

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Safeguarding, Children and Families

Protocol relating to Foster Carers who wish to transfer to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

This protocol comes into effect once the foster carers have notified their Fostering Service of their decision to transfer.

The protocol has been developed by the Local Authority taking into account:-

The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and 2013.

The Children Act 1989 Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations, Volume 2, 2010 and 2015.

Embedded in the protocol is the National Minimum Standards 2011.

1. Underlying Principles.

- 1.1** Foster cares have a right to transfer to alternative fostering services and RMBC will uphold their rights in treating carers with respect and in processing their application in a fair and equitable manner which accords with the 2013 Regulations.
- 1.2** RMBC will take into consideration the views of a child in placement, their parents and associated agencies linked to the child's Care Plan.

2. Aim

- 2.1** RMBC's aim is to facilitate the smooth transition of foster carers to the Local Authority within a timely framework which ensures statutory compliance and affords the foster carers a transparent assessment.

3. Transition Process

- 3.1** At the point when a foster carer has reached the decision to transfer to RMBC, they should notify the relevant fostering service in writing.
- 3.2** Thereafter, RMBC will formally submit a written request to access the records relating to the foster carers assessment and approval subject to their prior consent.
- 3.3** If the foster carers refuse to give consent to access their records, the Agency needs to determine what 'records of concerns' they should share with RMBC.
- 3.4** If there are no issues of concern, then the foster carer's right to confidentiality is upheld.

- 3.5 The Fostering Service should grant access to the records within a period of 15 days, after receipt of the written notification.
- 3.6 RMBC will then commence a comprehensive re-assessment at Stage 1 and 2 of the procedure, whereby, they will obtain a creditable and accurate reference testimony relating to the foster carers history and level of competence with the previous Agency.
- 3.7 The primary responsibility to notify the child's placing authority/ authorities of the foster carers decision to transfer to RMBC rests with that individual fostering service.
- 3.8 A principle of good practice is for the foster carers to provide verbal notice to the child's or children's social worker. This will allow for a period of preparation and the invoking of the care planning, placement and Case Review Regulations by the child's/children's Independent Reviewing Officer.

4. Protocol Meeting

- 4.1 To be convened by the Recruitment Team Manager in consultation with the Agency.
- 4.2 Attendance requirements
Fostering Team Manager
Allocated Assessing Social Worker
Agency Supervising Social Worker
Agency Team Manager
RMBC LAC Social Worker
Foster Carers
- 4.3 The purpose of the meeting is to carefully map out each stage of the transfer and to ensure the foster carers are in agreement and fully informed.

5. Foster Panel

- 5.1 A foster carer cannot be approved by more than one fostering service at the same time.
- 5.2 Therefore, foster carers transferring to RMBC must ensure their approval has ended by their prior Agency before approval by RMBC.
- 5.3 Foster Panel and RMBC Agency Decision Maker will enter into close communication, to ensure a foster carer experiences a seamless transition from their prior Agency to becoming an approved RMBC foster carer.
- 5.4 RMBC Foster Panel and the Local Authority's Agency Decision Maker will enter into close communication to ensure foster carers experience a seamless transition from their prior Agency to becoming approved RMBC Foster Carers, in which there is no period of overlap in their Registration status.