

# Statement of Purpose (MIDLANDS)

July 2022



**INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE**



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# Introduction

**This Statement of Purpose has been developed in accordance with appropriate legislation and guidance including:**

- The Children Act 1989;
- The Care Standards Act 2000;
- The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011;
- The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services, 2011 (updated 2013)
- Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards 2011
- The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020

*Please see Page 9 on the agency's response and management relating to COVID-19. This remains under review as Government Advice is updated and revised.*

**The Statement of Purpose, produced in accordance with Fostering Services Regulation 3, includes:**

- Statement of the Aims and Objectives of Sunbeam's fostering service;
- Statement as to the services and facilities provided by the fostering service.

**A copy of this Statement of Purpose is available on our website and copies will be made available, upon request, to:**

- Any person working for Sunbeam Fostering Agency
- Any foster carer or prospective foster carer
- Any child or young person placed with Sunbeam
- The parent/person with parental responsibility for a child or young person placed with Sunbeam.

**This Statement of Purpose is regularly reviewed by Sunbeam Fostering Agency's Management Team whenever there is a change, and at least annually.**



# About Sunbeam

Sunbeam is an established Independent Fostering Agency that provides a range of fostering placements to meet the needs of looked after children. The organisation is managed by a team of experienced, qualified professionals who provide an innovative and needs led service to children and young people in foster care.

Sunbeam was set up largely in response to a perceived need for a prompt co-ordinated service, which provides packages of care to meet the needs of individual children and young people, especially children from ethnic minorities.

We currently provide services to over 50 Local Authorities in London, South East, South Central and Midlands regions and are geographically expanding into further areas to recruit more foster carers for the benefit of children in care.

Sunbeam is registered with Ofsted as follows:

- **Midlands branch registration: Coventry, Warwickshire**
- **Head Office: Langley, Slough**

We are accredited by the relevant professional bodies such as East and West Midlands Childcare Consortia, London Care Placements, Commissioning Alliance, South Central Framework Authorities and Eastern Regions Consortium. Sunbeam is a member of the Fostering Network. All our foster carers are individual members of Foster Talk.

Sunbeam is a private limited company registered under the Companies Act 1989 (Company Registration No – 3948662).

The company was founded by three social workers and these founders remain at the heart of the business.



# About Sunbeam

## Equality and Diversity

Sunbeam Fostering Agency is committed to the principles of equal opportunity in all areas of its service. All staff and foster carers are inducted and receive appropriate training and support in anti-discriminatory practice.

As a service Sunbeam, Fostering Agency embrace diversity and is committed to fulfilling its role without discrimination in terms of colour, race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, HIV status, disability, age, religious belief or any other status.

All staff and foster carers of the Agency will seek to eliminate discrimination and promote equality and good relations by recognising and valuing diversity.

As an equal opportunities employer Sunbeam Fostering aims to:

- Promote equality of opportunity, good relations between people of different races and groups and contribute in any way it can to community cohesion
- Recognise and value the differences between individuals
- Wherever possible make a contribution to the community generally as well as to children and young people in public care collectively and individually

Our Equalities policy aims to have the following desirable outcomes:

- Provision of services that are accessible and fit for purpose, especially services provided for looked after children and young people
- Provision of information about the Agency's services which is accessible and easy to comprehend
- To ensure that no child/young person, foster carer or staff member receives less favourable treatment, and that, wherever possible, they are given the help they need to attain their full potential

## Participation and consultation

We value feedback from children, young people and foster carers.

Supervising social workers are expected to regularly speak to children and young people during visits to obtain their views about their care. We also seek regular feedback from children and young people to shape and develop our service through questionnaires and support groups.

Foster carers are also consulted with during visits, support groups and annual questionnaires.



# Aims & objectives and principles of care

Sunbeam's focus is always the child or young person in our care. We aim to provide children and young people with a positive, safe nurturing experience of substitute care within a family environment.

In agreement with the Children Act 1989, we subscribe to the view that a child is best brought up in their own home with both parents playing a full part in their upbringing. We recognise that this is not always possible. Whenever it is considered to be in the child's best interests, however, Sunbeam Fostering Agency will work positively with the placing Local Authority checks to return the child to her/his parents or extended family.

Sunbeam's key objective is to develop services in order that children and young people can develop and grow within the five key outcomes areas of "Every Child Matters":

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic wellbeing

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

By the same token we at Sunbeam, regard foster carers as the bedrock of our service. A core purpose of Sunbeam is to ensure that a wide range of placements is available for children/young persons. In order to protect the choice of placements for children, we believe it is necessary to offer foster carers a robust package of professional support and financial remuneration.

Our overall aim is to recruit professional, resilient carers who can provide foster children with a positive and nurturing experience of substitute family care.

We are a progressive organisation and with this aim in mind all staff and others working on behalf of the Agency are required to be conversant with the national minimum standards for foster care as well as the code of practice on the recruitment, assessment, approval, training, management and support of foster carers.

We are single minded about identifying and recruiting foster carers who can comply with the National Minimum Standards and work towards meeting the Training, Support and Development standards (TSDS) for foster carers.

# Standards of care required of Sunbeam Fostering Agency

Sunbeam is a forward thinking, progressive organisation and we are keen to implement and exceed the national minimum standards for foster care. All relevant policies and procedures are written and subsequently monitored and reviewed with reference to the framework of expectations laid down by government in regulations, guidance and standards.

We have produced a job description for a foster carer, which includes the competencies required for fostering. This has been taken directly from the Fostering Network Code of Good Practice on the recruitment, assessment, approval, training, management and support of foster carers. As such, it is one yardstick against which Sunbeam Fostering Agency can evaluate its practice.

Sunbeam Fostering Agency also sets out to be compliant with fostering regulations and to meet and exceed the Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards 2011.

Sunbeam's achievements and ability to meet all the minimum standards and to develop its services further is reviewed regularly by Ofsted and commissioning Local Authorities. This is evidenced in our inspection reports, which can be downloaded from the Ofsted website.

Our foster carers can expect a minimum of four weekly supervisory visits along with a minimum of two unannounced visits a year. Supervising Social workers will keep in contact with their carers weekly and visit more frequently if required. Regular progress reports will be sent to the placing authority sharing the progress of the child/young person. All carers have to meet the competencies set out by the TSDS within twelve months of approval and will be supported by their supervising social worker and a comprehensive training programme to achieve this.



# Standards of care required of Sunbeam Fostering Agency

Carers will undertake a minimum of a yearly review to assess their competencies and commitment to the fostering task. Carers have the opportunity to provide feedback on the services we offer to them. At this point we also seek feedback from the children in foster care and also their social worker. The outcome of the review is to agree continued approval and terms of this.

The supervisory role is primarily for the foster carer; however, supervising social workers will also spend time with the looked after child listening to them and ensuring they understand any decisions that may have been made for them. Such relationship building, we find is essential to maintaining placements and enhances the carers ability to provide a good standard of parenting.

## Support to Foster carers

### Supervisory home visits

Foster carers receive regular supervision from their Supervising social worker. Supervision provides a space for carers to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children /young people in placement. The training and development of foster carers is also monitored.

### Unannounced visits

Foster carers will receive two unannounced home visits a year. This is to complete checks to ensure a high level of care is being provided by the carers.

### Transport

Day to day transport for looked after children is managed by foster carers for instance for school runs and contact with birth parents. We will try and support if foster carers are unable to do at times subject to resources.

### Appreciation

Activity days are organised for our fostering families such as trips to the seaside and fun days. We also hold foster carers awards ceremony annually where foster carers are appreciated and recognized for their hard work. The achievements of children and young people are also celebrated on a regular basis where certificates and vouchers are sent.





# Standards of care required of Sunbeam Fostering Agency

## **Foster carer reviews**

All foster carers have an annual review to reflect on the previous year. New goals are then set for the year ahead. Training needs are also discussed and any other recommendations are made. This process looks at feedback from carers and birth children, involved professionals and children/young people.

## **Record Keeping**

Foster carers are expected to record regular logs for the children in their care. These logs are then reviewed by the supervising social worker. Recording is an essential part of the foster carer's role which help monitor the child's journey.

## **Policies and Procedures**

All our foster carers have access to the foster carer's handbook which has the key policies and procedures along with useful guidance. We also have a wide range of policies and procedures which foster carers have access to.



# COVID-19 update and your support

## COVID-19 update and your support

Sunbeam Fostering continues to follow Government Advice relating to COVID-19 and ensuring that the best support and practice is provided.

Our key priority is to ensure the well-being and safety for all children, young persons, foster carers, staff and other third parties the agency works with.

Case levels across the agency are far lower and the impact of COVID-19 has significantly reduced. The agency is however remaining structured and focused on its management and support.

Ongoing measures and support include (but are not limited to):

- Testing is being undertaken where needed for any expected cases and periods of isolation for any positive cases are being followed
- Recording of all cases for management, safety and internal records
- Continued promotion of the booster take ups and vaccinations (if not already received)
- The agency has returned to face-to-face events, training and panel but is balancing these alongside continued virtual meet ups where these are best and preferred
- Checking for any COVID risks or cases before home visits and asking people to check before attending face to face meet ups or events
- Continued sharing of information and best advice with everyone

If foster carers, children or other parties have any questions or concerns, please do contact us.

## COVID 19 GUIDANCE

# Services provided by Sunbeam Fostering Agency

## **Fostering Services**

We pride ourselves on finding the closest possible match when children need to be placed in foster care and identifying any additional training, support or resource required. We work in partnership with Local Authorities and all other agencies to achieve the best possible outcome for all children who need to be looked after.

## **Sunbeam offers the following types of placements:**

### **Emergency**

Sunbeam provides a 24 hours a day emergency service. Many carers choose to specialise in short term work and are able to accept unplanned, emergency placements. An emergency placement ideally should not exceed a few days and it would be anticipated that the child or young person should be moved to a more suitable placement within a week in a planned way.

### **Short term placements**

Provision of short term care that could be for a few days, weeks or months, whilst plans are made for the child's future by the Local Authority. Foster carers work with children/young people and their families as appropriate to fulfill the objectives of the permanence plan, whether this be for reunification or another type of placement.

### **Respite placements**

Respite placements are provided to give parents a break, or offer additional support if they do not have their own support network. In addition, respite is also offered to our own foster carers and is available in order to support placement demands and needs.

### **Long term placements**

These placements are where adoption is not an option, and the foster carer will care for a child/young person up to and into adult independence.

### **Asylum seeker placements**

Sunbeam has a pool of very experienced foster carers from diverse backgrounds who are willing to advocate, access services and work within the child's care plan in supporting and caring for unaccompanied children and young people from outside the UK.

### **Disability placements**

Sunbeam has foster carers who have experience and skills in caring for children and young people who are disabled and/or require specialist medical care.

# Services provided by Sunbeam Fostering Service

## Core, Enhanced & Complex Placements

Local Authorities define children and young people's needs and behaviour as either core, enhanced or complex. Where a placement is determined as core the foster carer can expect the common behaviours and needs of those children and young people who have been removed from their birth family sadly because of the loss, bereavement and due to past adverse childhood experiences.

For enhanced placements, this would be where the child or young person is suffering from trauma induced behaviours to a greater level. After recognising the growing need for therapeutic foster placements we have purchased the licence for the Attachment, Self-Regulation and Competency (ARC) treatment framework to caring for traumatised children and young people developed by Dr Blaustein and Kristine Kinniburgh of the Trauma Centre, Massachusetts, USA. The framework provides overarching principles to assist carers with therapeutic parenting and supervision in order to fully support the child's and young person's emotional well-being. Such placements can vary in time from emergency, short term and long term however we are often looking for carers who will provide a permanent foster placement.

Complex placements would also include those young people who are stepping down from a residential placement. Please see our Enhanced Fostering booklet with ARC© for further information. Other complex placements may involve caring for a child or young person with significant health needs or disabilities such as autism, profound global developmental delay and palliative care. ARC training for foster carers has been successfully delivered for Sunbeam Midlands and is being supported by processing groups.

## Respite placements

We provide respite for our foster carers who care for children and young people with enhanced and complex needs. These placements are arranged to provide enjoyable activities for the child or young person and allows for the foster carers to have some time for themselves.

## Sibling placements

Sibling placements are for brother and sisters who are placed together into a foster care household. Sunbeam believes in keeping siblings together within a family environment, unless it is deemed inappropriate by the placing Authority.

## Parent and child placements

Placements are available for mothers and/or fathers and their child, where foster carers can provide support and guidance to parent(s) and help them develop parenting skills. If requested, and by arrangement with the placing Local Authority, a formal assessment of parenting ability can be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced Sunbeam staff in conjunction with the Sunbeam foster carer. Comprehensive written assessment reports, for use in child protection conferences, planning meetings, statutory reviews or court proceedings, can be prepared.

# Management structure

**Company Director (Responsible Individual)**

**Karamjit Dhull**, MA (Social Work),  
Practice Teaching Award in Social Work,  
LLB, BSc (Hons), Dip in Training &  
Development

**Company Director**

**Muhammad Haneef**, MA (Social Work),  
PG Dip in Child Forensic Studies:  
Psychology & Law, BA (Hons)

**Company Director**

**Naseem Ahmed**, MA (Social Work) and  
BSc (Hons)

**Director of Quality Assurance**

**Helen Daly**, Dipsw, MA in social work,  
NVQ Assessor, Diploma Level 5  
Leadership and Management Diploma in  
Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (Merit),  
Diploma in Systemic Practice (Distinction)

**Head of Service**

**Catherine Moore**, BA in SW, NVQ Level  
5 in Leadership and Management,  
Masters in Advanced Child Protection.

**Interim Registered Manager**

**Jacqueline Pape**, Diploma in Social Work,  
PQ Child Care Award, PQ Award in Social  
Work, PG Diploma in Leadership &  
Management

**Head of Service Development**

**Alison Lamb**, Diploma in Social Work,  
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Social  
Studies, NVQ in Management, MSc in  
Advancing Practice in Family Violence

**Business Development Manager**

**Nicola Westley**, BA Hons in Business  
Management, NVQ level 3 in Business  
Administration

## LEADERSHIP





# Background on Management

## Background on **Company Director**

Responsible Individual - **Karamjit Dhull (Board member)**

Karamjit has 25 years of social work experience and acts as Responsible Individual for Sunbeam London and Midlands. Karamjit joined Sunbeam in 2001 and oversees our business performance and HR issue. Karamjit is also a member of board.

## Background on **Company Director**

Company Director - **Muhammad Haneef (Board member)**

Muhammad has 27 years of social work experiences both within statutory setting and private sector as a social worker, senior social worker and manager. Muhammad is one of the founding member and set up the Agency in March 2000. Muhammad oversees finance and manages our key relationships with our bank, suppliers and other external parties.

## Background on **Company Director**

Company Director - **Naseem Ahmed (Board member)**

Naseem has 27 years of social work experience both within the statutory and private sector both as a practitioner and in management, quality assurance and service development. Naseem provides valuable input and advice on our operation and is one of the founding directors and set up the Agency in March 2000.

## Background on **Director of Quality Assurance**

Director of Quality Assurance - **Helen Daly**

Helen Daly first qualified as a social worker in 2000, she started her career with Southampton Child Protection Enquiry Team, and thereafter worked for Barnet referral and assessment team. Helen has had eight years' experience in front line social work where she extensively developed her practice in child development and is passionate about the rights of children and young people and is a strong force of ensuring this happens within the safeguarding children and young people prior to starting her career in fostering. Helen has since undertaken five years as a team manager for Sunbeam Fostering prior to setting up Sunbeam Pride Fostering Service as the Registered Manager. Helen is now the Head of Fostering working with all three regions Registered Manager and is also taking a lead role in our Enhanced Fostering Service. Helen has level 5 Management & Leadership Diploma, Cognitive and Behaviour Therapy Diploma and Systemic Practitioners Diploma.

## Background on **Head Of Service**

Head of Service - **Catherine Moore**

Catherine obtained a Bachelor in Social Work from Australia in 1993. Catherine has worked in rural Victoria initially then in Melbourne in Non - Government Organisations including : Community Health, Domestic Violence, Strengthening Families and Family Counselling. Catherine has worked in England in Child Protection and from 2001 within the fostering sector. Catherine has an NVQ 5 in Management and in 2019 obtained Master's in Advanced Child Protection from the University of Kent. Catherine has been a Registered Manager in 4 Independent Fostering agencies, achieving Outstanding and Good ratings from Ofsted, consistently. Catherine is highly motivated to improving the lives of children in fostering; supporting foster carers to invest in their role in providing aspirations of improvement through stability and care for the children that join their families; which will in turn, makes a positive difference to our whole society."

# Background on Management

## Background on **Interim Registered Manager**

Interim Registered Manager – **Jacqueline Pape**

Jackie has extensive experience in fostering for over 20 years and she is a qualified social work practitioner. Jackie has excellent knowledge on safeguarding and child protection areas and also management of complex and challenging cases. Jackie has been working with the Sunbeam Team prior to being Interim Registered Manager."

## Background on **Head of Service Development**

Head of Service Development – **Alison Lamb**

Alison has been qualified as a social worker since 1993. She holds a Diploma in Social Work and a Bachelor of Arts in Applied Social Studies. Alison also has a NVQ qualification in Management and an MSC in Advancing Practice in Family Violence Alison has many years of experience in the field of child protection and experience of running a fostering panel as the chair. She is highly motivated and committed to keeping our children and young people safe and ensuring they have the best possible outcomes so they can achieve and become successful adults. Alison is Agency Decision Maker.

## Background on **Business Development Manager**

Business Development Manager – **Nicola Westley**

Nicola joined Sunbeam family in 2004 and has gained extensive knowledge and experience within Sunbeam. Nicola is our Business Development Manager, her responsibilities include managing our placements, recruitment and administration teams. Nicola holds strong knowledge of our contractual arrangements and supports the agency to work collaboratively with our Local Authority partners through contract and relationship management.

## **Management and board overview**

The Board of Sunbeam includes the Directors and CEO, which works extensively with the management and staff team to cover:

- The agency's strategic vision
- Annual business plan and review system
- Performance targets
- Financial management and expenditure
- Development issues
- Quality assurance
- Policies and procedures
- Values, principals and culture of the organisation
- Compliance with legislation and standards

# Sunbeam's Fostering Panels

In accordance with the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, Sunbeam Fostering maintains a central list of people suitable to sit on fostering panels and has established regular fostering panels whose overriding objectives are to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in foster care. Our fostering panels meet in London and other branch offices on a regular basis. Panels have a balance of gender, ethnicity and qualifications and reflect our commitment to bring together individuals from different backgrounds. Each panel has access to specialist legal and medical advice as required.

The Independent chair has many years' experience of working with children and young people in a variety of roles and currently works as a children's right officer and number of panels. Our central list of suitable panel members includes a teacher, foster carers, a qualified nurse, a formerly looked after child and qualified social workers.

We also have a central list for panels run by our registered office in London.



# Recruitment, assessment and approval of foster carers

Sunbeam Fostering Agency makes use of the competencies approach in all stages of the recruitment, assessment and approval of the foster carers.

We endorse the view expressed in the Fostering Network Code of Practice that the use of common, standard assessment tools, such as those produced by the Fostering Network and the CoramBAAF Form F, will enable fostering services to achieve uniform standards.

We therefore make full use of the above tools in the recruitment, assessment and approval stages of fostering applications to Sunbeam.

We also seek to actively promote the Fostering Network values underpinning the competencies approach and to ensure that they are an integral part of the assessment process.

These are that:

- Child safety is paramount
- Individuals are respected
- Difference and diversity is valued
- Equality is promoted
- Discrimination is challenged
- Confidentiality is maintained
- Advice and feedback is provided in a constructive way
- Applicants are supported to demonstrate their competence
- Standards of childcare are explicit and agreed

## Recruitment

Sunbeam Fostering Agency subscribes to the following statement:

**“The aim of our recruitment campaign will be to attract potentially suitable people who may want to take up fostering and provide them with significant information for them to decide whether or not to make a formal application”.** (Fostering Network Code of Practice)



# Recruitment, assessment and approval of foster carers

**Sunbeam's advertisements and other recruitment materials aim to promote the Agency's specific selection criteria, which are as follows:**

- Previous employment in children's services – paid or unpaid
- Applicants with particular skills and experience in specific areas as learning difficulties, medical problems etc
- Applicants who show a willingness to work towards meeting care standards for fostering
- Applicants with experience of previous fostering and/or close involvement with someone who has already fostered
- An ability to reflect on life experiences and to mature through them
- An ability to see beyond children's behaviour, and to link it to past trauma, where applicable
- An empathy for and natural ability to nurture children traumatised by separation from their birth families
- Applicants able to accept teenagers
- Applicants comfortable with parents visiting their home
- If living with a partner/ spouse, the relationship should be established and secure

**In addition, Sunbeam will expect the applicants to have:**

- A spare bedroom
- Plenty of physical and emotional stamina
- A commitment to attend training events and support groups
- Availability to promote contact and offer supervision
- A willingness to support a child's/young person's attendance for therapy, hospital appointment etc- including the provision of transport where necessary

Priority will be given to progressing those applicants who appear to meet some or all of the above requirements.

All interested people who either respond directly to an advertisement or apply to Sunbeam in between recruitment campaigns, will have their enquiries recorded on a registration of interest form. If appropriate, the Agency will send out a foster carer's handbook and job description in order to help the enquirer decide whether they feel they have the necessary skills for the job.



# Recruitment, assessment and approval of foster carers

## Enquiry form

Once the potential applicant has had an opportunity to find out about fostering and is keen to apply, they will be asked to complete an enquiry form over the phone or online. If the enquiry form is positive an initial home visit will be arranged.

## Initial Home Visit

During the home visit, applicants will be given further information about fostering. The roles and responsibilities of the Agency staff will be discussed as well as the assessment process itself. The need for all adult members of the household to consent to a DBS (Disclosure Barring Service, previously referred to as CRB) and other statutory checks will be explained and information on these checks (including medicals) will also be supplied.

In addition, Agency requirements in terms of health and safety standards will be provided to ensure applicants meet certain essential criteria.

If the home visit is positive, an application form can be completed following the visit or alternately this can be completed later.

## Planning the assessment

All assessments will be carried out by appropriately qualified and experienced social workers.

The first assessment meeting will be to plan the assessment with the applicants. At this stage, Sunbeam will provide the applicants with information on the assessment process. The guide to the assessment process explains what the competencies are and how applicants will be expected to help identify and collect evidences towards their fostering portfolio.



# Recruitment, assessment and approval of foster carers

**When they have the first assessment meeting with applicants, Sunbeam assessors will explain to them that:**

1. Certain requirements will be made of them during the process e.g. attendance at a preparation group, permission for statutory checks and references etc.
2. That the assessment has two stages and that specified statutory and safeguarding checks are undertaken under stage 1. These include the DBS, local authority, medical, references (interview of two referees and fostering reference if previously fostered) and other checks are begun at this stage in respect of suitable applicants. If it is decided not to continue with an assessment because of information collected as part of stage 1, this will be communicated formally in writing.
3. Under stage 2 of the assessment, they will be able to see any "brief report or final report and record any disagreement with it before this is considered by a fostering panel.
4. The assessor's report will make a recommendation to the fostering panel about their suitability to foster, including those children whom they might best be matched with, as well as their training and development needs for the future.
5. Applicants will be encouraged to give honest answers and not to exaggerate or give false information about their skills and/or experience. Doing this may lead to them not being able to cope in certain future placements.
6. The assessor will explain the competencies required for fostering and give initial help and advice in enabling applicants to link evidence with the skills required for fostering e.g. 'can you think of a time when you needed to be patient?' etc.
7. Leading on from the above, the assessor will also help the applicant identify skills or abilities they may find most difficult or need to develop.
8. Form F assessments also known as home study explores in detail the applicant's family background, childhood experiences, own parenting experiences (where applicable), employment history, current and past relationship and skills, knowledge and experiences to care for vulnerable children and young people.

## **Preparation training**

Applicants will be invited to attend a Skills to Foster preparation course along with other applicants. The course is led by experienced social workers and foster carers. We provide specialist training where carers will be approved for more challenging children.

## **The assessment process**

Assessment of prospective foster carers is undertaken using a competencies approach and the CoramBAAF Form F report. Having explained the competencies, the assessor will then discuss each of them with the applicant and explore how they may obtain the evidence for each competency.

# Recruitment, assessment and approval of foster carers

## Gathering evidence or information

The Sunbeam assessing social worker will undertake the assessment in the following settings:

- The applicant's own home
- During the Skills to Foster preparation course
- In other relevant settings e.g. a relevant workplace, such as a playgroup etc.

## **A variety of techniques will be used to gather evidence or information regarding the applicants suitability to foster. These may include:**

1. The CoramBAAF Form F guidance and competencies list to assist applicants and assessors to work out what existing skills they already possess and what new ones they need to acquire.
2. Ecomaps, family trees and/or other personal history tools to gain information on an applicant's motivation to foster and how their past history may impact on future fostering.
3. Witness statements from other adults who can corroborate the applicant's ability to relate to and care for children - e.g. babysitting circle, helping out at school etc.
4. Discussions
5. Records and reports
6. Assignments and case studies
7. Role playing and simulation
8. Observations from the "Skills to Foster" preparation course
9. Shadowing other foster carers for a day, if appropriate

Care will be taken by the assessor to stand back and pay due attention to the life history of the applicant - rather than concentrating solely on the applicant's current functioning and circumstances.

The completed assessment will include a recommendation by the Sunbeam assessing social worker.

# Recruitment, assessment and approval of foster carers

## Statutory checks and references

Following written consent from prospective carers, Sunbeam will ensure that satisfactory clearance is received in relation to the following checks and references before the approval stage is reached.

### 1. Statutory checks and good practice

- Proof of identity
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) on all household members
- Children's Services Department's record
- School reference if applicable
- Cafcass (if appropriate)
- Ofsted (if appropriate)
- Registration and inspection units
- Previous applications to foster
- Overseas check (if appropriate)
- Any other checks we deem appropriate

### 2. References

Personal X 3, each of whom will be visited by the assessing social worker, ex-partner where applicable, current employer reference (if applicable other employer reference if working with children), Health Visitor (if applicable) and school for birth children if attending school.

### 3. Health report

### 4. Health and safety inspection

Following satisfactory clearance in relation to all the statutory good practice, as well evidence that the applicant complies with health and safety requirements, the Sunbeam assessor will reach a point in stage 2 of the assessment when enough information has been collated about the applicant in order for an assessment recommendation to be made. This may be in the form of a brief report or a final report to a fostering panel.

At this stage, the applicant will be told the recommendation and reasons for it. Feedback should be given in a clear and constructive way and recorded in order to meet legal and Agency requirements.

The structure of the final report will be within the framework of areas covered by the CoramBAAF Form F, including the competencies and consideration of the applicant's learning and development needs to enable them to achieve the TSDS (Training, Support and Development) standards within twelve months.

Prospective foster carers will sign the assessment report prior to submission to panel and where applicants suggest changes to the report, these are negotiated with the assessing social worker. Applicants have the right to add written comments or other information to their report if they wish.

Copies of brief reports or the completed CoramBAAF Form F report are circulated to the Sunbeam fostering panel members in advance of their meeting.

The social worker will attend the fostering panel meeting to present her/his report. Applicants are invited to attend and may bring a supporter with them.

# Recruitment, assessment and approval of foster carers

## Approval

Sunbeam's fostering panel makes recommendations about the approval of prospective carer/s. The Agency Decision Maker considers the recommendations before notifying the applicants in writing. Where the decision is to approve them, the letter will specify any terms of approval for age range, number of children and type of placements.

Following approval, foster carers and Sunbeam sign a written agreement (the Foster Care Agreement) that sets out the terms and conditions of the fostering household's relationship with Sunbeam.

If, following consideration by the fostering panel, and a review of case papers and the final panel minutes, the Decision Maker considers that an applicant is not suitable to act as a foster carer the Decision Maker will write proposing not to approve them together with reasons (qualifying determination) and will invite them to submit written representation within 28 days of the notice or to request a review by an independent review panel through the IRM (further details can be provided).

If Sunbeam does not receive any representation within the above said period and there is no referral to the IRM, it may proceed to make its decision.

If Sunbeam receives written representation it will refer the case to its fostering panel for further consideration; and the Decision Maker will make its decision, taking into account any fresh recommendations made by the fostering panel, and will notify their decision to the applicant in writing.

If Sunbeam receives any recommendations from an independent review panel through the IRM, the Decision Maker will take this into account and then make their decision, and will notify their decision to the applicant in writing.

## Sunbeam Fostering has the following Decision Makers:

### Decision Makers – applications to foster

**Alison Lamb** - Agency Decision Maker - Head of Service Development

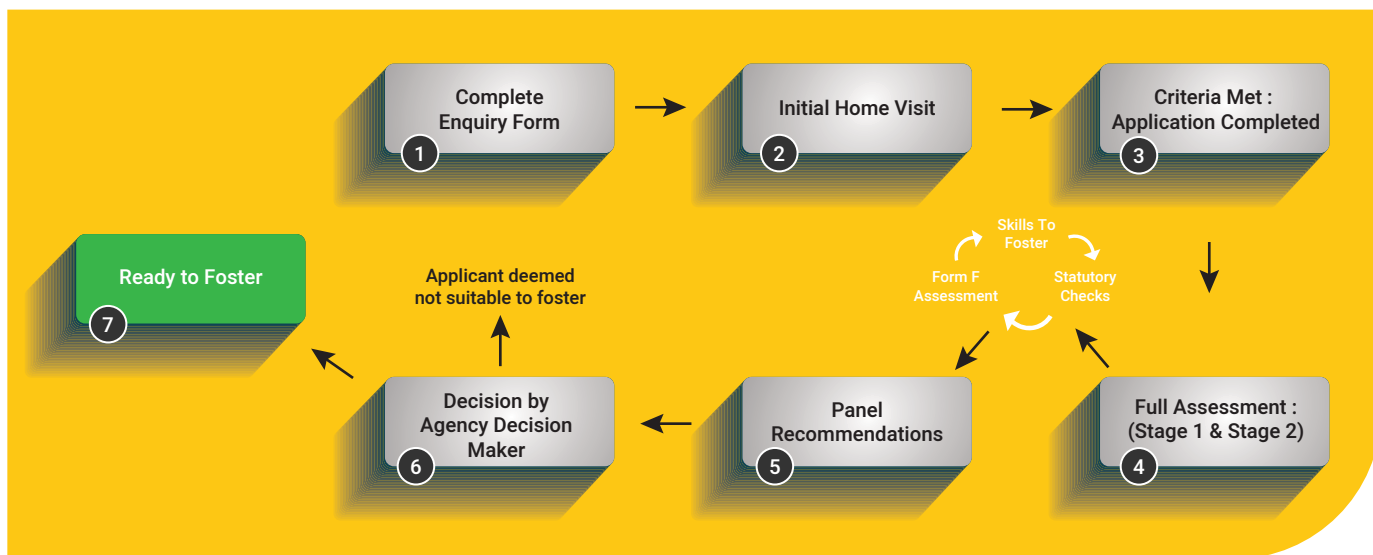
### Decision Makers – foster carer reviews

**Alison Lamb** - Agency Decision Maker - Head of Service Development



# Assessment and approval process

Please see an overview of the application process (from enquiry to approval) for foster carers. Further details are included in our Guide to Foster on our website or please email us on [info@sunbeamfostering.com](mailto:info@sunbeamfostering.com)



# Contact Sunbeam Fostering Group



## Registered/Head Office Address:

Sunbeam House,  
12 Waterside Drive,  
Langley, Slough, SL3 6EZ  
Tel - 020 8799 0930  
Fax - 020 8810 3949  
Email - [info@sunbeamfostering.com](mailto:info@sunbeamfostering.com)  
Website - [www.sunbeamfostering.com](http://www.sunbeamfostering.com)

## Sunbeam Midlands Registered Office address:

Sunbeam Fostering Agency  
383 Broad Lane,  
Coventry West  
Midlands, CV5 7AX  
Tel - 024 7642 0390  
Email - [info@sunbeamfostering.com](mailto:info@sunbeamfostering.com)

## Sunbeam Pride Registered Office address

Sunbeam Pride Fostering Service Ltd  
113 New Bedford Road,  
Luton, LU3 1LE  
Tel - 01582 218 228  
Email - [info.pride@sunbeamfostering.com](mailto:info.pride@sunbeamfostering.com)



Sunbeam Midlands  
☎ 02476 420390



Pride  
☎ 01582 433 775



Sunbeam London and South  
☎ 02087 990930

## Other Resource centres for Sunbeam Fostering

Portsmouth	Blackburn	East London	South London	West London	Birmingham	Nottingham	Northampton
Gatcombe House, Copnor Road, Portsmouth, PO3 5EJ, UK	Suite 3, The Beehive, Lions Drive, Shadsworth Business Park, Blackburn BB1 2QS	Sunbeam Family Support Centre , 14 Prospect Hill, Walthamstow, E17 3EL	Sunbeam House, 610 Mitcham R oad, Croydon CRO 3EL	Viglen House Business Centre, Alperton Lane, Wembley, HA0 1HD	Arion Business Centre Harriet House, 118 High Street, Erdington, Birmingham B23 6BG	Melrose House, 9 Waverly Street, Nottingham, NG7 4HF	Office 137, Regents Pavilion, 4 Summer house Road, Moulton Park, Industrial Estate, Northampton NN3 6BJ

# Contact Sunbeam

## Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint or have any concerns about a child in care with Sunbeam or otherwise, please contact:

**Jackie Pape** – Complaints Officer

Tel – 024 7642 0390

Full details of our Comments, Compliments & Complaints Procedure can be obtained by contacting Jackie or emailing us on:

[JackieP@sunbeamfostering.com](mailto:JackieP@sunbeamfostering.com) or  
[info@sunbeamfostering.com](mailto:info@sunbeamfostering.com)

## Safeguarding

For any Safeguarding matters, please contact our Designated Safeguarding Officer – Jackie Pape.

[JackieP@sunbeamfostering.com](mailto:JackieP@sunbeamfostering.com)

Tel – 024 7642 0390







# STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

(Midlands)

July 2022

## TELEPHONE

024 7642 0390

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## EMAIL

[info@sunbeamfostering.com](mailto:info@sunbeamfostering.com)

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## WEBSITE

[www.sunbeamfostering.com](http://www.sunbeamfostering.com)