

Grading Criteria – fostering / connected person and adoption / SGO



| 1. Case Recording – Foster Carers / Connected Persons and Adopters / Special Guardians | | | | |
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| Criteria | O: Outstanding | G: Good | R: Requires Improvement | I: Inadequate |
| Case recording - suitability | There is a clear focus of the work which is routinely and consistently evidenced on file. Case recording is exceptionally thorough and balanced, showing exceeding professionalism. | Comprehensive and up to date records are held and shared between agencies to help and protect children and young people. | Case records do not consistently reflect the work undertaken and do not allow to get a clear and holistic picture of the carer's/ adopter's/ guardian's journey, including their family history and family/ support network. | There are significant gaps in the case recording that do not to consider the carer's/ adopter's/ guardian's history and support network. Case records on file do not evidence the work undertaken with the carer/ adopter/ guardian. |
| Consideration of case history | | Case records reflect the work that is undertaken and clearly relate to the plans for the future. | | |
| Family and support network | | Case recording is well argued, focused, jargon free and appropriate for the relevant audience; it will support the carer/ adopter/ SG in any future access to records to help their understanding of their journey, the intervention and support put in place | | |
| | | The style and clarity of records enhances the understanding that children and young people have about their histories and experiences. This also includes the effective use of chronologies that reflect significant events in the family's life. It supports the analysis of the history and identification of potential patterns. | | |
| | | The carer's/ adopter's/ guardian's relationships and support networks as well as their impact on the family's functioning and dynamics have been explored; this includes the effective use of genograms and ecomaps | | |

2. SUPERVISION/MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT – Foster Carers / Connected Persons and Adopters / Special Guardians

| Criteria | Outstanding | Good | Requires Improvement | Inadequate |
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| Supervision/ PSG | Management oversight is robust and decisions are regularly, routinely and consistently scrutinised by managers in supervision sessions that also facilitate reflective discussions. | Decision-making is undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced social workers and managers, with decisions, all actions (including timescales) and engagement with the carer's/ adopter's/ SG's and other professionals (where relevant) clearly recorded | The work evidenced on file does not consistently reflect the decisions taken, including the rationale for them, in a timely way; there is inconsistency in linking supervision/ PSG with plans in place and their progress. | There are significant gaps in the evidence of supervision/ PSG including case discussion, review of actions and their progress as well as planning and agreeing on a way forward. The level of management oversight is not sufficient in response to significant events/ concerns. |
| Frequency | | Supervision/ PSG takes place at the minimum required timescales, and more often if the complexity of the case work requires | | |
| Triangulation | | Supervision/ PSG offers a forum to link the recommendations of the plan in place, progress on previously agreed actions and recent developments within the carer's/ adopter's/ SG's life. | | |
| Reflection and critical discussion | | Supervision/ PSG offers the opportunity to discuss, debate, reflect and test hypotheses in relation to what is happening with the carer/ adopter/ SG | | |
| Audit findings | | If an audit was completed within the past 6 months, the manager and practitioner engage in a discussion on the findings and agree on the required actions to progress the case work. | | |

3. RELATIONSHIP WITH Foster Carers / Connected Persons and Adopters / Special Guardians

| Criteria | Outstanding | Good | Requires Improvement | Inadequate |
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| Relationship building and communication | <p>The support offered to the carer/ adopter/ SG is exceeding and professional. The practitioner evidenced consistently their work undertaken, including any challenge; risks are identified timely and managed effectively.</p> | <p>The practitioner demonstrates a proactive and sensitive approach in engaging with the carer/ adopter/ SG and child/ children in placement whilst evidencing professional curiosity. The carer's/ adopter's/ SG's particular needs are acknowledged and considered consistently.</p> | <p>Case records do not consistently reflect the work undertaken and give not a clear picture of the relationship between the carer/ adopter/ SG. The child's experience in placement and support offered to the carer/ adopter/ SG's is not clearly evidenced, raising some questions about the comprehensiveness and appropriateness of such.</p> | <p>There are significant gaps in the support and challenge provided to the carer/ adopter/ SG resulting in concerns or the potential of such of the safe care of any child/ children in placement.</p> |
| The child's experience | | <p>The practitioner evidences ability to communicate effectively with the carer/ adopter/ SG and child/ children in placement and considers their particular needs, i.e. language needs, age, disability, etc. Children share that they feel safe and well looked.</p> | | |
| Consideration of the household | | <p>The practitioner evidences their understanding of the child's experience of living with their carer/ adopter/ SG and their family; the child's views are actively sought and any concerns/ wishes are addressed sensitively; the practitioner effectively supports the carer/ adopter/ SG to understand the child's/ children's holistic needs. Carers/ adopters/ SGs are supported to actively build and contribute to the child's live story work.</p> | | |
| | | <p>The Social Worker demonstrates a good understanding of the carer's/ adopter's/ SG's household and their dynamics; the impact on the child is explored and considered carefully in the assessment and matching, including the support required.</p> | | |

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| Risk identification/ management | The child is safe in the placement; if any risks have been identified, appropriate plans to manage those are in place and effective. | | |
| Response to allegations and poor practice by professionals | Allegations of abuse, mistreatment or poor practice by professionals and carers/ adopters/ SGs are taken seriously; steps are taken to protect children and young people and the management of allegations is robust and effective. | | |
| Complaints | Complaints are treated seriously and result in a clear response, urgent action and improve services where that is required. | | |
| Carer's/ adopter's/ SG's professional development | The practitioner is proactive in supporting the carer/ adopter/ SG in their development to allow the safe care of the child/ children living with them. For foster carers and connected persons: their Personal Development Plan is up to date and actively used to enhance their professional and safe care of any child. | | |

4 Regulations and statutory requirements – Foster Carer / Connected Person

| Criteria | Outstanding | Good | Requires Improvement | Inadequate |
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| Pre-approval/assessment | There is evidence of the assessment process being clear, focused and proactive. It is consistently balanced and professional, addressing any delay and concerns timely. Senior Management evidence oversight and temporary approval consistently whilst child focus is maintained. | The assessment progresses in a timely and appropriate manner. Any drift is reasoned and with clear evidence. Visits are recorded to evidence the ongoing work. Any safeguarding issues identified are escalated timely and appropriately. Connected Person: the file shows evidence of adhering to all statutory requirements and all timescales being met. Where this is not possible an explanation is clearly recorded. | Evidence of the assessment is inconsistent and does not allow a clear understanding of the progress, including any challenges and delays; some delay is evident and not explained/ followed up timely. | There is a significant delay in the assessment/ pre approval stage and no or limited explanation is given. Stat requirements are not met. There is no plan in place how to best address this. |
| Approval | The Form F contains a high level of analysis and critical reflection and references relevant research appropriately. Where the Form F assessment was completed some time ago a scanned copy is uploaded onto the file. Additionally, more recent review reports demonstrate evidence of ongoing work/assessment with the carers and seek to develop the carers. | The Form F contains analysis and critical reflection. Where the Form F assessment was completed some time ago, more recent review reports demonstrate evidence of ongoing work/assessment with the carers that is analytical, reflective, provides challenge and seeks to develop the carers. There is evidence of theoretical perspectives and research being applied. If the Form F has been archived (due to the carers having been approved prior to the introduction of the electronic system) this is noted on the file. All necessary documents are dated and clearly evidenced on file. Where the approval is ongoing, the progress of statutory requirements is easily followed and any delay is explained. | The Form F (or reviews for carers approved some time ago) are present or referenced, but are descriptive and require analysis/critical reflection. Some approval documents are not evidenced on file. | Form F or review reports are either not evidenced or referenced or do not contain enough information which leaves the reader with questions regarding the carers and their situation. Evidence of stat requirements shows significant gaps. |
| Statutory Checks | Timeliness and quality of statutory checks is consistently exceeding. They are consistently considered in the | Statutory checks are completed timely and clearly evidenced on file. They outline their relevance and impact on the child/ children in placement and contribute towards the safe and appropriate care of the | Statutory checks lack consistency in terms of timeliness and impact on the child/ children in | There is a significant gap in statutory checks, leaving the child/ children in |

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| | assessment of the child. Unannounced visits are considered more frequently than once per year if required. | child/ children in placement. There is at least one unannounced visit per year evidenced on file. | placement. | unknown and potentially unsafe placements. |
| File Content | Updates of terms of registration and variations/ exemptions are supported by reflective discussions. The foster carer's profile is exceeding and accessible to the age group of children that they are approved for. | The carer's terms of registration are clearly evidenced on file, including any changes. Discussions of variations or exemptions are evidenced and signed off by the appropriate manager and ADM. The foster carer's profile is up to date and presented in such way that it is appropriate for the age group of children that the foster carer is approved for. All basic information in relation to the carer is up to date. | Some information evidenced on file lacks consistency and clarity. | There are significant gaps in relation to the content of the file which does not allow a clear understanding of the current situation and registration. |
| Placement Details | All placement records are exceeding. The quality of supervision between the Supervising Social Worker and carer clearly demonstrates how it is effectively used to fully support the child/ children in placement who are safe. The child's/ children's views are actively sought and taken into consideration for the planning. | Past placement records are detailed and comprehensive. Current placement records include all necessary and relevant statutory requirements and outline their impact on the child/ children in placement. Supervision between the Supervising Social Worker and Foster Carer/ Connected Person is evidenced within required timescales and supports the carer in understanding the child's needs and lived experience. Strategies are explored and contribute evidently to the safe care of the child/ children in placement. The child's needs and wishes are actively sought and promoted within the placement. The child is safe in the placement; if any risks have been identified, appropriate plans to manage those are in place and effective. | Placement records (past and current) show some inconsistency. Supervision records lack evidence and detail how the foster carer is helped to fully support the child/ children in placement. | Placement records (past and present) show significant gaps. The carer's understanding of the child's needs is not evident; supervision shows significant gaps. It is not clear how the child is supported to be safe. |

4: Regulations and statutory requirements – Adopters / Special Guardians (SG)

| Criteria | Outstanding | Good | Requires Improvement | Inadequate |
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| Pre-approval/ assessment | All agreements are correctly completed and clearly evidenced on the file. Any reasons for delay are clearly documented with adopters agreement to this evidenced. | The assessment progresses in a timely and appropriate manner. Any drift is reasoned and with clear evidence. Visits are recorded to evidence the ongoing work. All documents are well evidenced on file | Documents not fully completed or unsigned. | Documents missing with no reasons given for this. |
| File Content | The PAR/ SG assessment is exceeding and holistic. Risk is carefully assessed to ensure that child/ young person stays safe and feels safe long term. Approval is supported by reflective discussions. | All basic information in relation to the adopter/ SG is up to date. The PAR/ SG assessment is comprehensive, supported by reflection, analysis and relevant research. It outlines the prospective adopter's/ SG's ability to safely meet a/ the child's holistic needs long term. Statutory checks are completed timely and clearly evidenced on file. They outline their relevance and impact on the child/ children in placement and contribute towards the safe and appropriate care of the child/ children in placement. Discussions around approval are evidenced and signed off by the appropriate manager and ADM. | The assessment requires consistent child focus and does not fully explore any potential risks/ challenges. There is some delay with checks. | The assessment has significant gaps in relation to potential risks/ challenges. Child focus is very inconsistent. Checks are delayed without any rationale given to the reasons. |
| Post Approval – Placement Details | The work consistently evidences child focus and is exceeding and professional. This is reflected consistently in all documents | All necessary documents are clearly evidenced on file and outline the rationale and decision making of the matching process. The learning and developmental needs of the carer are explored and appropriate support is identified. Children's matching documents are well written and comprehensive and will support the carer to understand the child's story and to contribute to the child's life story work. | The work does not consistently evidence child focus, this is reflected in some supporting documents; this may also impact on the adopter's/ SG's ability to support the child's life story work. | There are significant gaps in the evidence of documents supporting the matching process; child focus is inconsistent. |