children are likely to have better outcomes in life if carers have the right level of support, training and monitoring.



## SWAN Fostering's aims are:

-  To offer carers from diverse backgrounds by recruiting individuals, couples and families from the different communities who have the necessary skills to look after fostered children;
-  To ensure that when matching placements, the full needs of children/young people are considered thoroughly including religion, culture, age, family lifestyle, emotional and educational;
-  To promote a child-centered approach where the child/young person's safety and welfare come first;
-  To ensure that the views of children/young people placed with our foster carers are sought and given due consideration, irrespective of gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, etc.;
-  To assist all foster carers in remaining child focused whilst working with and alongside birth families;
-  To acknowledge the hard work, skills and knowledge of our foster carers and provide them with a high level of support and encouragement;
-  To ensure stability for each child/young person whilst they are placed with our foster carers;
-  To guarantee a commitment to thorough evidence based assessments of all potential foster carers: this will include information and training during the assessment process to ensure that only those committed to providing safe, consistent care are considered as potential carers for children and young people;
-  To provide 24-hour support for foster carers, and the children/young people in their care;
-  To ensure that all **SWAN Fostering** foster carers attend regular on-going training and support groups and encourage them to comply with national standards;
-  To provide all **SWAN Fostering** foster carers with regular supervision, monitoring and support in order that the child/young person's opportunities are maximised and that the Five Outcomes are consistently met;
-  To guarantee a commitment to working in partnership with all those involved in the planning and providing for each child's care. This includes local authorities, families, children/young people, foster carers, health professionals, education authorities and other relevant professionals, individuals or organisations;










-  To guarantee a commitment to support on-going plans for fostered children by supporting transitional stages, such as a unification with birth families or on to semi-independent living;
-  To work alongside SWAN Independent Living and offer accommodation and support for 16-18 year olds who are ready for semi-independent living.





## Standards of Care

**SWAN Fostering** aims to provide high standards of care at all times. It is acknowledged that a family-based setting provides better opportunities for the majority of children and young people, compared to a residential environment.

The quality of the family-based setting is likely to determine whether a child will reach their full potential.

At **SWAN Fostering**, we will ensure our high expectations and standards of care by:

-  Ensuring that only those carers who have shown evidence of commitment to the safety and well-being of vulnerable children are taken forward for approval;
-  Ensuring that **SWAN Fostering's** Panel members are fully vetted and offered on-going training;
-  Ensure that each foster carer's approval status is reviewed annually;
-  Ensuring that **SWAN Fostering** and its foster carers support the maintenance of family contacts, friendships and community contacts;
-  Ensuring that an anti-discriminatory approach is taken to considering and providing for individual needs, including gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, etc.;
-  Ensuring that **SWAN Fostering** and its foster carers work collaboratively with the child/young person, their families, local authorities and other agencies;
-  Ensuring that there is an on-going commitment to promoting and safeguarding each child/young person's emotional and physical well-being and protecting them for all forms of abuse;
-  Ensuring that as far as possible, the views and feelings of each child/young person are sought and he or she is involved in the decisions being made about them - providing access to advocacy services where appropriate;
-  Ensuring each child/young person is provided with appropriate health care and an opportunity to participate in any decisions about their health;

-  Ensuring each child/young person has full access to educational resources, promoting achievement and independence;
-  Ensuring that each child/young person has appropriate support in preparing them for long-term fostering or adoption, or developing their skills for independent living;
-  Ensuring that where possible, on-going assistance is made available, as agreed by the local authority, to children and their families in the event they return to their care;
-  Ensuring that contact is maintained for children who leave a placement with **SWAN Fostering**.

## Services and Facilities

**SWAN Fostering** provides placements for children and young people of all ages up to 18 years. This includes individuals and sibling groups.

### Types of placements:

#### **Emergency Placement**

**SWAN Fostering** operates a 24-hour emergency service. Some carers are able to accept unplanned placements where the carers' tasks would be to provide a place of safety and meet the immediate needs of the child.

#### **Short Term Placement**

**SWAN Fostering** provides short-term placements whilst further plans are being made for the child(ren)'s care. Whilst in the placement, **SWAN Fostering** has Support Workers who can be allocated to provide specific services or undertake identified pieces of work with the child/young person.

#### **Parent and Baby Placement**

**SWAN Fostering** can provide foster carers who are equipped to provide short or long-term placements for parent and baby, regardless of the age of the parent. These carers are trained to undertake and/or contribute to Parenting Assessments.

#### **Sibling Group Placement**

**SWAN Fostering** is committed to ensuring that where possible, siblings groups are placed together and is able to offer sibling group placements: There are a number of carers who are able to take larger sibling groups to ensure that children do not need to be separated for practical reasons.

#### **Bridging Placement**

**SWAN Fostering** has carers who will work with children and birth families towards preparing for adoption, long-term fostering, future placements or work to plans aimed at supporting them into (semi) independence.



## Long-term Placement

**SWAN Fostering** provides carers who are approved for long-term placements and wherever possible, it will assist local authorities in finding and/or assessing long-term foster carers for a specific known child.

If an existing short-term placement is likely to be agreed as a long-term placement, the Agency will undertake an assessment to consider how the carers will meet the long-term needs of the child.



## Planning

**SWAN Fostering** requires detailed placement requests in order to identify a match. If an appropriate placement is available, we will provide the local authority social worker with written information about the foster carer/s.

Where possible, a visit by the child and local authority social worker will be arranged, and if necessary plans made for future visits. If there is already a child in placement, we will approach the social worker of that child to give their comments on the proposed placement.

A written placement agreement must be completed before placement, except when it is made in an emergency.

To ensure the appropriate level of care, **SWAN Fostering** needs the placing local authority to provide all relevant "Children Looked After" documentation; including background information, care plan and an up-to-date risk assessment.



## Social Work Service

**SWAN Fostering** foster carers have a named Supervising Social Worker who visits the placement a minimum of once every four weeks, depending on the carers' experience and the needs of the child/ren.

The purpose of these visits is to support the carer and child/young person, and to monitor the level of care provided. Between visits, there is contact with the foster carers by telephone, text or email.

The Supervising Social Worker is responsible for providing appropriate advice and guidance in relation to enabling foster carers to develop their knowledge, experience and skills. S/he receives regular formal supervision from **SWAN Fostering's** Fostering Manager.

Supervising Social Workers also support foster carers in contributing to formal meetings about the child/ren and is the named Agency contact person for the local authority and other agencies involved in the care planning.



For each child in placement the local authority social worker will receive a Monthly Progress Report that will specifically relate to the 'Five Outcomes' identified in 'Every Child Matters'. Reports are available for Child Care Review.

## Support Workers

**SWAN Fostering** has Support Workers who have relevant skills and experience in providing specific support to children and young people in placement.

**SWAN Fostering** believes that by providing foster carers with the appropriate support, the placement is more likely to be a success. Support Workers are able to provide day support; supervise contact between children and their birth families; assist in social activities for foster children/young people; and assist in social activities for the sons and daughters of foster carers. A qualified social worker supervises all Support Workers.

## External Links

**SWAN Fostering** is supported by a range of individuals and organisations who assist with IT, database, legal advice, and accountancy.

Our Panel members come from a range of different backgrounds and experience which includes education, health, police, foster carer and local authority social worker. **SWAN Fostering** also have a named Medical Advisor.

Foster carers can also use **SWAN Fostering** affiliated resources that include *Counselling Works*, *Fostering Network* and *BAAF* to assist them in meeting a fostered child's needs.

## The Status and Constituion of the Office

**SWAN Fostering** is an independent fostering agency based in Hertfordshire. The company is a private limited company registered under the Companies Act 1985 (Company Number 4614052).

**SWAN Fostering** is a professional team consisting of:

**Director and Registered Individual:** Baljinder Haer

**Registered Manager:** The Registered Manager has overall responsibility for the day-to-day running of **SWAN Fostering**, ensuring excellent practice across The Agency.

**Supervising Social Workers:** who monitor and support foster carers and children in their care.

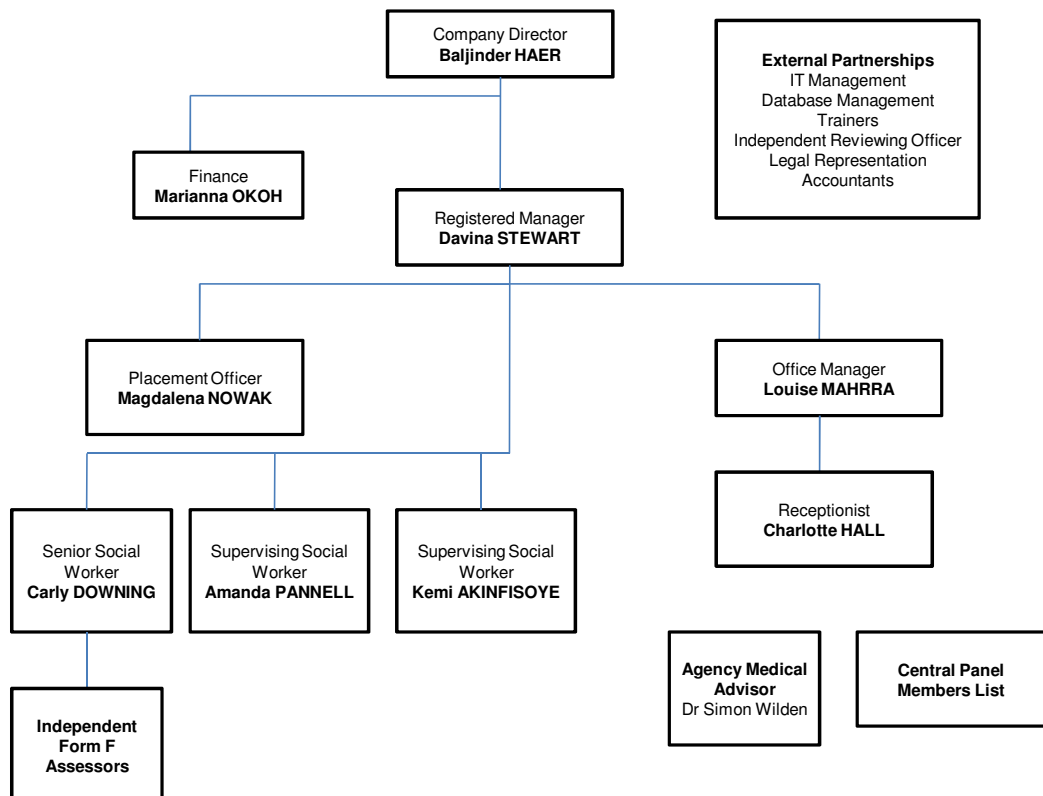
**Assessing Social Worker:** responsible for completing assessments on new applicants for fostering.

**Placement Officer:** who co-ordinates referrals and new placements

**Office Manager:** responsible for quality assurance systems, marketing and communications, and the management of the office.

**Administrative Team:** who assist other team members.

## Organisation Structure





## Comments and Suggestions

SWAN Fostering welcomes your comments and feedback. Please contact us on:

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