

# Fostering Transformation Programme

Improving Lives Select Commission  
December 2025

# Fostering Overview

- Strong Fostering service – includes Brightsparks marketing provision, Mockingbird model, experienced managers and team
- High recruitment levels compared to regional and national
- Challenge with numbers of retiring carers
- Changing model of how people want to care
- Children and young people with different needs



# Fostering Transformation Board

- Significant sufficiency programme underway in relation to residential, 16+ and kinship
- Agreed need for a review through a new time limited Board that would link to the overarching Children in Care Sufficiency Board in May 25
- Inquest outcome due in June 25, so agreed a delay so that it could also consider the actions arising from the Inquest.

# Incident of Concern

- On 5.4.23. Marcia Grant, an RMBC foster carer, was killed when a car driven by her 12-year foster child ran her over. He had been placed with her for 6 days at the time.
- There were two relevant risk factors included going missing on one occasion from foster care and receiving a caution for carrying a knife.
- Child X was convicted in November 2023 of death by dangerous driving. He received a two year sentence.
- Inquest was planned for June 2025, focused on the placement decision making by the LA. This was adjourned on the 4<sup>th</sup> day due to the Assistant Coroner requesting more documents from the LA and was ultimately concluded on 2.7.25.

# Findings and PFD report

- The Assistant Coroner found that RMBC had:  
*contributed to [the death of Marcia Grant] by the failings of the Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council to have appropriate systems and processes in place when placing foster children, including but not limited to the lack of accurate and complete documentation, failure to communicate risks and concerns appropriately, failure to conduct appropriate risk assessments and failing to safeguard those in their care.*
- There were 3 actions from the Preventing Future Deaths Report which followed:
  - *Lack of placements*
  - *Documentation and communication*
  - *Risk assessment*

# Action Taken

In 2023:

- Meetings with Foster Carer community
- Support to staff
- New Head of Service – full review
- Fostering Duty post created
- Much closer joint working with the Placements Team
- Scheme of delegation updated and sign off of forms set at a senior manager level
- Placement referral forms (PRFs) are saved to children's files
- Risk analysis section populated on PRFs and Matching Approval documents

# Action Taken

Following the PFD report received on 3.9.25:

- Fostering Transformation Board commenced
- Meetings with foster carers and agreement to co- produce practice guidance on matching and information sharing
- Review of standalone risk assessment forms and threshold for using these; updating of other forms
- Learning Academy reviewing the training offer around risk assessment and management (including recording)
- Development of kinship offer and practice as part of the Families First programme

# Next Steps

- Ofsted ILACS Inspection outcome
- Development of Family Help through the Families First Transformation programme
- Fostering review recommendations taken forward.

