



Oak Fostering

Long term therapeutic foster placements

Comments, Compliments, Complaints and Whistle Blowing

Our Commitment

At Oak Fostering we aim to:

- Provide the highest standard of care to the children within our service
- To maintain positive working relationships with children's families and the professionals we work with
- To create a positive working environment for our carer and staff team

We promote a culture where children, carers, families and other professionals are encouraged to express their views and concerns and know they will be actively listened to and that we will work towards solving the problem. Children, families, carers and staff are reminded about their right to complain and are given information on how this can be done and what happens afterwards in their welcome pack.

Comments, compliments and complaints are an important part of helping us to fulfil these aims so we value this feedback immensely. We are committed to listening and responding professionally to any feedback and where needed taking action to improve or continue to develop our service.

Comments

Sometimes people may wish to give feedback but do not feel it fits into either a complaint or compliment category. We are more than happy to receive this kind of feedback and you can share this in a number of ways:

- Telephone and speak to a member of staff/manager
- Write us a letter or email
- Speak to a member of staff/manager directly

In addition to informal feedback we will formally request feedback at least annually from anyone involved with Oak Fostering. The response to this feedback will inform the development of our service plan for the year ahead. We aim to ensure that everyone's views are taken into account and to address any issues that have been raised.

Compliments

We always strive for the best so it is lovely to hear when we get things right. This again helps us to know what people who use our service feel and to influence our future practice. Compliments can be shared in the same way as comments:

- Telephone and speak to a member of staff/manager
- Write us a letter or email
- Speak to a member of staff/manager directly

Complaints

At Oak Fostering we aim to offer the highest standard of service, should anyone feel we have not achieved this then we want them to let us know. This enables us to address the issue and where needed make changes to ensure that we can improve our practice. Complaints can be lodged in several ways:

- Telephone and speak to a member of staff/manager
- Write us a letter or email
- Speak to a member of staff/manager directly

Once we have received a complaint the following process will be followed:

1. Manager and Responsible Individual will be notified.
2. Complaint will be investigated fully by a manager.
3. Written response will be sent to complainant within 7 working days.
4. Complaint will be fully logged, including the outcome in the complaints file.

Should the complainant not be happy with the response to their complaint they should immediately report this. The investigation will then be reviewed and the complainant will be given details of external bodies they can take their complaint to.

If the complaint relates to the manager then the Responsible Individual and Directors will investigate the complaint.

Complaints from children

Oak Fostering understands that children can find it difficult to complain when they are not happy, especially about those who care for them so we have in place a locked box at our main office base where children can write their concerns, complaints or views down and post it. All foster children are also provided with freepost card's which they can use to write complaints or compliments on and post using Royal Mail. At a suitable time children are encouraged to talk about their complaints with an adult of their choice and/or the manager.

In their placements children also have access to a phone which they can use to complain to an outside service such as the placing authority, Ofsted or Child Line. All carers must ensure that the children have the freedom to use the phone to make a call of this nature.

In addition we ensure that all children have regular and unsupervised contact with someone external to the home e.g. their social worker, relatives (where appropriate) or an independent visitor. This allows them the space to talk openly with someone if they are unhappy with any aspect of their care.

Children are reminded of how to complain during day to day discussions, in children's meetings and details of how they can do this are contained within the Children's Guide which they have a copy of.

Whistle blowing

As an employee of Oak Fostering or an Oak Fostering carer if you believe that the service itself or an individual working or fostering for Oak Fostering is involved in any wrong doing such as:

1. Committing a criminal offence
2. Failing to comply with a legal obligation
3. Endangering the health and safety of an individual
4. Environmental damage
5. Concealing any information relating to the above

You should in the first instance report your concerns to the Manager, Responsible Individual or Director. The same process as used with complaints will be followed to ensure that the matter is dealt with efficiently and in a sensitive way.

The public interest Disclosure Act 1998 prevents you from suffering a detriment or having your contract/agreement terminated for 'whistle-blowing' and Oak Fostering fully supports this approach. We will ensure that in dealing with the reported issue you are protected and supported to ensure you feel safe and happy within your role.

Our aim at Oak Fostering is to ensure that all carers and staff feel able to discuss their views with managers and to feel confident that they will be protected and supported. However if you are not happy with the response that you receive or you feel unable to report it to the manager or director then you should raise the matter with the appropriate external body e.g. Ofsted, Police, Local Authority.

Useful Contacts

Registered Manager & Director: Anna Powell
 Tel: 01525 839633
 Email: anna@oakfostering.co.uk

Director: Debbie Bavister
 Tel: 01234 767432
 Email: debbiebavister@whiteorchid-care.com

Responsible Individual & Director: Richard Mills
 Tel: 01525 839633
 Email: richardamills@hotmail.co.uk

If you wish to complain to an external body please contact:

- Ofsted
 Regulator for Children's Social Care Services
 Oak Fostering URN: 1241664
 Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
 Tel: 0300 123 1231
- Child Line – 0800 1111

- NSPCC - 0808 800 5000
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Manager Name:

Manager Signature:

Date: