

The Foster Carers' Charter Wales Implementation Framework

July 2017

Contents

The Foster Carers' Charter Implementation Framework – a vision	2
Introduction	3
About The Fostering Network	4
Our work in Wales	4
About The Foster Carers' Charter Implementation Framework	6
Part one - Turning the charter into reality	8
Part two - Monitoring progress of the Foster Carers' Charter	10
Working in partnership	11
Information	12
Learning, development and support	13
Communication and consultation	15
Clarity about decisions	16
Support	17
Fair treatment	18
Respect for the child	19
Part three - Partners and working together	20
Part four - National support	21
Acknowledgements	22
Contact details	23

The Foster Carers' Charter Implementation Framework – a vision

We know that good foster care makes a real difference to children and young people's lives. Foster carers provide children with stability, security, attachment, and often their first positive experience of family life. However, the system does not always support foster carers to do this. These problems mean that outcomes for such children are not good enough because they are not enabled to meet their potential.

To help fostered children achieve the very best they can, we need a system whereby:

- Every fostered child and young person has security and stability in their foster home, is helped to make and maintain relationships, is supported to stay until they are ready to leave, and is helped to reach their potential.
- Every foster carer is respected as a professional child care expert; given all the information they need to care for each child properly, fully involved in decision making and empowered to make appropriate day-to-day decisions concerning the children in their care.
- Every foster carer is both fairly compensated for the expenses incurred in caring for a child in their home, and paid for their time according to their skills and experience.

The Fostering Network has long campaigned that foster carers should be regarded as full members of the team working with the child. The Foster Carers' Charter, which will be agreed by fostering services and their foster carers, will help to make this a reality.

The charter supports the corporate parent responsibilities of local authorities and sets out a framework of rights and expectations for foster carers. It sets out mutual roles and responsibilities, which are 'owned' by both foster carers and the fostering service. The charter covers issues such as supervision, involvement in planning and decision making, information and payments.

The charter is an important way forward for fostering services in Wales, as it is a promise for service delivery that is owned by everybody involved: the council, the fostering services and foster carers. It will be signed by the cabinet member with responsibility for children's services, and the director for social services.

In this way, a framework is created with which to improve the lives of children in care. This work will enable fostering services to develop their own local charter, so that foster carers get the recognition they deserve and need, to provide children with the best possible care.

Introduction

The Fostering Network first produced The Foster Carers' Charter in 2011, in consultation with its members. In 2015, the charter was revised and launched by the Minister for Health and Social Services, Mark Drakeford AM, at a Senedd reception held by The Fostering Network.

This implementation framework embraces the charter and takes it to the next level: translating the ideals into concrete actions that can be taken by a wide range of partners to bring about real and measurable improvements in foster care for people across the country. The Fostering Network plans to build on this and produce a bilingual toolkit to support implementation that will focus on the roles of councillors, foster carers and local government officers.

A wide range of partners have worked together to produce a framework that really works for organisations on the ground. The framework includes practical ideas for how everyone engaged in foster care can make this charter a reality. The framework focuses on improving outcomes, quality and value for money, and making sure that people who are involved in foster care services are fully involved - *no decision about me, without me*. Some of the suggestions may seem simple, but sometimes simple changes have the biggest potential to improve people's lives.

About The Fostering Network

The Fostering Network is the UK's leading fostering charity. We are the essential network for fostering, bringing together everyone who is involved in the lives of fostered children. We support foster carers to transform children's lives and we work with fostering services and the wider sector to develop and share best practice.

We work to ensure all fostered children and young people experience stable family life and we are passionate about the difference foster care makes. We champion fostering and seek to create vital change so that foster care is the very best it can be.

Our work in Wales

The Fostering Network in Wales has a long history of delivering targeted programmes and interventions that contribute to transforming the lives of hundreds of children and young people who are looked after.

The Foster Carer's Charter is part of our Fostering Excellence programme, our three-year national programme which aims to make a significant contribution to improving outcomes for looked after children. Through our bespoke and comprehensive programme of work we will support foster carers, by providing a variety of training, advice and support through topical masterclasses, our Fosterline Wales advice line and Wales' first foster carer ambassador scheme. The programme will also support fostering services to improve foster carer recruitment and retention, whilst also implementing the Foster Carers' Charter across Wales.

Another of our key themes has been to promote the educational needs and attainment of looked after children. We have worked closely with Cardiff University (CASCADE) and disseminated the important messages contained within their report *Understanding the Educational Experiences and Opinions, Attainment, Achievement and Aspirations of Looked After Children in Wales*.

Furthermore, with funding from Welsh Government, we have published a *Foster Carers' Guide to Education in Wales* and two foster carer magazines, *Making it Happen* and *Greater Expectations*, which aim to inspire and support foster carers.

The wider strategic context in Wales

Improving outcomes for looked after children remains a key priority for the Welsh Government and its partners in all sectors. They acknowledge that the strategic, operational and financial context for looked after children services as a whole will be very challenging for the foreseeable future.

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act establishes Wales' first legal framework for social care in post-devolved Wales. Legislation relevant to looked after children is set out in this Act, in part 6, which details the duties of the local authority in accommodating and supporting children in their care. A code of practice has been issued which provides further practical guidance on what the duties mean in practice.

Importantly for The Fostering Network, the Act states the importance of the role of the third sector and places a duty on local authorities to recognise this. This is important as it gives organisations like ours legitimacy, in 'co-producing' new programmes and interventions in partnership with local authorities.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, 2015

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, 2015 establishes seven national wellbeing indicators, which it is the responsibility of local public service boards to respond to, and measure progress towards. In the delivery of all of The Fostering Network programmes it is important to be cognisant both of the wellbeing indicators and the work underway across public services towards specific goals.

The National Fostering Framework

The framework will concentrate on more efficient use of scarce resources and achieving greater consistency of both approach and outcome. There is also a general agreement that a model of national, regional and local is appropriate. The work was undertaken in two stages, Phase 1 established the case for change, and potential business case, which was consulted on widely across the sector. A set of recommendations were established and Phase 2 is currently developing a model for the practical implementation of the recommendations.

Social Care Wales

From April 2017, the Care Council became Social Care Wales, with a broader remit bringing together workforce development and regulation, service improvement and research. One of their key functions will be to develop the social care and early years' workforce, by expanding on previous workforce qualifications and resources, and agreeing priorities for funding social care training.

Early indicators are that there is strong support for looked after children and dementia to be the next priorities for service improvement. Their consultation with the childcare sector identified some key requirements in relation to training; such as improved access for foster carers, more awareness training for professionals in education and health settings, and more joint cross sector training opportunities. Permanence, transitions challenging behaviour and socialist interventions such as therapeutic play emerged as key themes. The messages from their consultation activity are consistent with our own, and reinforce the vision for The Fostering Network's learning and development service as a hub for the training of all childcare professionals involved with looked after children, with the expertise and reach to promote effective joint working to support children with increasingly complex needs.

Review of Social Care Qualifications Framework

In 2001, the Care Council worked in partnership with the sector to develop our first Social Care Induction Framework. Now this is being reviewed and The Fostering Network Wales has been involved in the consultation process. The aim is for the induction programme to be suitable for all working with children, including foster carers. This may replace the non-mandatory Induction Framework for Foster Carers and Short Break Carers in Wales. We are still awaiting the outcome of the review which aims to be completed in September 2017.

In addition, Social Care Wales has begun a review of Health and Social Care qualifications and will introduce a new pathway to replace the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) from September 2018 (ready to teach from September 2019). The Continuing Professional Education and Learning Framework (CPEL) will also be due for review by 2020. There have also been suggestions that registration of foster carers will be on the agenda in the near future.

About the Foster Carers' Charter Implementation Framework

The Foster Carers' Charter Implementation Framework was initiated in 2016, with the objective of supporting the effective and successful implementation of The Fostering Network's Foster Carers' Charter launched in 2015. This framework has been designed and developed with participation of fostering stakeholders including local councillors, local government officers, social worker practitioners and foster carers.

In June 2015, to improve the status of foster carers, The Fostering Network with the support of ADSS Cymru and WLGA, launched The Foster Carers' Charter in Wales. The charter sets out mutual roles and responsibilities, which are 'owned' by both foster carers and the fostering service. In this way a framework is created, with which to improve the lives of children in care. The charter covers issues such as supervision, involvement in planning and decision making, information and payments. The charter is an important way forward for fostering services in Wales, as it is a promise for service delivery that is owned by everybody involved: the council, the fostering services and foster carers. It will be signed by the cabinet member with responsibility for children's services, and the director for social services.

The Fostering Network has long campaigned for foster carers to be regarded as full and equal members of the professional team working with a child. A charter that is agreed by fostering services and their foster carers will help to make this a reality. This charter has an important role to play in providing all those involved in fostering with a clear statement about what foster carers need and deserve, as well as what has to improve.

Development of The Foster Carers' Charter Implementation Framework

This Foster Carers' Charter Implementation Framework was initiated in 2016, with the objective of supporting the effective and successful implementation of the Foster Carers' Charter 2015. It has been designed and developed with a target audience of anyone involved in the implementation of the Charter so, for example, councillors, local government officers, social worker practitioners and foster carers etc.

The Fostering Network will:

- establish a Foster Carers' Charter national working group, and a framework for implementation agreed by the end of year one
- produce a bilingual toolkit for officers, elected members and foster carers and a children's version of the charter developed, published and promoted throughout Wales by the end of year two
- by the end of year three, all 22 local authorities will have been supported to implement the charter and realise its potential

How to use this framework

The framework to implement and measure the Foster Carers' Charter is divided into four parts:

- **Part One** sets out what the charter's vision will look like in reality.
- **Part Two** sets out how progress in implementing the charter could be monitored and reported.
- **Part Three** sets out what local organisations – both individually and collectively – can do to implement the charter.
- **Part Four** sets out how local action will be aided by the Welsh Government and other national bodies and organisations.

The sections of the framework are modular and are not 'stepping stones'. They can be read together, to build up a picture of local implementation, and of what the future fostering system will mean for foster care, or they can be read separately, as standalone guides to what each partner can contribute.

Part one

Translating the charter into reality

What will the charter's vision and promise look like in reality?

The Foster Carers' Charter sets out the roles and commitments for both the fostering service and their foster carers.

The fostering service's role

The fostering service aims to provide stable and first-rate foster care for children who are valued, supported and encouraged to grow and develop as individuals. To achieve this aim, we recruit, train and approve foster carers and deliver ongoing support to them, in order to give them the skills and confidence they need to develop meaningful relationships with the children and young people they care for, and provide stable and loving homes while they are part of the foster family.

The foster carer's role

Foster carers are at the heart of the foster care service. We are assessed, trained and supported to look after children and young people by developing meaningful relationships in a family environment, providing them with stability, care, love and an opportunity to grow and develop and to reach their potential.

A foster carer's relationships with other members of the team around the child are based on mutual trust and respect.

Achieving this for everyone and in the most effective way will mean that:

Foster carers will:

- know what their role is
- be clear about the expectations of them
- be treated with respect and receive consistent support, advice and supervision
- take part in learning and development, use skills and approaches that make a positive impact and enable the child to reach his or her potential
- provide positive role models
- treat the foster child as they would their own child in advocating for all aspects of the child's development, including educational attainment, physical and emotional health and wellbeing and co-operate fully as part of a team with other key professionals in the child's life.

The fostering service will:

- listen to, involve foster carers and their foster children in decision-making and planning and provide foster carers and their foster children with full information about each other.
- achieve a confident, competent pool of engaged carers, skilled and able to meet the needs of vulnerable children to the highest possible standard
- have a solid foundation to achieve the improved working relationships with the team and their children
- share best practice.

Children in foster care will:

- have a consistent experience where all of their needs are met
- experience as full a family life as possible as part of a loving foster family with carers who can make everyday decisions as they would for their own child, and without the child feeling that they 'stand out' as a looked after child
- have the ability to achieve the best possible individual outcomes, with improved self-esteem and a positive future ahead of them
- be central in the decision-making process
- be able to develop their own identities and aspirations, fulfil their potential and take advantage of all opportunities to promote their talents and skills
- be listened to.

Part two

Monitoring progress of the Foster Carers' Charter

How can progress in implementing the Charter be monitored and reported?

Monitoring and reporting on progress in implementing the charter – knowing whether we are making a difference – will be vital not only in holding services and partners to account, but also to guide future efforts and actions.

The toolkits that will be developed during 2017 will provide further guidance and self-assessment and describe further how to evidence your progress against the framework and charter.

Working in partnership

<p>Foster carers</p> <p>We will demonstrate a high standard of care and conduct.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate our expertise and make use of our skills to the best of our ability. • Provide children with a positive experience of family life. • Attend meetings about the children and young people we care for. • Work with the agencies involved with the child such as school, health and religious establishments. • Show a willingness to work with birth parents, wider family and people significant in a child's life. • Meet the standards set out in fostering regulations and guidance and follow departmental policies and procedures. • Respect confidentiality. 	<p>Fostering services</p> <p>We recognise that foster carers have skills and expertise and make the biggest difference to the everyday lives of children in care.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value your skills and expertise equally to those of other professions. • Recognise that you are the people who live with children every day and know them best. • Include you in all meetings that affect you and the children you care for. • Ensure that our fostering service will meet the standards set out in fostering regulations and guidance. • Treat you without discrimination and respect you as a colleague. • Respect confidentiality. 	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be mutual respect between the foster carer and the fostering services. • All stakeholders will be party to all meetings. • Regular and clear communication will take place between all stakeholders in the child's life. • Foster carers will have a greater understanding of the child's individual needs. 	<p>We will know this because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships will be strong between the fostering services and foster carers. • Complaints will be reduced. • Meetings will be attended regularly without missed appointments. • Relationships between foster carers, birth parents, wider family and people significant in the child's life will be strong and healthy. • Foster carers will feel they are treated with fairness and respect.
---	--	--	--

Information

<p>Foster carers</p> <p>We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship and we will aim to build a meaningful and collaborative relationship with our supervising social worker.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform our supervising social worker about changes in our household. • Inform our supervising social worker about any difficulties that arise for us. 	<p>Fostering services</p> <p>We know that information is vital in order for foster carers to provide care that meets the child's need.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give you all the information you need in order to care safely for the child. • Provide this information in writing prior to placement, or as soon as possible in the case of emergency placements. • Ensure that there is a placement plan drawn up in discussion with you and agreed with you in advance of placements, or as soon as possible in the case of emergency placements. • Provide you with information on all financial matters including tax allowances and additional entitlements. • Provide you with full details of all relevant departmental policies and procedures. 	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be regular, clear communication between carers and the fostering services. • Foster carers will be fully informed regarding their role and responsibilities. • Information will be readily available to foster carers in all aspects of foster care and the services available. • Fostering services will keep abreast of research developments and implement suggestions for good practice and a better quality of service, based on local and national research and engage with third sector partners such as The Fostering Network. 	<p>We know this because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a positive working relationship between foster carers and social workers. • Foster carers will be clear and confident about their role. • Foster carers will be clear about what is expected of them. • Foster carers will be confident, competent and engaged. • Foster carers will feel valued and involved in relation to plans regarding placements. • Children will be confident they are able to access help and advice from both foster carers and their own social workers.
--	---	---	--

Learning, development and support

Foster carers	Fostering services	This means that:	We will know this because:
<p>We must be enabled to access learning and development opportunities throughout our fostering career. This will ensure we have the skills and knowledge we need and allow us to develop our practice, in order that we can help transform the lives of the children we foster.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be willing and able to develop our skills throughout our fostering career. • Attend relevant training. • Take up opportunities offered to us. • Let you know if we are unable to attend. • Attend and contribute to support groups. 	<p>We believe that foster carers must be enabled to access learning and development opportunities throughout their fostering career. This will ensure they have the skills and knowledge they need, and allow them to develop their practice in order that they can help transform the lives of the children they foster.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide you and your family with appropriate and relevant training by trainers who understand the fostering task. • Enable you to develop meaningful relationships with the children in your care and the fellow members of the team around the child. 	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive training programme and learning opportunities will be available to develop the knowledge and skills of foster carers. • Learning and development opportunities will be relevant and responsive to the needs of the individuals attending. • A variety of learning opportunities will be offered, not just traditional classroom based training. • Training will be provided to a very high standard by using current and experienced foster carers and social workers to facilitate training, assisted by a skilled trainer. 	<p>We will know this because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fostering service will have a confident, competent pool of engaged carers, skilled and able to meet the needs of the child in their care. • Encourage attendance at learning and development opportunities where little or no take-up occurs. • With developed skills, foster carers will feel empowered and valued.

- Provide you with other development opportunities which make the best use of your skills and expertise, such as mentoring or providing training or support.

- Highly qualified and motivated staff are in post who are dedicated to recruitment, training, assessment and support of foster carers and are solely focused on the needs of children and young people who are cared for in foster placements.

Communication and consultation

<p>Foster carers</p> <p>We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respond to local consultations and discussion in order to inform the development of the service.• Meet with councillors, service managers and others in order to promote dialogue and a good working relationship.• Support the children in our care to do the same.	<p>Fostering services</p> <p>We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate regular communication between you, councillors and the director of children's services.• Ensure that we consult with you in a meaningful way on matters that affect you.• Give you timely feedback from consultations.	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication will be clear and concise, in a language that all stakeholders are able to understand.• Effective and accessible processes are put in place to allow all stakeholders to engage in dialogue.	<p>We will know this because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakeholders will understand what is being asked of them in relation to consultations and engagement.• Engagement and consultation responses will increase.• Foster carers will feel valued members of the team.• Fostering services will value the contributions made by foster carers and children.• Foster carers are confident in making suggestions about areas for improvement or where changes need to take place to improve the fostering service.
--	--	--	---

Clarity about decisions

Fostering services

We recognise that in order for children to live a full family life, foster carers must be able to make decisions regarding the children they foster.

We will:

- Ensure that whenever possible, you are able to make everyday decisions that mean that your fostered child is not treated differently to their peers, and can feel part of your family.
- Provide clarity about any decision you cannot take at the outset so that everyone understands who is responsible for what.

This means that:

- Information will be made available about decision making processes.
- Fostering services will be clear in communication with foster carers about their role in making everyday decisions about the child.

We will know this because:

- Foster carers are clear in their roles and responsibilities about who makes decisions about the child and when.
- Foster carers feel empowered that they are able to take everyday decisions.
- Foster carers are clear about any decisions they cannot make on their own.
- Children will be confident that they are not treated differently from their peers and feel part of the family.

Support

<p>Fostering services</p> <p>We recognise that fostering is an isolating and challenging task and appropriate and timely support makes all the difference to the fostering family and to the child in your care.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respond positively to requests for additional support.• Provide you with monthly supervision and weekly phone contact.• Give you honest and open feedback.• Provide you with access to 24 hour support from people with fostering expertise.• Pay you allowances, expenses and fees in a timely manner.• Pay fees that reflect the task.• Ensure that there is a local group recognised by the fostering service where you and your family can find support and share experiences with other fostering families.	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foster carers will be treated according to their individual needs and the needs of the child.• Communication will be a two-way process.• Feedback will be provided sensitively and in a timely manner.• Information is accessible at all times.	<p>We will know this because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foster carers will have access to support from qualified and experienced foster carers outside of office hours.• Foster carers can access advice and assistance from qualified social workers.• Numbers of enquiries and contact will increase.• Effective and positive relationships will be developed between foster carers and families.• Reduced complaints are received regarding late payments of allowances, expenses and fees.• Foster carers feel that the remuneration for tasks is appropriate and proportionate.
---	---	--

Fair treatment

<p>Fostering services</p> <p>We recognise that foster carers have a right to be treated fairly, no matter what the circumstances.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult with you before changing terms and conditions.• Ensure openness in all of our decisions and communications with you.• Ensure that you are treated with respect, kept informed and provided with emotional support should you be subject to an allegation.• Provide a framework for dealing with allegations and adhere to our agreed timescales.• Ensure that you know the arrangements or the payment of fees and allowances in the event that you are not able to foster while the subject of an allegation.	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fostering services will deal with complaints or allegations sensitively.• Appropriate support will be provided to foster carers.• Responses to complaints or allegations will be done fairly and within an agreed timescale.• Foster carers and fostering services will adopt an open and honest problem solving culture. Where any matter is likely to give rise to a difference, the parties shall give brief particulars to the other as soon as possible, and meet for as soon as possible, and direct good faith negotiations to try to resolve the matter.	<p>We will know this because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foster carers understand that they are respected and supported.• Foster carers are aware of any changes to terms and conditions in advance.• Agreed timescales are adhered to by foster carers.
--	--	--

Respect for the child

<p>Foster carers</p> <p>Every child and young person should be respected as an individual and be supported in meeting their needs and achieving their aspirations and potential.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a meaningful relationship with the child: understand their needs, support their growth, and become an advocate and champion for them. • Respect and promote a child's religious, linguistic and cultural heritage. • Afford the same level of protection and care to a child as we would our own child in accordance with the national minimum standards. • Ensure the child has the right to make decisions regarding their own lives, as appropriate to their age and understanding. 	<p>Fostering Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering Services will recognise that foster carers may know child best. • Fostering services will listen to the child or young person Fostering services will keep child informed of decisions affecting them. • Fostering services will enable child to experience 'normal family life' by enabling FC to make decisions. 	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster carers will listen to their foster child and enable them to be heard. • Foster carers understand the individual needs of the child particularly those in relation to the Equality Act 2010. 	<p>We will know this because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will be confident that their needs are understood and supported. • Children will feel safe and secure in their placement/family. • An increased number of children are involved in making decisions about their own lives. • Children achieve their full potential. • Children will live without victimisation, discrimination or harassment.
--	---	--	---

Part three

Partners and working together

What can local organisations – both individually and collectively - do to implement the charter?

To make a real difference in fostering, a wide range of partners will need to work together. What can partners do?

- Publicise the charter prominently on the website and use it appropriately in other communications about foster care.
- Ensure the lead councillor for children's services signs the charter.
- Appoint an elected member as 'Foster Carers' Charter Champion'. This role might include raising awareness of foster care including, for example, the role of fostering services and foster carers.
- Recognise the role of children's services and the wider organisation to champion and promote the Foster Carers' Charter.
- All stakeholders require an understanding of the charter and why it has been introduced so that it becomes part of the culture and 'the way we do things around here'.
- Partners need to recognise their individual role and responsibilities in implementing the charter and to understand their accountability.
- Joint training should be provided with all stakeholders to provide a clearer understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities and to create mutual respect.
- Accessible, clear and effective engagement and consultation needs to take place with all partners involved.
- Support and promotion of the charter needs to be gained from the Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA), Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Social Care Wales (SCW), Commissioners and Social Services Policy Group (SSPG).
- Any commissioned independent agencies must be made aware and adhere to the Foster Carers' Charter.
- Regularly update foster carers over time to measure progress of the charter.

Part four

National support

How can local action be aided by Government and other national organisations?

- The Foster Carers' Charter needs to be underpinned by the Welsh Government's National Fostering Framework.
- National organisations can sign up to and support the charter – this will provide promotion at a national and local level and provide consistency.
- Raising awareness of the charter should be undertaken at national, regional and local levels.
- Implementing the charter will potentially work towards some of the goals as outlined in the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- Foster carer learning and development could be standardised to create a potential qualification for foster carers.
- Foster carers and interested members of the public can lobby their local authority councillors to implement the charter locally.
- The Fostering Network will continue to promote the charter, for example, via its website as part of its Fostering Excellence programme, and through partnership working with its members and stakeholders across Wales.

Acknowledgements

Authors

Anna Morgan, director, Red Shiny Apple

Maria Boffey, head of operations, The Fostering Network Wales

This report has involved The Fostering Network Wales foster carer ambassadors and foster carer advisory group. They have been both generous with their time and expertise. We would like to extend our thanks and gratitude to them, as this report is grounded in, and informed by, their everyday experiences of being foster carers.

We also like to thank:

The fostering teams from Swansea City and County Council, Powys County Council and Cardiff County Council.

Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)

AFA Cymru

Jessica Matthews, programmes manager, The Fostering Network Wales

Charlotte Wooders, Fostering Excellence programme officer, The Fostering Network Wales

The Fostering Network

The Fostering Network is the UK's leading fostering charity. We are the essential network for fostering, bringing together everyone who is involved in the lives of fostered children. We support foster carers to transform children's lives and we work with fostering services and the wider sector to develop and share best practice.

We work to ensure all fostered children and young people experience stable family life and we are passionate about the difference foster care makes. We champion fostering and seek to create vital change so that foster care is the very best it can be.

To find out more about this charter and our wider work in Wales, please contact:

Maria Boffey

Head of Operations

The Fostering Network Wales

1 Caspian Point, Pierhead Street,

Cardiff Bay CF10 4DQ

T: 029 2044 0940

E: maria.boffey@fostering.net



/thefosteringnetwork



@fosteringnet

The Fostering Network is registered in England and Wales as a limited company, no. 1507277. Registered office 87 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HA. Registered charity no. 280852 in England and Wales and no. SCO39338 in Scotland. VAT Registration 231 6335 90.

© The Fostering Network 2016

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), without prior permission of the publisher.