



**Beacon
Fostering**

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

NORTH WEST

BEACON FOSTERING



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Introduction

Welcome to Beacon Fostering's Statement of Purpose. We hope this document helps you to understand our values in looking after children and the services we offer children and families.

This Statement of Purpose reflects the current legislation and guidance taken from the:

- A statement of our aims and objectives of Beacon Fostering
- A statement as to the services and facilities provided by the fostering service
- Fostering Legislation 2011
- Fostering National Minimum Standards

A copy of this Statement of Purpose is available on our website and has been provided to Ofsted, our regulator. Copies can also be made available, upon request to:

- A person working on behalf of Beacon Fostering
- Any foster carer or prospective foster carer
- Any child or young person placed with Beacon Fostering
- Any parent or carer with parental responsibility for a child or young person placed with Beacon Fostering

This Statement of Purpose is reviewed by Beacon Fostering's Management Team whenever there is a change and at least annually.



About Beacon Fostering

Beacon Fostering is a leading independent fostering agency based in the North West. The agency has a focus on this area including Manchester, Liverpool, Lancashire and Cumbria.

Children and young persons are at the heart of the agency and we have a strong commitment to achieving positive outcomes and achievements. This is through the dedicated support to all our fostering families and having a family ethos. Every foster parent is part of the Beacon Fostering family and we help out and support each other.

Beacon provides enhanced support through therapeutic intervention and access to relevant professionals. The agency supports a range of placements including emergency, respite, short term and long term. The agency was established in 2024 with an experienced and skilled team building on achievements and their care for children, young persons and foster carers.

Our Registered office* and resource centre

Our head office is based Wythenshawe, South Manchester to provide support to foster carers and children across the North West. We also have resource centres based in Preston and Liverpool to support foster carers locally in these areas.

Ofsted registration currently in progress

Beacon Fostering works in partnership with The Fostering Network, Foster Talk and the Nationwide Association of Fostering Providers (NAFP). We ensure that all our foster carers are individual members of Foster Talk.

Beacon Fostering is a private limited company registered under the Companies Act 1989 (Company Registration No – 15235314).



Our Values and Aims

Beacon Fostering is focused on achieving and delivery the best for children and young person's. This is through their well being, health, happiness and achievements. We want children and young person's to feel safe, cared for and empowered. We also aim to achieve and exceed the standards set out in the Fostering Minimum standards.

Please see the summary below of Our Values:

Children and young persons should be happy, benefit from excellent support, parenting and help in their education and personal development.

Each child and young person feels safe and their welfare is at the focus of their care and support.

Children are part of a loving environment, feel cared for and their development needs are met and exceeded.

Children and young persons are provided with opportunities to progress, secure their own achievements and have a successful adult life.

The wishes and feelings for each and every child and young person are listened to. These are also taken into account for their decisions and life choices.

There is inclusive support to the child or young person. The foster carers feel part of the team and are central to the child or young person's well being.

The agency delivers enhanced support and intervention where needed for all children and young persons. This is to involve professionals and therapists to form part of the team around the child or young person.



Our Values and Aims

Beacon Fostering aims to have a clear and committed partnership between all those involved in fostering children is essential to deliver the best outcomes for children. We believe that a child is best brought up in their own birth home, with both parents playing a full part in their upbringing. We recognise however this is not always possible. If the local authority believes it is in the child's best interests to be removed from their birth family and placed with one of our foster families, our aim is to ensure that the child/young person has the best experience of being in foster carer and goes onto achieve in all areas of their life.

We always promote positive working relationships with the local authority and support the local authority's care plan for the child/young person. If the care plan is for the child to return to their parent/s' care or extended family, we will fully support this and follow the steps requested by the local authority to ensure this happens.

At all times, Beacon Fostering expects its staff and carers to positively embrace each individual child and young person's heritage. Our value base is that everyone, children and adults alike, are individuals who are to be respected and treated as equals, whatever their circumstances or difficulties.

Foster carers are the foundation of our service. Our overall aim is to recruit professional, resilient carers who can provide foster children with a positive and nurturing experience of family care. We are single-minded about recruiting and training foster carers who will work within the National Minimum Standards while completing the Training, Support and Development Standards (TSDS) within 12 months of approval. Beacon Fostering respects the professional fostering caring context, whilst acknowledging the duality of ensuring that they provide a safe, caring family environment for children and young people who have trauma backgrounds.

Our objectives are to:

- Meet and exceed foster care regulations and national minimum standards.
- Provide high-quality care and achieve positive outcomes for children and young people.
- Deliver quality support to our foster carers and enhance their skills through tailored training packages.
- Maintain a secure financial base, where care quality is individualised to children and young people placed while retaining value to local authorities partners.
- Recruit and invest in our staff team to provide quality support, psycho-education and supervision so our foster carers can provide the best possible care to children.

Our Values and Aims

Beacon Fostering strives to operate according to the principles of equal opportunities and valuing diversity.

All children are to be cared for in a way that meets their needs and promotes their individual heritage and identity. They are to be supported to build on their strengths to help them to achieve their full potential and develop a positive self-esteem.

We aim to recruit sufficient foster families to offer placement choice to local authorities, and we encourage a range of applicants to foster from all sections of the community – including White, Black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups.

Our preparation training ensures that applicants understand the role of a foster carer in respecting and maintaining a child's heritage and identity, including religious, cultural and linguistic background, and the importance of an anti-discriminatory approach.

We are committed to providing a holistic service which embraces diversity and promotes equality of opportunity. Our goal is to ensure that these commitments, reinforced by our values, are embedded in our day to day working practices with all children and young people, foster families, employees, colleagues, and stakeholders.

We provide training in equality and diversity and each year focus on a specific area of difference to highlight to foster carers and social workers the importance of understanding everyone's needs and how best to meet their needs when they may be very different to your own.

We also hold celebrations for different religious festivals such as Christmas, Diwali and Eid. Our organisation is based on the principles of understanding and embracing each other, and this very much includes celebrating our differences.



Services provided by Beacon

Fostering

Foster placements, within our families can be for days, months or years. While some children return to their birth families, others may remain with foster carers long-term. There is therefore a range of placement types, depending on children's needs.

We offer the following types of foster placements:

Emergency

Beacon Fostering provides a 24 hours a day emergency service. Many foster carers choose to specialise in short term work and can accept children on an unplanned, emergency basis. Many children and young people are placed in an emergency and their stay with the foster carer/s continues for a short term period - this may last for a few days or a few weeks. We aim to match children and young people who enter foster care in an emergency with carers who would be able to continue caring for them beyond an emergency period, if it is only agreed for an emergency placement, we will work with the local authority to support positive transitions for children and young people to move on.

Long term can also be known as 'permanence'

These placements are where adoption or special guardianship are not an option, and the foster carer will care for a child/young person on a fostering basis into independence. This may include transitioning to a staying put arrangement once the young person reaches age 18.

Short term

Provision of short term care could be for a few days, weeks, months and even years, whilst plans are made by the local authority for the child or young person's future. Foster carers work with children/young people and their families, as appropriate, to fulfil the objectives of the care plan, whether this be for reunification to birth family or another type of placement, such as adoption, long term fostering or independence.

Respite also known as 'short break'

Respite/short break placements are sometimes offered to provide parents with a break from their children within a set time frame for the children to return home, and to offer additional support to the birth parent where they do not have their own support network. In addition, respite can be considered where children and young people benefit from a regular arrangement away from their main foster carers providing a positive short break experience for both foster carers and foster children.

All the above placements may involve caring for a single child or a sibling group.

Services provided by Beacon Fostering

Siblings

Sibling placements are for brothers and sisters who are placed together in a fostering family. We are committed to ensuring that, where possible, siblings are placed together, and the agency is able to offer families who can take sibling groups, to ensure that children do not need to be separated.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children & young people

An unaccompanied child/young person is someone who is under 18 years of age, is separated from parents/family and is applying for asylum in his/her own right. These young people come from a range of different countries, often do not speak English and likely to be frightened and confused. Beacon Fostering has a long history of providing foster homes for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children & young people, including supporting them into independence. Beacon Fostering staff and foster carers are acutely aware of the unique experiences and challenges faced by these children and young people.

Parent and child

Placements are available for mothers and/or fathers and their child/ren /baby, where foster carers will provide a family environment, support and guidance to parent(s) and help them develop their parenting skills. If requested, and by arrangement with the placing local authority, qualified Beacon Fostering staff can undertake a formal assessment of parenting ability. We can prepare comprehensive written assessment reports, for use in child protection conferences, planning meetings, statutory reviews or court proceedings.

Enhanced placements

Beacon Fostering provides enhanced support through providing access to therapeutic input, intervention and engagement. Foster carers receive specialist training, increased social worker visits and contact. This is supporting children that may have experienced trauma, have behavioural issues or other needs. The support package for foster carers and each child or young person is on a bespoke basis and tailored to ensure the best outcomes are delivered. This involves reflection, reviewing progress together for children and sharing experiences

Solo placements

We aim to support foster carers who are experienced in caring for children and young people who can only be placed in a household where there are no other fostered children. This may be because they pose a risk to other children, or because of the level of support they require.

Management Team

At Beacon Fostering we have an extensive management team who all undertake different roles to ensure that all areas of the service are effectively managed. We have a dedicated staff team with extensive social work experience within the fostering sector throughout the organisation right up to the Directors.

All Directors are the members of the board and take an active role in the management of the organisation.

Priankar Ghosh – Registered Manager - Interim

Priankar has extensive social work experience being qualified for over 10 years. He has developed his practice knowledge with senior roles at Sunbeam Fostering including Team Manager. He has direct safeguarding knowledge, practice experience and has worked extensively with children and young persons.

Shariq Ansari - Responsible Individual - Interim

Shariq has over 20 years fostering experience through his Finance Manager role with Sunbeam Fostering. Shariq has sector knowledge and management skills from his experience and qualifications. Shariq will oversee finance, IT and other areas.

Karamjit Dhull - Director and Agency Decision Maker

Karamjit has over 30 years of social work experience and is a member of the Board for Beacon Fostering. Karamjit has excellent sector knowledge and experience through his involvement with Sunbeam Fostering. Karamjit supports Beacon on its strategy, HR and development. Karamjit is an agency decision maker for Beacon Fostering.

Muhammad Haneef - Director and Agency Decision Maker

Muhammad has 30 years of social work experiences both within statutory setting and private sector as a social worker, senior social worker and manager. Muhammad has significant experience and sector knowledge from his engagement with Sunbeam Fostering. Muhammad is agency decision maker for Beacon Fostering and supports on finance, strategy and development.

Naseem Ahmed - Director and Agency Decision Maker

Naseem has 30 years of social work experience both within the statutory and private sector both as a practitioner and in management, quality assurance and service development. Naseem provides valuable input and advice on our operation. Naseem is also a decision maker.

Helen Daly - Quality Assurance Partner

Helen Daly first qualified as a social worker in 2000, she started her career with Southampton Child Protection Enquiry Team and thereafter worked for Barnet referral and assessment team. Helen has had eight years' experience in front line social work where she extensively developed her practice in child development and is passionate about the rights of children and young people. Helen has level 5 Management & Leadership Diploma, Cognitive and Behaviour Therapy Diploma and Systemic Practitioners Diploma.

Simon Williams - Fostering and Business Consultant

Simon has over 15 years fostering experience and knowledge. Simon has extensive sector knowledge through his recent consultancy work with fostering agencies and also from 10 years with Sunbeam Fostering as their Chief Executive and Business Development Director. Simon supports strategy, marketing, finance and IT.

Support to foster carers

Supervising social workers

Foster Carers are fully supported within the agency and Beacon Family. They are allocated a named therapeutic supervising social worker, as soon as they are approved. The social worker supports with foster carers within the context of the Fostering Regulations and National Minimum Standards. This includes undertaking regular monthly supervision meetings, allowing time for carers to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children/young people living in their families. The supervising social worker's role includes advice and guidance practical and emotional support, and ensuring that foster carers maintain continued professional learning and development. They also engage foster carers regularly for telephone consultation and support on day to day issues. It is the social worker who holds specific information about the fostering family and children placed within this family. They liaise with the Local Authority Social Workers, and often other professionals alongside the foster carers to ensure that the needs of individual children are being met in consideration with the child's care plan

Unannounced visits

Foster carers receive two unannounced home visits a year. These are an opportunity for the agency to complete checks to ensure that the carers continue to provide a high level of care. Where possible on these visits children and young people will also be engaged one to one to ensure that they can share their views on the care provided.

Foster carer reviews

All foster carers have a review at least annually, to reflect on the previous period. Similar to an appraisal, the review sets new goals for the year ahead. Training and development needs are also discussed, and other recommendations may be made. This process considers feedback from carers and birth children, other involved professionals, including placing social workers, and fostered children/young people.

24-hour support

All our foster carers, children and young people and staff members have access to a support line staffed by experienced and qualified social workers, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year. Managers are always available and can be contacted by a social worker for any support and guidance.

Support workers

In addition to our social workers, we have dedicated support workers who will assist with travel, practical arrangements and contact arrangements between children and their birth families. They can also provide structured and emergency availability to foster carers to support children and young people living within their foster family.

Therapeutic Service

We have additional services to ensure foster carers feel fully supported to care for our most traumatised children. This includes fortnightly supervisions, therapeutic workshops, clinical supervision for social workers, one to one session with a therapist/coach, higher fostering allowance, paid respites (when required) and conditional support work sessions.

Support to foster carers

Independent support

Foster carers are given individual membership of Foster Talk. This includes a range of benefits such as :

- Foster Carer 24-hour Legal Advice Helpline
- Foster Carer Legal Expenses Insurance
- Foster Carer Accountancy Advice Helpline
- Foster Carer 24-hour Counselling Helpline
- Foster Carer Tax Advice

Policies and Procedures

All our foster carers have access to our foster carer's handbook, which summarises our key policies and procedures along with useful guidance. We also have a wide range of policies and procedures available to foster carers which support the service to work within legislative boundaries, and provide structure and consistency to safe practices.

Support Groups

Support groups for foster carers run on a quarterly basis and are coordinated and facilitated by supervising social workers. Support groups take place during both the daytime and evenings, to provide flexibility around the different childcare and working arrangements of foster carers. Support groups take place at venues which are accessible and not far away from foster carer/s' homes, in addition to online options, which some foster carers have enjoyed post Covid.

Therapeutic Support Groups

Run monthly by a trained therapist/expert who provides a trauma-informed lens to understand and support children with significant trauma needs. All foster carers are welcome to attend these sessions and it is crucial for our enhanced carers to attend.

Training and development

Each foster carer receives pre-approval (Skills to Foster) training as well as post-approval training and development in a range of topics. This may be accessed one-to-one, in groups and/or online. We expect and support all carers to achieve the Training, Support, and Development Standards (TSDS) within their first twelve months of fostering. We are committed to offering the best training to foster carers to enhance their growth and development. We expect all our foster carers to share the same commitment to their development and attend training and support groups.

Support to foster carers

Transport

Day to day transport for looked after children is an expectation of the national minimum standards to be managed by foster carers - for instance, for school runs and contact with birth parents. Although this is the responsibility of the foster carer, if for any reason this is not possible, we will do our best to provide additional support.

Activity and appreciation days

We organise activity days for our fostering families, such as trips to the seaside and fun days. We also hold a foster carers awards ceremony annually, where foster carers are appreciated and recognised for their hard work. The achievements of children and young people are also celebrated on a regular basis.

Blog, social media and newsletter

We maintain contact with our foster carers through our social media posts, our blogs and agency newsletters. This features information on new staff members and foster carers, developments within foster care, forthcoming training opportunities and information regarding what's happening within Beacon Fostering and the services we offer. Foster carers are encouraged to contribute articles and information to the newsletters.

Beacon Fostering Family events

Each year, in each office venue, we invite foster carers to an informal lunch which offers an opportunity to meet senior managers in the agency. These events are well-attended and assist in helping managers and foster carers get to know one another better and 'put a face to the name'. In addition, it is a good opportunity for senior managers to hear directly from foster carers, listening to their feedback and considering these experiences for future development.

Your Beacon Voice Foster carer's forum

Beacon Fostering's foster carers forum is a consultative group that brings together management, staff and foster carers with the intention of discussing policies, resolving issues and identifying ways to develop our services and to improve outcomes for fostered children.

Support to children and young people

Our primary concern is to provide safe, secure and successful foster families for children and young people. We ensure that all the children and young people in our care are fully supported and that their wishes and views are regularly obtained and reflected on for action.

We provide children and young people with an inclusive support package, which includes the following:

Guide to foster care

Children arriving at a new foster home with Beacon Fostering will receive a Guide to Foster Care for Young People (age 11+) or a Guide to Foster Care for Children (ages 5 – 10). There is also a summary of the statement of purpose included as a letter from the Registered Manager to each child. The guides describe what fostering is all about and detail the support available to the child or young person.

Support groups

We have regular support groups so that children and young people can meet others and make friends. We encourage children to come along, have fun, and share experiences. To facilitate access, support groups take place locally to the children and young people's placements and the groups are tailored to the needs of the children and young people and are age appropriate; for example, we have a support group for young people in foster care who are working towards independent living.

Website

There is a Young People page on Beacon Fostering's website which explains the children's guide and arrangements for support groups, and also includes an e-mail address that young people can use to contact Beacon with their views.

Activities

Beacon Fostering provides a range of events for our looked after children and young people throughout the year. These include social events and outings, and various leisure and recreational activities.

Beacon Care Leaver Covenant

The progression of young persons for their development and personal well being is very important to the agency. Beacon has a commitment to Care Leavers to support their future education, employment and other opportunities. Young persons are supported with a financial contribution from the agency to support their ambitions. All Care Leaver achievements are to be celebrated!

Feedback

It is important to us at Beacon Fostering to encourage children and young people to express their views. We seek their views at the time of their foster carers' review, but also at other times. Every six months, we routinely ask for feedback from our children and young people by sending a short, written questionnaire (in young person-friendly language). The Registered Manager analyses this feedback and identifies any action points. We have specific feedback forms for children and young people with special needs and it is important that, irrespective of any communication difficulties, we are still able to access their views.

Complaints

Our complaints procedure is explained in the children and young people's guides. All complaints are taken seriously, as it is important that children and young people know that we value their views and that we truly listen to what they say.

Children's awards

Each year we hold a children's awards evening where we celebrate children and young people's successes. We hold these events in great venues and invite the whole family to join in the fun.

Beacon Sporting Chance

For each young person, the agency wishes to support their sporting interests, hobbies or other activities. Beacon will actively contribute toward equipment, coaching, opportunities and other support for children and young person's to follow their ambitions.

Recruitment, assessment and approval of foster carers

In line with national minimum standards, we seek to recruit, assess, supervise and support a wide range of foster families to meet the needs of children for whom we provide care.

Throughout the process of enquiry and assessment, we will treat potential foster carers with respect and fairness. They will be received by members of staff who have the skills to deal with any difficulties and are able to pass on relevant information. They will be kept informed of the progress of their application and assessment.

The assessment process includes:

Fostering Assessment

We carry out assessments of potential foster carers using the CoramBAAF Form F Prospective Foster Carer Report and associated documents, guided by the requirements of The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011.

We follow CoramBAAF's advice, 'to use Form F to identify families who can reasonably be thought to have the required qualities for fostering, ensure they have thought through the implications of fostering, consider the kinds of fostering for which they are best suited, and to rule out those carers who are clearly unsuitable'.

As part of the assessment process, applicants will be asked to:

- Narrate and explore their own childhood, past relationships, family history and life experiences.
- Provide references – both personal and employment.
- Undertake a medical check with their GP (paid for by us).
- Consent to other checks with local authorities, schools or other agencies.
- Undertake a criminal record check, known as DBS, for all household members over the age of 18 years old.

Preparation training

Applicants receive specific training through a three-day training course to prepare them to foster known as 'Skills to Foster'. Attending this course will also allow them to meet other applicants, share experiences and learn more about foster care.

For applicants wishing to look after children with disabilities or complex needs, additional training will be provided. We have a range of enhanced training courses, such as learning how to become a therapeutic foster carer, caring and supporting parent and child placements, and caring for children with disabilities.

Fostering panel

Following completion of training and the fostering assessment, the report will be submitted to a fostering panel, who will decide whether to recommend approval to be a foster carer to the agency decision maker. The panel will also consider the terms of approval, such as the numbers and ages of children and also types of placements. Applicants will be asked to attend the panel meeting with the social worker who completed their assessment.

Recruitment, assessment and approval of foster carers

Our fostering panels meet in Manchester on a regular basis. Panels have a balance of gender, ethnicity, skills, knowledge and qualifications and reflect our commitment to bring together individuals from different backgrounds. Each panel has access to specialist legal and medical advice, as required.

Approval

The agency decision maker holds the final decision regarding approval and will review all the paperwork presented to the panel as well as the panel minutes, before making the decision.

Beacon Fostering has the following decision makers:

Muhammad Haneef - Director

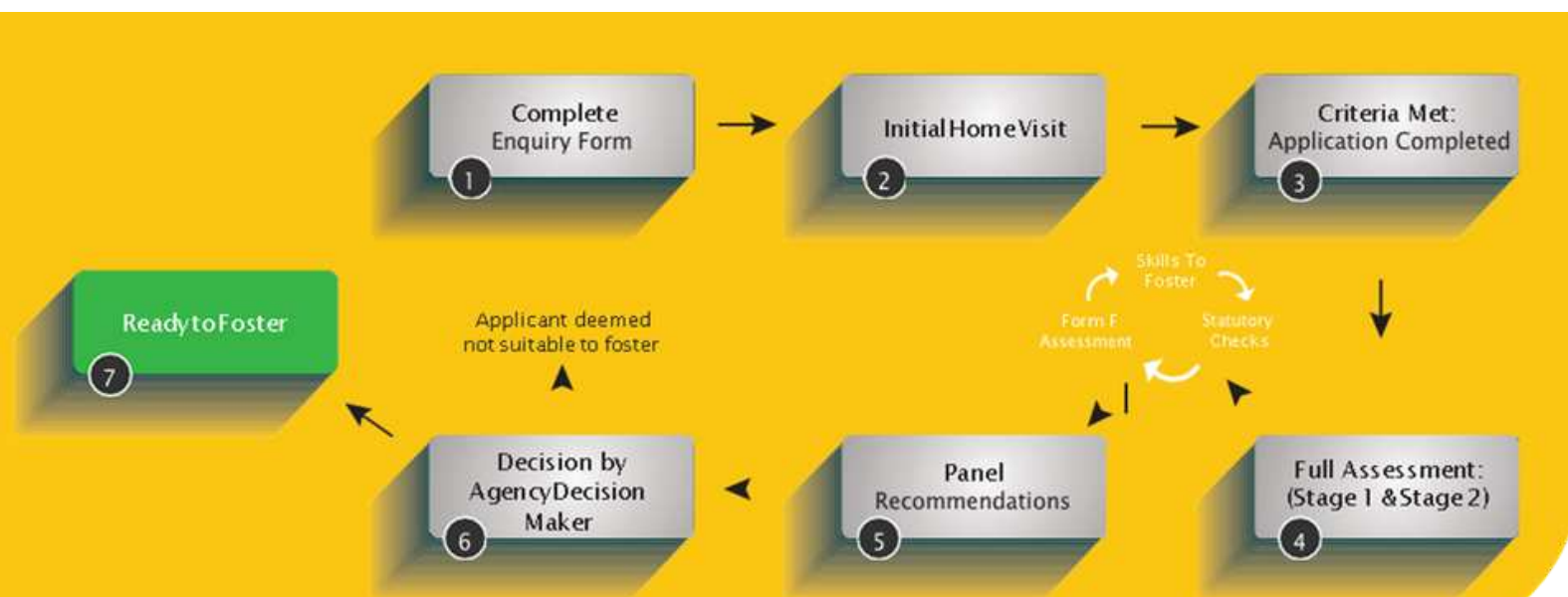
Karamjit Dhull - Director

Naseem Ahmed - Director

Once approved, the individual will then be a registered foster carer with Beacon Fostering and be able to care for looked after children and young people in their home. They will be allocated a supervising social worker for support and supervision. The path to becoming a foster carer requires commitment to the assessment process and our current foster carers would be happy to share their experiences of the assessment process.

Further details are included in our 'A Guide to Foster Care & becoming a Foster Carer', which can be downloaded from our website or please email us on info@beaconfostering.com

Please see an overview of the application process (from enquiry to approval) for foster carers.



Complaints Procedure

Any child, foster carer, member of staff, family member or indeed any person who has had an involvement with Beacon Fostering is entitled to comment about the quality of any of the services, whether positive or negative. A foster carer, relative or friend can also do so on a young person's behalf.

A complaint, comment or compliment may include such things as quality of communication, staff behaviour or attitude, decisions we have made, support for carers or children, or quality of care in the home.

In the matter is urgent, e.g. a child protection issue, an allegation, or an incident involving the child's health and safety, the foster carer must contact Beacon Fostering immediately. If the timing of the call is outside of office hours, our out of hours support service will be able to assist the person calling.

We have a Comments, Compliments & Complaints Procedure which can be obtained by contacting :

Priankar Ghosh - Registered Manager

Phone – 0161 266 2079

Email: PriankarG@Beaconfostering.com





**Beacon
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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Beacon Fostering

January 2025

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