

**REPORT FOR: CORPORATE
PARENTING PANEL**

Date of Meeting: 21 July 2010

Subject: INFORMATION REPORT - Foster Carer Training

Responsible Officer: Catherine Doran, Corporate Director Children's Service

Exempt: No

Enclosures:

- 1) Harrow Foster Carer Training Programme 2010
- 2) Children's Workforce Development Council Training Workbooks standards 1 to 7

Section 1 – Summary

This report sets out recent developments in Foster Care Training.

Section 2 – Report

2. 1 In 2008, The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) outlined new requirements for Foster Carers to evidence competency in 7 standards.
2. 2 In response to this requirement and following consultation with Harrow Foster Carers it was agreed that the Fostering Service required its own Training and Development Officer to oversee and coordinate Foster Carers' training and the CWDC requirements. To achieve this a fostering social work post was changed to a Training and Development post and Aaron Fennell came into post on 2nd February 2009

2.3. Achievements to date include the following:-

- Updating carer training records on FWi/HOST logging historical training data from as far back as March 2007. This database continues to be maintained and updated
- Conducting a carer survey in June 2009 to assess carers' attitudes and perceptions of training, along with their suggestions for meeting future training needs
- Conducting a training needs analysis by reviewing all foster carers' annual review reports
- Designing the 2010 training offering and developed this into a training brochure for carers'
- Identifying external training opportunities, including free online training, to be made available to carers' to expand training opportunities
- Currently designing a new "induction" training package for carers' in their first 2 years. (This is based on the Fostering Network's "Pathways" package, covering the 6 topics of: Health, Behaviour, Contact, Education, Safer Caring, and Attachment)
- Facilitating 3 "Skills to Foster" courses which is the fostering induction programme for prospective foster carers
- Currently delivering the new Fostering Changes Programme which is a 12 session programme running over 7 months. This is designed for experienced foster carers
- Contributing a training section for the 2010 Foster Carer survey
- Collaborating with the North West London Fostering Consortium to conduct 2 Sons and Daughters training events. This included the design and facilitation of the second of these events.

2.4 Specific CWDC related achievements:

- Designed 7 workshops with materials; one Workshop for each standard, to be run as 4 half-days or 2 full-day sessions to assist carers in evidencing the identified outcomes
- Facilitated 14 half-day workshops and 2 full-day workshops held between 23 April 2009 and 14 November 2009). Below is a table indicating the number of carers who have attended these workshops so far:-

Standard	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Carers attended	32	29	30	27	26	26	26

- Two additional half-day workshops have been requested by a small group of carers, to be held in a carer's home. The first of these is

scheduled for 11 June 2010. These workshops will enable 5 additional carers to complete the workshops for standards 5, 6 and 7

- Developed a matching document, showing how the 112 standards match to the previous competency framework developed by the Fostering Network, that still forms part of the Form F assessment. The purpose of this document is to assist assessing social workers to identify how they can draw out additional information as suitable evidence for the outcomes
- Developed a matching document for the Short break carer standards. This is similar to above, but specific to the short break standards.
- Integrated the evidencing process into the Skills to Foster programme by introducing new material. This will enable prospective carers to evidence up to 53 outcomes by attending the Skills to Foster course and completing the associated homework tasks
- Developed a supervision tool, linking the CWDC outcomes to the foster carer supervision report document
- In the process of developing an “easy evidence” tool for assisting Supervising Social Workers to guide new carers through the outcomes framework. This document lists outcomes in themed groups such as personal development, home safety and policies and provides Supervising Social Workers with materials or references to give to the carer, or tasks to complete with the carer, to step them through the groups of outcomes
- There will be two CWDC re-training sessions in June to re-skill Supervising Social Workers on the whole evidencing process

2. 5 Other tasks:

- The Training & Development Officers is the Editor of the Monthly Foster Carer Newsletter
- The Training & Development Officer is participating in the "Learning Champions" programme (through Stanmore College) to be able to provide Foster Carers and Supervising Social Workers with informal coaching and development opportunities

2. 6 Summary

This comprehensive training programme has enhanced our fostering service and allowed us to provide a service to all Fostering households. This has allowed Harrow to be successful in its own recruitment and retention of Foster Carers

There has been a significant increase in the number of young people in in-house fostering placements and a reduction in the numbers in external placements.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Emma Stabler



on behalf of the*
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 18 June 2010

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Peter Tolley, Placement Service Manager, Children's Services
Telephone: 0208 863 5544

Background Papers: None