

INDIGO FOSTERING STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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1. Introduction

Regulatory Framework

The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards require all fostering services to produce a written statement of purpose setting out the aims and objectives of the service and the services and facilities provided.

Our Statement of Purpose has been developed in accordance with appropriate statute law and regulations, and it seeks to promote the principles and practice outlined within:

- The Care Standards Act 2000
- The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
- The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services
- The Children Act 1989
- Volume 4: statutory guidance on fostering services for looked-after children.

This Statement of Purpose will be reviewed regularly, as appropriate. Each time it is reviewed a copy will be sent to the Chief Inspector and all approved foster carers and foster children. A copy of the Statement of Purpose will also be made available on request to any staff member, prospective foster carer, parent of a child placed in foster care, any child placed and other professionals; and is reflected in the Agency policies, procedures, and any written guidance to staff, foster carers and children and young people.

The Statement of Purpose sets out the framework for Indigo Fostering. It is intended to provide an overall view of this fostering service, details of which are available in the agency's comprehensive Policies and Procedures manual. The management team and directors review the Statement of Purpose annually. Updated versions are uploaded to our website www.indigofostering.com and provided to OFSTED.

Children and young people in the care of the fostering service receive an age-appropriate Welcome Guide about Indigo, to help them engage with us and ensure their voice is heard. Tailored guides are available to meet the needs of young children and young people, and they meet the needs of unaccompanied minors who may benefit from a specifically tailored guide which addresses issues relevant to their status.

Our Commitment

Indigo's core mission is to channel our resources towards comprehensively meeting the needs of children and foster carers. Our primary focus is on cultivating stable, nurturing environments where children can flourish, and foster carers receive the essential support and resources needed to excel in their crucial roles.

Indigo is a company limited by guarantee, committed to ethical business practices. We are dedicated to reinvesting our revenues to continually enhance and expand the services we provide for the young people in our care, ensuring their wellbeing remains at the forefront of our operations.

In accordance with the Companies Act 1985 and 1989, Indigo Fostering has produced a Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association. The Board of Directors will meet twice a year and as required and are responsible for the strategic direction and corporate and financial management of the company.

Company Registration No.: 14967008

- Year of Registration: 2025
- Responsible Individual: Nicola Kusi Acheampong
- Registered Manager: Adam Zorgani
- Ofsted URN: 2784231

2. Mission Statement

Indigo Fostering is a child-focused foster care organisation that seeks to use its resources to readily support children and their carers. We seek to provide a high-quality, evidence-informed independent fostering service for children and young people aged 0-18 years old, living in London and surrounding counties, who may have suffered trauma through the experience of neglect, deprivation, physical injury, emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse.

Our aim is to place children and young people with carefully selected families, who can meet a very wide range of needs, as set out in their Care Plan. We ensure children can access education and services in their local communities, however complex their individual service requirements. Indigo Fostering aims to provide this high-quality fostering service by ensuring that:

- Our 'Risks and Opportunities Panel' efficiently identifies and addresses support needs, ensuring children, foster carers, and staff have the resources to keep children safe and help them reach their full potential.
- All adults demonstrate a positive model for communicating effectively with children and young people.
- Each child, young person is provided with appropriately matched, well experienced, skilled and trained carer(s) committed to meeting their needs.
- Each child and young person are provided with opportunities to achieve personal integration into their communities.
- Most importantly, each child and young person is provided with the experience of a stable, caring, and nurturing family environment.

3. Principles

The principles and standards guiding this fostering service are based on the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' framework and is also informed by a salutogenic approach. Salutogenesis is about focusing on health promotion and competency (as opposed to a deficit, or pathogenic approach), and is valuable in supporting foster care children and those with trauma. The term "salutogenesis" comes from the Latin word "salus," meaning health, and "genesis," meaning origin. In the context of supporting children in foster care and children with trauma, a salutogenic approach emphasises the factors that contribute to resilience, coping, and overall well-being. This approach informs our foster carer training and ongoing supervision.

Here are some evidence-based ways a salutogenic approach can play a role in supporting children in foster care and those with trauma:

Strengths-Based Perspective:

Salutogenesis encourages a strengths-based perspective, emphasising the individual's existing resources and abilities. For children in foster care or those who have experienced trauma, acknowledging and building upon their strengths can be empowering and contribute to a positive self-image.

Sense of Coherence (SOC):

Sociologist Aaron Antonovsky introduced the concept of a "sense of coherence" (SOC), which refers to a person's perception that life is comprehensible, manageable, and meaningful. Fostering a sense of coherence in children with trauma involves creating a structured and supportive environment, helping them make sense of their experiences, providing tools for managing challenges, and fostering a sense of purpose.

Resilience Building:

Salutogenesis emphasises the importance of resilience as a key component of well-being. Professionals working with children in foster care or those who have experienced trauma can focus on building resilience through supportive relationships, coping skills, and creating a safe and stable environment.

Empowerment and Participation:

In a salutogenic approach, empowering individuals to actively participate in decision-making processes regarding their own lives is crucial. For children in foster care or those with trauma, involving them in decisions about their well-being, treatment plans, and daily activities can contribute to a sense of control and empowerment.

Holistic Support:

Salutogenesis encourages a holistic view of health, considering physical, mental, and social well-being. Supporting children in foster care or those with trauma involves addressing not only their immediate needs but also considering their broader social context, relationships, and mental health.

Trauma-Informed Care:

A salutogenic approach aligns well with trauma-informed care principles. It emphasises creating an environment that is sensitive to the impact of trauma, promotes safety and trust, and focuses on the individual's strengths and resilience.

Cultural Competence:

Considering the cultural background of children is essential in a salutogenic approach. Understanding and respecting cultural values and norms contribute to a more comprehensive and effective support system. In essence, salutogenesis guides a holistic, empowering, and culturally sensitive approach, fostering resilience and well-being in vulnerable populations. Training is developed and provided to embed this strengths-based approach.

Our goal is to support children with:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic wellbeing

We are committed to the following:

- The safety and protection of looked after children and young people will be an overriding priority for the fostering service.
- The needs of looked after children and young people will be met in respect of health, including mental health, and this will be achieved by working closely with other professionals including the specialist nurse for looked after children and young people and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).
- The needs of looked after children and young people will be met in respect of education, and this will be achieved by working closely with other professionals. Indigo Fostering will aim to ensure that children and young people have stable school arrangements, Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and educational support necessary to meet their needs.
- Children and young people will be supported and encouraged to develop independence skills appropriate to age and ability and friendship and leisure interests in line with their wishes and individual care plans.
- The interests and welfare of children and young people is always paramount, and this will be reflected in all aspects of work.

- All work will be undertaken in partnership with looked after children and young people, their parents, birth families, foster carers, social workers and other relevant departments and agencies.
- The fostering service will advocate for looked after children and young people to ensure that they have access to their own social worker and any specialists and services that they need.
- The fostering service will operate in a manner that promotes equality, values diversity, challenges discrimination and aims to meet the varied needs of looked after children and young people.
- In recruiting foster carers and coordinating fostering arrangements, consideration will be given to the needs arising out of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, language, and sexuality.
- Foster carers and staff will be valued and supported in a way that assists them to provide safe and effective care for looked after children and young people.

Indigo Fostering is committed to achieving and maintaining the highest standards and offering quality provision. It has been developed and is managed in accordance with the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and the principles outlined in the Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards. The performance of the agency will be monitored at multiple levels and in several ways:

- Ofsted will inspect regularly to ensure that the agency complies with the legislation and standards. This report together with any action plan arising from it will be publicly available.
- The Director will also monitor the activity at a strategic level against the aims and objectives, performance indicators and tasks as contained in the Development Plan.
- In addition to involvement in the above, the Fostering Manager will also monitor performance through his activities.

Performance Targets and Indicators:

- Fostering arrangement stability (% of children looked after in the same fostering arrangement according to and stratified by duration)
- Continued recruitment of new foster carers to address diversity, and in accordance with the current needs and demands.
- All assessments to be completed in a timely manner and of high quality.
- All newly approved foster carers will carry out the agreed pathway training within the first year of their approval.
- Retention of foster carers.
- Successful Ofsted inspection aiming at “good” or “outstanding”.

We aim to put children at the centre of what we do, in accordance with the principles of the fostering services and support foster carers to do the same, in order to:

- Promote and safeguard the welfare of children throughout their childhood.
- Promote working partnership with children and their families.
- Ensure equality of opportunity.
- Ensure all children fulfil their potential in education.
- Ensure that young people are supported to move into independence in a planned way.
- Ensure all children’s health needs are met.

Our child focused approach also encompasses ensuring that children's wishes, and feelings are considered:

- We aim to provide children with a caring and safe experience of family life which also supports their identity.
- We will listen to children and young people and take their views into consideration.
- We aim to promote equality of opportunity, recognising and providing for each child and young person's ethnic, cultural, and religious needs, ensuring that staff and foster carers value disability.
- We aim to work in an open and accessible way, treating children, young people, their families and foster carers with fairness and respect.
- The fostering service is committed to improving outcomes for children and will actively promote and improve the life chances of children we look after.
- Working with a range of professionals, we aim to ensure that children and young people and their foster carers are provided with the services and support to meet their needs.

Valuing diversity, professionalism and supporting carers:

- We do not discriminate against applicants on the grounds of gender, religion, ethnic origin, cultural and linguistic background, nationality, disability, and sexual orientation.
- We actively challenge views or practices which are not in line with our diversity and anti-discriminatory policies.
- We recruit foster carers based on the needs of the agency and the children it looks after, setting annual targets.
- We treat our foster carers with respect, recognising that they are a core member of the professional team around the child with an important contribution to make in planning and decision making about the child.
- We value foster carers' own children and extended family and the support they offer to looked-after children.
- Indigo Fostering recognises that foster carers are valuable members of the team working with a child. As such they are involved in all aspects of caring and planning for children they are looking after.

4. Aims

Our focus areas: Promoting Safety, Stability, Activities, Education, Health, Emotional Wellbeing, Family Contact and Life Skills.

The overall aim of Indigo Fostering is to provide safe, healthy, stable and high-quality foster fostering arrangements for children and young people of all ages, irrespective of their race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation and disability, who, for whatever reasons or period of time, need to be looked after away from their family of origin and kinship; which value, support, nurture and encourage them to grow and develop as individuals.

Specifically, Indigo Fostering aims to do the following:

- To provide a service responsive to the needs of children who require a fostering family, recruiting sufficient foster carers to offer fostering arrangement choice and create a culture where children and young people are encouraged to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy, and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing.
- To provide a fostering arrangement that meets the requirement of the child's care plan and wherever possible that reflects the child's ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic background.
- To fully assess and support the particular needs of disabled children and young people and/or children and young people with complex needs.
- To value foster carers, providing them with a high standard of supervision, support, and guidance through individual sessions with their supervising social worker, support groups and pre and post approval training, including the Training, Support and Development Standards (TSDS) for Foster Care.
- To be open and accessible, ensuring that practice complies in every respect with the agency's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- To provide a high standard of care for children looked after in a warm, safe, and stable environment that will meet their developmental needs.
- To provide a respite care to support a child living with his/her family or carers.
- To work in partnership with professionals, carers, parents, and children to return children to their own family wherever possible.
- As a minimum standard, to promote a good relationship between parents and their children where a return home is not possible. We also support children in contact with all family members in line with their care plan.
- Wherever possible and in the best interests of each child, to place siblings together.
- To offer information and advice on all fostering matters to general public enquiries and other professionals.
- The fostering service, including foster carers has high expectations that children in foster care will reach their full potential.
- To safeguard all children.
- To support foster carers to provide care to children and young people that minimises the need for police involvement.
- To protect each child and young person from all forms of abuse and neglect.
- To ensure no administration of corporal punishment to any child in the care of foster carers.

5. Objectives

- Every effort will be made to find a fostering family that meets the young person/child's emotional and development needs – in careful matching of the needs of the children and young people referred for foster arrangements with the skills of the foster carers.
- A child/young person's wishes and feelings will be considered, and children/young people will be encouraged to participate in decisions about their care.
- The fostering service will work in partnership with foster carers, children/young people and their families.
- All information/records will be treated confidentially and held securely.

- Applicants who wish to become foster carers will have equality of access to the fostering service.
- Applicants are recruited in line with local identified needs and annual service targets.
- Foster carers are well prepared and supported for the fostering task.
- To enable each child to reach their full potential in all areas of their life.
- To ensure that all children are safeguarded in foster care.
- For children to move on from foster care in a planned and positive way.
- That all foster carers are suitably prepared and trained for the task.
- To recruit, train and develop professional staff in order to provide excellent support and services to children and young people looked after and foster carers.
- Delegated responsibility to be given to foster carers as defined within the fostering arrangement.

6. Organisational Structure



The above reflects how the agency is structured to ensure compliance and best practices. We are committed to maintaining a suitably qualified and experienced team which reflects the needs of the carers and children in our agency including engaging the services of ad-hoc professionals to support our operations where required.

Agency Decision Maker

This role makes decisions on foster carer approvals, reviews, and terminations. The ADM participates in key strategic meetings, reviews cases, analyses recommendations post-panel meetings, collaborates with the panel and senior management if further inputs are needed, and communicates recommendations to stakeholders. The ADM ensures decisions are aligned with regulatory requirements and the best interests of children and provides clear rationale for decisions. They are responsible for overseeing the agency's commitment to continuous improvement.

Responsible Individual

This role oversees the overall governance of the agency. The RI chairs key strategic meetings, ensures regulatory compliance, chairs Quality Assurance Review (QAR) meetings, makes decisions on significant policy or practice changes, oversees the overall quality assurance and inspection readiness process, and liaises with Ofsted and other regulatory bodies. They ensure the panel's activities align with strategic objectives and that adequate resources are available for quality assurance.

Quality & Compliance Manager

The QCM is a central practice management role that directly works alongside the RM and RI. This role is key to ensuring regulatory compliance and upholding/exceeding the mandated quality and effectiveness of care. The QCM supports the RI in conducting regular audits to ensure continual compliance and provides guidance to staff on policy interpretation and application following senior management guidance. The QCM coordinates assessment and review activities of care provision, monitors and reports on key quality indicators, ensures inspection readiness, and drives continuous improvements. Additionally, the QCM supports SSWs, FCs, and YPs by collecting routine feedback, managing feedback mechanisms, and identifying areas of improvement for continuous development of the service via senior management, aligning with the process of reporting findings and actions to staff and ensuring implementation of improvement actions identified through report and meeting mechanisms. The QCM contributes to inspection readiness by ensuring practices meet and exceed regulatory requirements and incorporate feedback from children, foster carers, and staff to strengthen policies and inform reporting.

Registered Manager

Responsible for the day-to-day operations of the fostering service. The RM chairs operational meetings, ensures the implementation of policies and procedures, sends notifications to appropriate authorities within 24 hours of a notifiable event, and is responsible for the quality of reports completed by staff, focusing on safeguarding practice and outcomes for children. The RM also arranges Fostering Panel meetings in tandem with the Chair and co-chairs the quarterly QAR meetings with the Responsible Individual.

Supervising Social Workers

SSWs provide regular supervision and support to foster carers. They participate in team meetings and contribute to monitoring and review processes. SSWs conduct supervision visits (monthly minimum) focused on training, children's needs, standards adherence, and carer development. They undertake essential tasks like post-approval requirements, pre-placement assessments, continuous monitoring,

participation in reviews/meetings, addressing concerns, and ensuring compliance. In cases of allegations against carers, SSWs provide support, share information about available support, and inform carers of the process and their rights. They consult with foster carers in formulating risk assessments and track engagement progress for social integration. SSWs also ensure children's views are represented in care plans and review meetings and facilitate access to independent advocacy.

Indigo Foster Carers

Indigo Foster Carers provide quality care, fully aligned with core values, ethical standards, and our Statement of Purpose. FCs support young people's rights and represent their best interests, maintain appropriate confidentiality and transparency, and commit to ongoing training. They provide quality care catered to children's unique needs and identities, promote diversity, equality, and accessibility within the foster home, and work closely with the agency to access resources. FCs maintain a clear understanding of the agency's guiding values and quality commitments, provide inputs on strengthening support resources and addressing placement risks, and contribute to the agency's continuous improvement efforts. They actively seek and listen to children's views, create a safe environment for expression, adapt communication methods, and report any concerns raised by children. They also play a crucial role in supporting children's educational attainment and sense of identity and belonging.

Young People

Children and Young People are central to the mission and at the heart of everything we do at Indigo Fostering. Their welfare is the paramount consideration in all decisions and operations, designed around providing comprehensive, compliance, and effective care. Policies are built on the principle of a child-centred approach, where their views, wishes, feelings, and overall experiences are actively sought, listened to, and given due consideration in all aspects of service provision. We employ a robust safeguarding framework, with safeguarding being everyone's responsibility, ensuring our commitment to children and young people includes respecting their unique needs and identities.

Fostering Panel Advisor

The PA provides expert advisory on case analysis, legislation, and policies to the Fostering Panel. They contribute to training and quality standards maintenance and ensures documentation completeness and effective information sharing. Their measures include providing advisory inputs and participating in case reviews, giving guidance on regulations and alignment and training development, and assisting audits and advising on panel composition. The PA also assesses the panel's functioning, reporting quality standards, addressing concerns, and providing key information at quarterly Panel Oversight meetings, facilitating an evaluation of Indigo Fostering's responsiveness to placement demands.

Fostering Panel Chair

Leads the Fostering Panel meetings. The PC provides leadership, facilitation, quality assurance, and drives balanced decision-making within the panel. They enhance policy awareness, maintain transparency, guide deliberations while reinforcing child-centricity, contribute to capability building, coordinate communications, and ensure meetings are effective and uphold high practice standards. The Chair also arranges Panel meetings with the Registered Manager and approves the Panel minutes.

Fostering Panel Vice Chair

The Fostering Panel Vice Chair is appointed to support panel leadership, working alongside the PC to ensure the panel's critical function of promoting safe, secure, and stable placements and maintaining high standards of care. The VC's presence is necessary for the Fostering Panel to achieve quorum, allowing them to make essential recommendations regarding the suitability of applicants and foster carers and other matters. The VC is expected to maintain impartiality, confidentiality, and adhere to guidelines for reviewing cases and participating in discussions and contributing to the overall quality assurance process of the Fostering Panel.

Fostering Panel Members

Panel Members independently contribute to the quality assurance of foster carer approvals and reviews. They ensure impartiality in reviews and approvals, bringing collectively diverse expertise to contribute to informed suitability analysis and recommendations. PMs must attend scheduled meetings, participate in discussions, disclose conflicts of interest to preserve neutrality, review cases per established operating guidelines, and maintain confidentiality standards regarding case information.

7. Services Provided by the Fostering Service

The services provided by Indigo Fostering are based on the principles laid out in the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcomes Framework, the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011.

Indigo Fostering is committed to:

- Putting the child first
- Delivering high quality services
- Valuing diversity and promoting equality
- Working collaboratively and in partnership
- Valuing, developing, and supporting children and young people, foster carers and staff
- Making the best use of its resources

We aim to provide a range of diverse types of fostering arrangements to ensure that individual needs and circumstances of referred looked after children are best matched with the knowledge, skills, and experience of the foster carers. We also work with the placing authority right from the outset to ensure that there is an effective contribution by the foster carers and the Agency towards assessment and care planning process for the children and young people placed with us.

Fostering Arrangements Provided by Indigo

We provide the following types of Fostering Arrangements:

Emergency Care

We undertake fostering arrangements for children and young people who require care in emergency, particularly during out of working hours, in lockstep with the local authority to ensure effective plans are in place for children and young people supported by our foster carers.

Short-Term Care

We provide for short-term care that could be for a few days, weeks, months or longer, whilst assessment is undertaken, and longer-term care plans are developed for children and young people.

Long-term Care

We provide appropriate care for children and young people, where adoption or special guardianship is not an option, and they require long-term care through to adulthood.

Permanent Care

We are committed to principles and process of permanency planning for children looked after and the need to achieve legal permanency within the child's timescales. Where appropriate, in accordance with permanency plans and in the best interests of children, Indigo Fostering encourages and supports its foster carers to provide legal permanency to children in their care. Equally, whenever required, Indigo Fostering and its foster carers work in partnership with relevant professionals to support the children to move to permanent fostering arrangements.

Siblings

Indigo Fostering provides foster carers who are suitably skilled and experienced to take sibling groups. Foster carers are experienced in supporting siblings and with meeting their specific needs. Additionally, where siblings are placed separately, we encourage and facilitate frequent contact for them to develop and maintain positive relationships with each other.

Children with Additional and Complex Needs

We provide appropriate care for children and young people with additional needs arising out of specific physical/learning disabilities and/or emotional/behavioural difficulties. We recognise that foster carers providing homes for children and young people with complex needs require additional support and training. Wherever possible, the agency seeks to ensure that foster carers complete relevant specialised training prior to a placement commencing. We also aim to work actively with specialist services and access optimum support and provision to ensure that children's and young people's needs are effectively met including stability of foster placements. Where necessary and in agreement with the placing authority, Indigo Fostering commissions specialist assessment and therapeutic intervention from a pool of qualified and experienced professionals for children and young people. We also commission the provision of

ongoing therapeutic support and training for the foster carers from experienced professionals. Our policy is to ensure that our foster carers are reviewed in terms of their skills and experience prior to any such arrangements going ahead as part of a proactive care and robust matching approach.

Respite Care

Respite care is an important part of our service provision and is available on a regular and planned basis. Indigo Fostering provides foster carers who look after children and young people for periods of respite from their main place of care, such as children and young people in residential placements or other foster placements. The agency maintains a support network similar to that of an extended family, providing children and their carers with support, including sleepovers where appropriate and shared social activities. Our carers are encouraged to get to know each other and the children in foster placements, to facilitate minimally disruptive respite provision.

Parent and Child Provision

Indigo Fostering is currently developing our parent and child service provision aiming for launch in the near future.

Staying Put Arrangements

We embrace our responsibility to support and facilitate “Staying Put” arrangements, as outlined in the Children and Families Act 2014, the Children Act 1989 (as amended), the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, and the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011. We encourage and support foster carers in continuing to support and accommodate young people as part of a “Staying Put” arrangement after they turn 18, recognising the significant value and benefit this brings to their life outcomes and wellbeing.

We assist both carers and young people to ensure that relevant conversations and planning occur as part of the young person’s Pathway Plan. We advocate for these arrangements and represent the voices of foster carers and young people to relevant local authority teams and personnel, ensuring timely arrangements for a smooth transition for both carers and young people. We are committed to working in partnership with the placing authority and relevant professionals for implementation of agreed plans for children and young people.

8. Recruitment, Assessment and Approval of Foster Carers

Our recruitment strategy ensures we reach a diverse population of adults and families and provide them with the information about fostering and helps them express their interest accordingly. We provide all prospective foster carers comprehensive resources to explore and understand the fostering role for informed decisions on undertaking the very important role of a foster carer. Once we receive an application, applicants are visited as part of an “Initial Visit” to explore their accommodation, suitability and motivation, and to present essential documents for “Stage One” checks. If appropriate, they are then allocated for a full and competency-based assessment as per CoramBAAF requirements. Applicants are also invited to attend pre-approval training session “The Skills to Foster” according to TSDS for Foster Care.

A completed assessment report along with the satisfactory statutory checks are then presented to the agency's independent fostering panel for further recommendations with the final decision to be made by the Agency Decision Maker (ADM), followed by writing to the foster carers specifying the terms of approval and entering into Foster Care Agreement as outlined in Schedule 5 of the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011.

The fostering panel considers approval of new foster carers, review of existing foster carers and recommendations that foster carer approvals should be terminated where there have been concerns about the standards of care or substantiated allegations. The fostering panel is presented with all reviews following an allegation against foster carers irrespective of the outcomes. Foster carer applicants are expected to attend panel meetings.

The fostering panel recommends the terms of approval of the foster carers, for approval by the ADM:

- Type of fostering
- Age of child(ren)
- Gender of child(ren)
- Number of children, to a maximum of 3

The Children Act 1989 sets the 'usual fostering limit' to three children unless the children are siblings to each other; any variation of approval can only be for 6 days. Please refer our policies in relation to foster carer recruitment, assessment and approval for further detail.

9. Training of Foster Carers

All foster carers of Indigo Fostering have access to regular training sessions and support groups arranged by the Agency. We expect all foster carers to attend training sessions and support groups on a regular basis.

Our Learning Streams

Pre-Panel: Courses to be undertaken by applicants during their fostering assessment

Therapeutic Skills For Fostering – A comprehensive preparatory course which establishes the fostering mindset essential to pre-approval knowledge and our approach, which includes:

Therapeutic Foundations

- The therapeutic fostering mindset
- Understanding developmental trauma and attachment
- Language That Cares: principles and practice
- Trauma-informed responses in daily life
- Child protection and safeguarding

- Safer Caring
- De-escalation techniques through connection

The Child's Journey

- Life Story work and identity
- Managing challenging behaviour
- Supporting education and health needs
- Contact arrangements and birth family relationships
- Transitions and permanence
- Introduction to preparing for adulthood and independence
- Child development and relationships

Professional Practice

- Fostering Regulations and legal framework
- Working within the professional network
- GDPR and record keeping
- Report writing and daily recording practices
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Prevent Duty and contextual safeguarding
- Health and safety requirements
- Risk management and safer caring plans
- Impact on fostering families and self-care

Statutory Recurring Training: Direct courses which are required to be refreshed in timescales

Child Protection and Safeguarding (valid 2 years)

Paediatric First Aid (valid 3 years)

Behaviour Management (valid 3 years)

Post-Approval Mandatory Training: Direct courses which are required to be undertaken by all Indigo foster carers

TSDS Portfolio Completion

Impact of Secure Base

Promoting Education & Health of Looked After Children

Advanced De-escalation and Behaviour Management

Managing Contact Arrangements

Understanding Allegations and Complaints Procedures

Recording and Contributing to Child Reviews

Annual Review Preparation

Specialist Training: Courses to complement our statutory and mandatory training programmes

Therapeutic and Behavioural

Therapeutic Crisis Intervention

Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention

Managing Sexualised Behaviour

Specific Populations

Working with Unaccompanied Minors

Disability and Complex Health Needs

Supporting LGBTQIA+ Young People

Advanced Safeguarding

County Lines and Criminal Exploitation

Advanced Online Safety

FGM and Honour-Based Violence

Preparation for Independence

Preparing Young People for Independence

Staying Put Arrangements

Specialist training courses are tailored to the specific identified needs of children, carers' professional development, or address a broader learning and development need when it arises.

The fostering service has a comprehensive pre-approval and post-approval training programs which are reviewed and updated annually. All foster carers receive details of the training programs and are encouraged to attend courses to meet their development needs as foster carers.

We facilitate the TSDS for Foster Care. Foster carers need to have completed this in their first year of fostering, along with a First Aid course in which is updated every three years. All foster carers are allocated a Continuous Professional Development Plan which is reviewed annually at their review. As part of the continuous professional development, all foster carers, after successful completion of the TSDS for Foster Care, will be encouraged and supported to attend specialist training sessions as well as external

training courses such as NVQ and other qualifications in the social care sector to support their future career objectives in fostering.

10. Support and Supervision of Foster Carers

We recognise that the key to excellent care and successful outcomes for children and young people lies in the quality and level of support provided to the foster carers. Once approved, foster carers are allocated to a Supervising Social Worker for ongoing support and reflective supervision. Foster carers are visited by their Supervising Social Workers on a regular basis, whether they are caring for young people or not. This includes at least one unannounced visit every 12 months. Supervising Social Workers draw up a Continuous Professional Development Plan with applicants as part of the assessment and support for foster carers in the completion of their portfolio to meet the TSDS for Foster Care standards. This CPDP will be a dynamic “live document” which is responsive to their needs and the needs of children placed in their care.

Foster carers are expected to maintain meaningful daily logs and recordings relating to the children and young people’s day to day experiences. This information will be relayed to the agency via our secure digital systems and are actively monitored and reviewed. The allocated Supervising Social Worker is available for help and advice at other times and where not available, all foster carers have access to 24/7 support provided by the agency. It is particularly designed to ensure that the foster carers have access to advice, guidance, information, and support from a Duty Social Worker during out of working hours e.g., evenings and weekends, including Bank Holidays.

We organise foster care support groups and all foster carers are encouraged to attend. Foster carers are required to keep a daily log of activities and significant events in relation to the children and young people placed with them.

All foster carers caring for children receive fostering allowances, the details of which are available on request. Our service is responsible for ensuring that foster carers receive prompt payment. Payments are reviewed regularly, and the comprehensive payments document sent to all foster carers.

In the event that a foster carer is the subject of a child protection allegation against them, they are advised of their right to access independent advice e.g. from organisations such as Foster Talk or The Fostering Network and the agency provides support, ensuring that such support does not in any way influence or impact any investigation.

11. Reviewing of Foster Carers

All foster carers are subject to an Annual Review as per the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 Regulation 28, and Disclosure and Barring Service and medical checks must be completed as part of that review every 3 years and health and safety checks are reviewed annually. The process of Review examines foster carers’ abilities to meet the needs of the children and young people in their care; their strengths and areas for learning; their training and development needs; and makes appropriate recommendations in relation to their on-going approval status as foster carers.

As part of the Review process, in addition to the reports from the Supervising Social Worker and foster carers, Indigo invites views from the children and young people looked after by foster carers, their social workers and foster carers' own children to ensure the analysis considers a holistic view of foster carers' skills and abilities to care for children and young people and makes appropriate recommendations.

Foster carers are required to attend the fostering panel for their first review. The first annual review is presented to the fostering panel for consideration. A foster carer's review following a change of circumstances will be referred to the Fostering Panel, as will also any request to change their approval status.

In the event of a child protection investigation due to an allegation against a foster carer, the foster care review will take place immediately after the conclusion of the investigation and be presented to the fostering panel.

12. Voice of Young People

The views of children and young people receiving a service are sought on a regular basis, through various means of communication – seeking proactive feedback regularly (children/young people's surveys), informal away days, outcomes of complaints, lessons from disruptions, the fostering service annual review, home visits and children's views expressed in statutory and foster carer reviews. We also undertake a 'Children and Young People's Panel' to actively obtain views and opinions, which could include feedback on how the agency operates and/or what children want and need, providing a broad spectrum of opportunities for meaningful engagement and consultation.

Written feedback is requested from the child's social worker as part of the foster carer's review and at the end of each fostering arrangement. The fostering service aims to seek views from a range of service users, including representatives from other agencies, carers and from young people.

13. Records Management

As an agency we process information in the conduct of our operations and this relates to applications, staffing matters, foster carers and children/young people being cared for. The fostering service has a responsibility to maintain accurate records on all foster carers and ensure that information is shared with the foster carer wherever possible. We are committed to full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, ensuring personal data is obtained, processed, and stored securely while respecting the rights of foster carers and foster children.

Our records management practices include maintaining various types of records such as application forms, assessment reports, training records, and placement details. These records are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure accuracy and relevance. All records are protected through a combination of encryption, secure passwords for digital files, and locked cabinets for any physical documents, with access limited to authorised personnel only.

Records are retained for a statutory period of 10 years following closure (as per the table below).

(The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, s. 32.) After this retention period, physical documents are securely shredded and electronic files are securely deleted to maintain confidentiality. Foster carers have the right to access their records by completing a request form, to which the agency will respond within the statutory timeframe, though some information may be redacted for privacy reasons.

In the event of data breaches or unauthorised access, incidents are reported to the Data Protection Officer (DPO), the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the individual(s) concerned, and other relevant bodies. Prompt corrective actions are taken to address breaches and prevent future occurrences. To reinforce this, all staff members undergo training on records management policies and procedures during induction and as part of their ongoing professional development, emphasising their responsibility to protect access to restricted and confidential information.

The DPO also conducts regular audits to ensure compliance with records management policies, and our practices are reviewed and updated based on audit findings and legislative changes.

Data Retention Schedule	Regulation	Timeframe
Case records for approved foster carers (including relatives, friends or connected persons granted temporary approval under regulation 24 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010), and any information relating to them contained in the register of foster carers.	The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, s. 32.	At least 10 years from the date on which their approval is terminated.
Case records for people who are not approved as a foster parent, or who withdraws their application prior to approval.		At least 3 years from the refusal or withdrawal.

The agency's Quality & Compliance Manager (QCM) is the Designated Data Protection Officer (DPO).

14. Matching and Placement

Indigo Fostering provides foster carers who can meet each child's specific needs. To achieve this, we:

Implement a comprehensive matching process, considering:

- Carers' skills and experience
- Specific requirements from the child's referral
- Potential vulnerabilities and unknowns
- Care plan information

Involve all relevant parties in the matching process:

- Professionals (Supervising Social Worker, Children's Social Worker, current/former foster carers)
- Foster carers and their families
- Children and young people in the household

Address any emerging gaps in foster carers' abilities through:

- Regular supervision
- Targeted training
- Reflective practice sessions
- Provision of additional resources

Our approach ensures a thorough, collaborative matching process that adapts to the evolving needs of both children and foster carers. We prioritise early identification and resolution of potential challenges, fostering open communication among all stakeholders to create the best possible care environment. The “relevant professionals” include:

- Commissioning Team or the child's/young person's social worker
- Supervising Social Worker for the foster carer
- The foster carer
- The Registered Manager

The extent to which professionals are involved is determined by the specific circumstances of the case including the urgency of the need for the fostering arrangement.

15. Safeguarding

At Indigo Fostering, we prioritise the safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare through a dynamic, responsive approach that aligns with relevant regulations. Our Registered Manager seeks to ensure the implementation of the following proactive measures:

Dynamic Care Planning and Matching

- Develop and continually update Safer Care Plans that evolve with each child's needs
- Provide real-time guidance to foster carers, adapting to emerging situations
- Undertake a thorough matching process, whilst promptly responding to changes in circumstances
- Maintain up-to-date information to foster carers, ensuring they're always prepared

Proactive Placement Stability

- Support the continuity of fostering arrangements through real-time support and resources for foster carers
- Proactively seek to provide on-demand relevant training and immediate access to support networks

- Conduct ongoing, responsive monitoring and risk assessments to identify potential, or emerging issues whilst also seeking to address any ongoing issues
- Foster a collaborative environment for effective problem-solving

Adaptive Safeguarding Measures

- We promote dynamic Safer Care practices that adjust to each household's evolving needs via:
 - Regularly updated Safer Caring Family Plans
 - Ongoing child-specific safer caring assessments
 - Real-time risk assessments for all children
 - Regularly revised Child Protection Policy
- We provide flexible, needs-based training for foster carers and staff, including:
 - Continuous Child Protection and Safeguarding updates
 - Adaptive techniques for managing challenging behaviour
 - Responsive supervision through social workers, adjusting support as needed
 - Actively involving children in the ongoing development of Safer Caring Plans
 - Proactively addressing emerging issues such as cyberbullying, online exploitation, and mental health concerns
 - Unannounced visits, at least once annually, providing immediate feedback
 - Maintaining a proactive vetting system that continuously monitors carer suitability

We are committed to creating an environment where all children, young people, staff and foster carers feel safe. Through this approach, we seek to ensure that our safeguarding measures are responsive and best support safety, stability and positive outcomes for children and fostering families.

16. Complaints and Child Protection Allegations

As a childcare organisation we aim to ensure all our children can expect safe and effective care that helps achieve the best possible outcomes. On receipt of any allegation, Indigo Fostering instructs the child's placing local authority; liaises and consults with the relevant area Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO); and notifies Ofsted. In addition, all new staff members joining the agency are subject to robust safer recruitment procedures.

We provide training and expertise in safeguarding to ensure we are all aware of the risks to children and families we look after. All families participate in writing a Safer Caring Family Plan, which is updated when there are any significant events or changes in the family and reviewed on an annual basis. Each child who requires a family placement has a risk assessment, which is regularly reviewed and updated, with clear actions on how to minimise any risks posed by a child or to them. Health and Safety checks on the home are completed at least annually, and we undertake regular unannounced visits to carers.

We employ procedures for considering complaints received from looked after children, foster carers and any other concerned parties. Our policies and procedures and the Foster Carer's Handbook outline the processes followed in the event of concerns, complaints and allegations, and the procedures followed by the agency to effectively respond to them. Children's & Young Person's Guides also contain information on how to raise concerns and complaints.

Excluding child protection concerns, at first instance, all efforts will be made to resolve concerns and complaints through an informal discussion with the involved parties. In case a resolution is not achieved, the designated professional from the agency will undertake an investigation and present the assessment to senior management, or an otherwise independent party, for a decision.

We are committed to ensuring that looked after children and foster carers receive excellent service from the agency and will continuously improve its standards through learning from feedback provided by service users.

Any enquiries may be sent to hello@indigofostering.com.

Any complaints can also be made directly to Ofsted:

By Phone 0300 123 1231
By Email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
By Webform: <https://contact.ofsted.gov.uk/contact-form>

17. Contact Information:

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate
4 Store Street Manchester
M1 2WD
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Phone: 03001231231

Children's Commissioner for England

Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Phone: 020 7783 8330 / 0800 528 0731
Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Appendix

Salutogenesis Research Base:

Strengths-Based Practice:

Rapp, C. A., & Goscha, R. J. (2011). The strengths model: Case management with people with psychiatric disabilities. Oxford University Press.

Saleebey, D. (2006). The strengths perspective in social work practice: Extensions and cautions. *Social Work*, 51(3), 296-305.

Resilience Building:

Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American Psychologist*, 56(3), 227-238.

Werner, E. E., & Smith, R. S. (2001). *Journeys from childhood to midlife: Risk, resilience, and recovery*. Cornell University Press.

Trauma-Informed Care:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). (2014). *SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach*.

Anda, R. F., Felitti, V. J., Bremner, J. D., Walker, J. D., Whitfield, C., Perry, B. D., ... & Giles, W. H. (2006). The enduring effects of abuse and related adverse experiences in childhood: A convergence of evidence from neurobiology and epidemiology. *European Archives of Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience*, 256(3), 174-186.

Empowerment and Participation:

Zimmerman, M. A. (1995). Psychological empowerment: Issues and illustrations. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23(5), 581-599.

Israel, B. A., Schulz, A. J., Parker, E. A., & Becker, A. B. (1998). Review of community-based research: Assessing partnership approaches to improve public health. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 19(1), 173-202 *Cultural Competence*:

Betancourt, J. R., Green, A. R., Carrillo, J. E., & Ananeh-Firempong, O. (2003). Defining cultural competence: A practical framework for addressing racial/ethnic disparities in health and health care. *Public Health Reports*, 118(4), 293-302.

Sue, D. W., Arredondo, P., & McDavis, R. J. (1992). Multicultural counseling competencies and standards: A call to the profession. *Journal of Counselling & Development*, 70(4), 477-486.