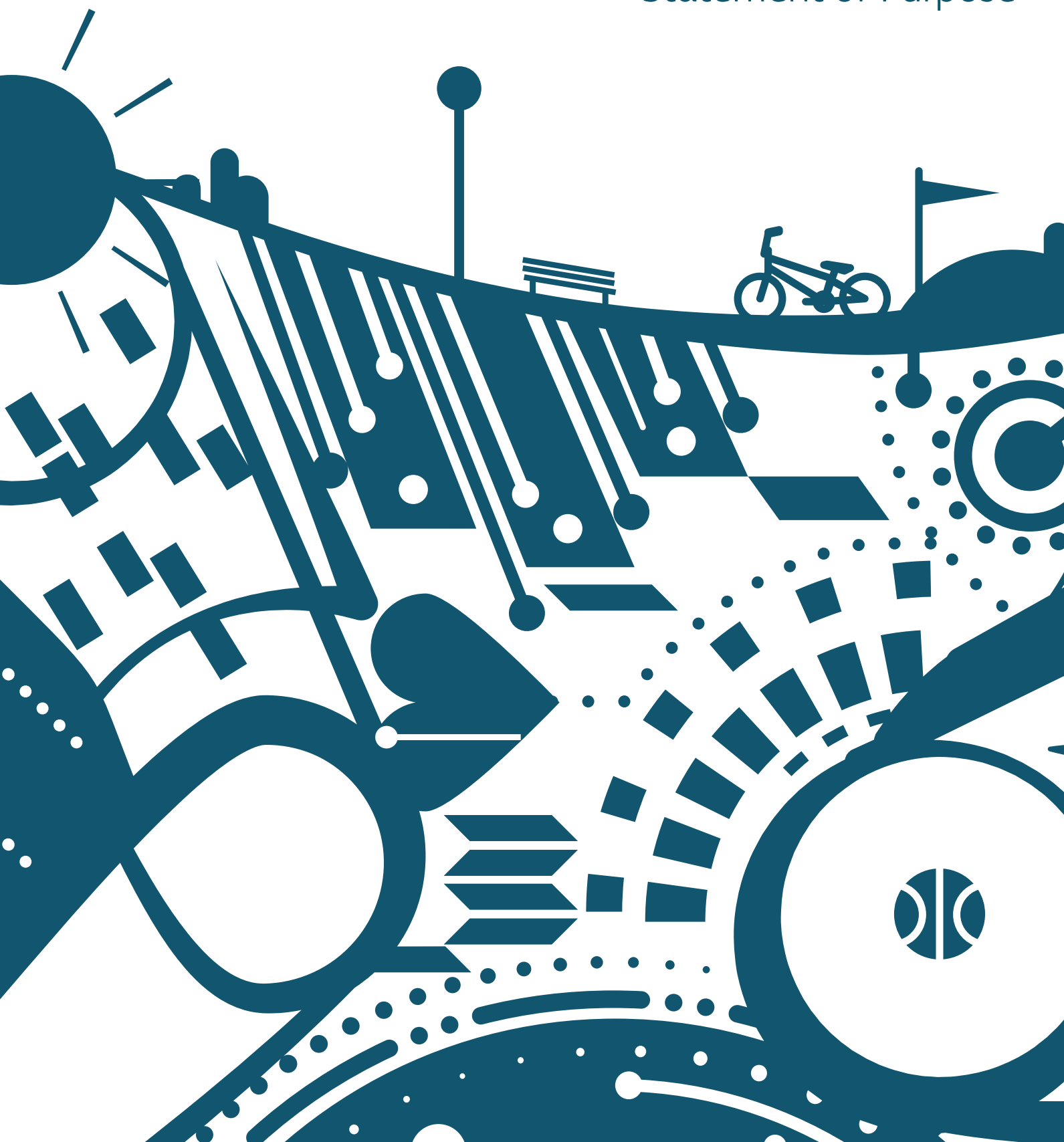


# Statement of Purpose





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## INTRODUCTION

Our Statement of Purpose aims to provide information about Kasper Fostering, our services and facilities to children, young people, foster carers, birth parents, staff and other professionals.

Our Statement of Purpose has been written and developed in accordance with appropriate statute law and regulations, which include:

- The Care Standards Act 2000
- The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
- The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services

A copy of our Statement of Purpose is available upon request to:

- OFSTED
- Purchasers of our services
- Any individual working with or for the fostering service
- Any child or young person placed with the fostering service (appropriate to age and understanding)
- Any parent or guardian of a child or young person placed with the fostering service

Kasper management team and the director review the Statement of Purpose at least annually. Updated versions are uploaded to our website **[www.kasperfostering.org](http://www.kasperfostering.org)** and provided to OFSTED.

Children and young people in the care of the fostering service receive an age appropriate Welcome Guide about Kasper, to help them engage with us and ensure their voice is heard.

## STATUS & CONSTITUTION

Legal Status: Kasper is a company limited by guarantee whose articles of association prohibit distribution of profits. As Kasper is a not-for-profit company, we reinvest any surplus revenue into services for the young people within our care.

Company Registration No.: 3536926

Year of Registration: 1997

Director: Malcolm Ornsby

Decision Maker & Responsible Individual: Kate Lovell

Registered Manager: Rebecca Askew

Ofsted Registration: SC036530

Ofsted Rating: Good across all areas (February 2019)

## ORGANISATION DETAILS

Office Address: 79 Nelson Road, Whitstable Kent CT5 1DX

Contact Details: Office hours 01227 275985

24 hours 07956 870863

Email [mail@kasperfostering.org](mailto:mail@kasperfostering.org)

Website [www.kasperfostering.org](http://www.kasperfostering.org)

## **LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK & STANDARDS OF CARE**

Kasper Fostering operates within the Fostering Service Regulations 2011 and 2013 made under sections 22 and 48 of the Care Standard Act (CSA) 2000 and the powers under the Children Act 1989 (s59).

As an independent fostering service, we are governed by and committed to ensuring we meet the National Minimum Standards set out by the Department of Education under sections 23 and 49 of the Care Standards Act 2000. We strive to embed, achieve, maintain and exceed best practice in the services we provide, underpinned by the relevant legislation, guidance and resources.

Our Registered Manager is responsible for the management, compliance and monitoring of all standards. Our Responsible Individual undertakes separate audits to ensure we are meeting the requirements of the standards, alongside monitoring:

- Child Protection allegations
- Children who go missing without authority
- Complaints and their outcome
- Compliments
- Incident reports

## OUR AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Kasper Fostering is a not-for-profit child-focused foster care organisation. Since 1997 we have provided a high-quality independent fostering service for children and young people aged from 0 - 18 years old, living in Kent, London and Essex, who may have suffered trauma through the experience of neglect, deprivation, physical injury, emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse.

Kasper works with sibling groups who need to stay together; teenage and adult parents (parent and child placements); teenagers with challenging behaviours; children with disabilities; and young people with complex physical, emotional and mental health needs.

Our objective is to place children and young people with carefully selected families, who are able to meet a very wide range of needs, as set out in their Care Plan. We ensure children are able to access education and services in their local communities, however complex their individual service requirements.

Kasper aims to provide this high-quality fostering service by ensuring that:

- All adults demonstrate a positive model for communicating effectively with children and young people.
- Each child, young person and parent (in the case of 'parent and child' care) is provided with appropriately matched, well experienced, skilled and trained carer(s) committed to meeting their needs.
- Each child and young person is 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.



## OUR VALUES & PRINCIPLES

In our mission to meet and exceed our aims and objectives, Kasper operates with one overriding principle: **we exist first and foremost for the primary benefit of the children and young people placed with our foster families.**

It is also our aim that any person associated with that child or young person, e.g. their responsible Local Authority and its representatives, any member of their family or any person significant to them, will consider the service they receive to be of the highest possible standard.

Alongside this principle there are certain values we hold essential to the continued child-focussed approach of Kasper.

Each child is an individual who has the right to:

- Develop their full potential.
- Live in a safe family environment.
- Be heard.
- Be valued.
- Be involved in decision making about their lives.
- Access high quality education.
- Maintain contact with their family and/or significant others.
- Be cared for by adults who offer respect, concern, affection and experience appropriate to their individual needs.

That all adults responsible for a child's care should:

- Promote the significance of a child's birth family, race, ethnicity, culture and religion.
- Recognise and develop the child's potential.
- Provide opportunities for self-realisation.
- Recognise and respect the child as an individual.
- Provide for every child, whatever their background or circumstances, the support they need to:
  - Be healthy
  - Stay safe
  - Enjoy and achieve
  - Make a positive contribution
  - Achieve economic wellbeing
  - Develop a sense of belonging and secure attachment.

That Kasper Fostering should:

- Provide an environment that promotes and facilitates the best interests of every child.
- Recognise and acknowledge the achievements of all of our members.
- Encourage enthusiasm, imagination and individual contributions to the team effort.
- Maintain systems and structures to enable the effective delivery of high quality, best practice and value for money childcare.
- Maintain effective relationships with Local Authorities, children, foster and birth families, schools and therapists.
- Value creativity, innovation and flexibility in our approaches.
- Prepare young people for independent living and their transition into adulthood.
- Prepare, support, train and develop skilled and experienced foster carers.
- Enable children to have access to therapeutic and wraparound resources.
- Provide, where appropriate, respite care, transport and supervised contact.
- Provide education and training opportunities for staff, carers and children that encourage continued personal development in line with current best practice e.g. Training, Support and Development Standards.

## **OUR FOSTER CARERS & PLACEMENTS**

### **Foster Carers**

Kasper has approved foster carers across London, Kent, Essex and surrounding areas.

### **Placements**

Many children are referred to Kasper in times of crisis; however we will always aim to meticulously match every child with a family who will meet their needs. The more closely we match them, the more likely the placement will be a success in the long term – a positive outcome for both carer and child.

We provide placements for children with complex behaviours, children with disabilities and complex health needs, and sibling groups. We have specialist carers providing short-term placements for unaccompanied minors, preparing children for adoption and offering 'parent and child' placements to inform and support parenting assessments.

## OUR SERVICES

### Referrals

We receive referrals from Local Authorities, which are managed by our full-time dedicated Placements Team and overseen by a social worker who carefully matches children's needs to appropriately skilled, experienced and trained foster carers. This is a collaborative process between Local Authorities and Kasper Fostering. We use the Secure Base Model as a framework to consider the child's needs alongside carer strengths and capacity to meet them, completing detailed matching reports for all prospective placements.

### SECURE BASE MODEL



The Secure Base Model provides a framework for foster carers and Kasper Fostering to think in more detail about how the different approaches can help a young person move towards greater security. It is a positive, strengths based approach that focuses on the interaction between the foster carer and child, but also considers how that relationship can enable the child to develop competence in the outside world.

## Promoting Safe Care

The child's welfare, safety and needs are at the centre of the care we provide. All children, young people and everyone in Kasper should feel and be safe. We promote Safe Care in every fostering household with:

- Safer Caring Family Plans
- Risk assessments on every child, updated on an ongoing basis in all households
- A comprehensive Child Protection policy

All foster carers and staff complete the following statutory training courses:

- Paediatric First Aid (foster carers)
- Child Protection and Safeguarding (all)
- Managing Challenging Behaviour (foster carers)

All carers are monitored, supervised and supported by social workers. Children are matched with foster carers who can safeguard their welfare; they are also encouraged to speak out and be part of Safer Caring Family Plans and risk assessments.

Issues of bullying and discrimination are addressed as part of ongoing supervision along with crime, antisocial behaviour, sexual exploitation, placement stability, security, self-awareness and protection for all. Kasper undertakes at least one unannounced visit per year and provides detailed recommendations on areas that require improvement.

## Promoting Education

Kasper endorses the right of every individual child to reach their full potential through accessing education that is appropriate to their learning needs. We consider this to be of particular importance for looked after children who may need, through their personal circumstances, to overcome greater obstacles than their peers.

We also believe children should, wherever possible, be educated within Local Authority mainstream provision (including specialist schools.) To this end, Kasper has established close working relationships with Local Education Authorities and Virtual School Teams to ensure appropriate school provision for children placed in our households.

We have access to a Specialist Education Advisor who will provide expertise and advice to help ensure all children receive the best possible education specific to their needs.

Supervising social workers ensure the educational achievements and progress of children and young people are monitored and assessed through the regular supervision of foster carers, visits to the foster home and liaison with schools. Reports detailing this work and any identified issues are provided for all looked after children reviews and in monthly reports, provided directly to the child's local authority social worker.

## **Promoting Health & Wellbeing**

Kasper views the health needs of children and young people in a holistic sense; from physical needs through to emotional, cultural, mental and sexual health. Supervising social workers ensure these are monitored and assessed through the regular supervision of foster carers, visits to the foster home and liaison with appropriate health professionals.

Reports detailing this work and any identified issues are provided for all looked after children reviews. Health matters are monitored by the Registered Manager and reported on a quarterly basis in Kasper's Regulation 35 report produced for our directors and OFSTED.

We address the physical health needs of all young people by ensuring they remain registered with their own GP and dental services wherever possible. Where this is inappropriate or not possible, e.g. due to geographical distance, the child or young person is registered with health services local to the foster placement. All health assessments, checks and immunisations are carried out in line with legislation (Children Act 1989).

Foster carers are familiar with the responsibilities that Local Authorities, health visitors and school nurses have regarding the health of looked after children, alongside understanding the health assessment process.

Kasper believes that promoting and providing education on health and related issues, e.g. smoking, substance misuse and diet, will not only improve the health of young people using our service but also their self-esteem.

To this end, children and foster carers are encouraged to develop a deeper knowledge of health issues through training days, workshops and information sharing. The ultimate aim is for children to eventually take responsibility for their own health as they prepare for transition into adulthood.

Foster carers are encouraged to provide a healthy environment and pay particular attention to managing a diet that extols these virtues as well as providing opportunities for physical exercise and activities that promote positive mental health.

## **Emotional & Mental Health Therapy**

Kasper aims to respond proactively to the emotional and mental health needs of the children and young people that come to our service.

Kasper has built up areas of expertise in the staffing team which enable us to offer systemic psychotherapy, creative arts, counselling and therapeutic life story work by qualified and skilled staff members in-house, with agreement of the local authorities.

In addition, we have experienced Child & Adolescent Psychotherapists checked and set up on our systems, who support us in the work we do with children and their carers.

With agreement from children's placing authorities, we are able to arrange high quality therapeutic input for children, (with regular reviews/reports to monitor progress) and commission specialist assessments to inform care planning. Our linked therapists can also offer clinical supervision and emotional support to our carers and their families where the need arises, and also facilitate clinical supervision for staff and offer reflective learning sessions on complex cases.

## **Enjoying & Achieving**

Kasper believes leisure and recreational pursuits are an important part of a child's social education, and in the holistic development of the 'self'. Whether just for enjoyment or where a young person is particularly gifted at an activity, participation is actively encouraged in line with the child's wishes and potential.

We monitor children's involvement in activities, and consider any Health and Safety issues as necessary. Children attend out-of-school and home activities and are encouraged to pursue hobbies and interests important to them. From drama clubs to sea cadets, motorbike racing to horse riding, young people embrace a wide range of exciting activities to help them enjoy and achieve in their lives. Where children find it hard to be involved in community activities or those outside the home, our sessional support workers help them to gradually develop more interests and hobbies and grow in confidence.

## **Achieving Economic Wellbeing**

Carers receive specific training, guidance and support on assisting young people to achieve economic wellbeing through meeting their educational and developmental needs – this is monitored during regular supervision.

Carers will also support children to have their own individual savings accounts. In consultation with the young person, carers and placing Local Authorities, we develop a supportive transition plan to independence, or semi-independence, that we work towards.

We help our young people to feel confident in being able to meet daily domestic tasks and encourage them to develop social and practical skills for employment. We have highly-skilled sessional support workers and facilities for young people to work on their independence skills.

Many of our young people continue to receive advice and assistance long after leaving care – we are very proud that they choose to remain in contact with us all, and that we are able to continue to make a positive difference to their lives.

## **Promoting Contact**

Kasper is committed to promoting contact with family members (or significant others) for every child; we believe it is essential for their emotional, mental and physical wellbeing. Where contact is not appropriate we strive to ensure that the child has updated information and knowledge about the people of most importance to them.

Our modern, friendly and well-equipped contact facility, specifically designed to represent the family home, provides an area where children can meet with their families in a safe, warm environment; one which promotes quality time together.

We also have access to a team of experienced, independent social workers able to complete specific pieces of work aimed at promoting family relationships for the child. These could include:

- Life story books
- Family group meetings
- Meetings with individual members of the family, either with the aim of rehabilitation or to assist in preparing court reports or other assessment processes.

## Respite Care

Respite care is an important part of our foster carer retention policy and is available to all families on a regular and planned basis. Additional respite is also available to carers in emergency situations such as a family bereavement, or where a child's placement may need extra support.

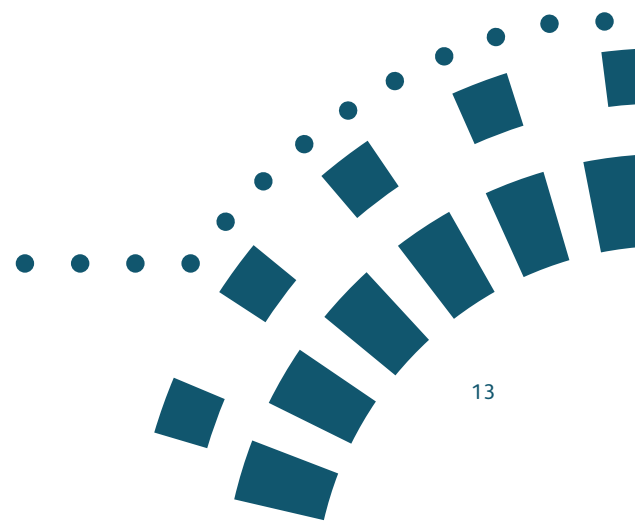
Whenever possible, we assess appropriate family members of foster carers as specific respite carers for children; this helps to maintain a sense of family life, with respite seen as having time with extended family. Children are matched with respite carers appropriately and they become part of the family and child's wider support network.

## Social Work Team

Kasper has a highly experienced and qualified social work team. We care passionately about achieving the best possible outcomes for the children and young people in our care, and are committed to working in partnership with Local Authorities to achieve this. In this role, Kasper's supervising social workers:

- Work with Local Authorities in planning children's placements.
- Support and supervise our carers in their care of the child, in accordance with the child's care plan.
- Develop strong relationships with foster carers to achieve in-depth insight into their households.
- Develop relationships of trust with fostered children and young people to enable their voice to be heard.
- Build strong relationships with the network of professionals around the child to achieve a joined up approach to the child's care.
- Respond quickly, effectively and transparently to any safeguarding concerns or complaints received.
- Oversee the continued professional development of carers in the best interests of the children in placement.
- Offer a 24-hour Out of Hours support service to carers and local authorities.
- Co-ordinate and facilitate support groups for carers and activities for children .
- Support other members of the carer's household.

Our social work team operates across the Kasper regions, overseen by the Registered Manager, they have over 100 years of social care experience between them. We also draw on an expert pool of supporting sessional workers and experts in specific areas of childcare, including therapists and education advisors.



## Foster Carer Training & Development

Kasper Fostering is committed to lifelong learning and providing all foster carers with training, opportunities, advice, information and support to ensure the continued development of skills and knowledge. As well as inspiring personal and professional development, Kasper's training programme is designed to equip carers with the knowledge and tools to face the challenges of caring for and improving the life chances of our young people.

Training takes place across our regions to ensure our foster carers have access to the latest learning and development tools in their own locality. Courses are a mixture of facilitated group workshops, formalised events, conference style sessions, eLearning and informal support and resources – designed and delivered by internal and external trainers, all of whom are experienced childcare practitioners.

Our learning streams
<b>Pre-Panel</b> – <i>online courses to be undertaken by applicants during their fostering assessment (not transferring carers)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child Protection &amp; Safeguarding</li><li>• Managing Challenging Behaviour</li><li>• Paediatric First Aid</li><li>• Health &amp; Safety</li></ul>
<b>Statutory Training</b> – <i>direct courses that are required to be refreshed in timescales</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child Protection &amp; Safeguarding (valid for 2 years)</li><li>• Managing Challenging Behaviour - Shades (valid for 3 years)</li><li>• Paediatric First Aid (valid for 3 years)</li></ul>
<b>Mandatory Training</b> – <i>direct courses that are required to be undertaken by all Kasper foster carers</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developmental Trauma – understanding the impact of trauma and neglect on brain development</li><li>• Secure Base - agency practice model founded on key theories and research about child development and relationships</li></ul>
<b>Essential E-learning</b> – <i>online courses that are required to be undertaken by all Kasper foster carers</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fostering Regulations</li><li>• Prevent Duty</li><li>• Equality &amp; Diversity</li><li>• GDPR</li><li>• Risk Management &amp; Safer Caring</li></ul>
<b>Specialist Training</b> – <i>a combination of direct and online courses to complement our statutory and mandatory training programme</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specialist training courses can be tailored to the specific identified needs of children, carers' professional development, or address a more broad learning and development issue for the agency when the need arises.</li></ul>

All prospective foster carers must complete the Skills to Foster course during their fostering assessment; this forms part of our initial assessment of new fostering families. We also ask applicants brand new to fostering to complete some online learning during the assessment process, to facilitate the beginning of their learning and training journey. Once approved by our Panel and Agency Decision Maker, all new foster carers must then complete the Training, Support and Development Standards within 12 months (friends and family carers within 18 months).

Kasper recognises that educational, professional and vocational qualifications are a vital part of training and development. Both theory and practice-based learning helps to develop individual and team performance, and directly impacts the service we are able to deliver for children and young people.

As well as the annual training programme, we support the personal and professional development of our foster carers, and encourage self-directed learning opportunities, through Personal Development Plans. These empower carers to make informed decisions about the most appropriate learning opportunities (relevant to their foster child's needs and/or skill base) and are reviewed through ongoing professional supervision, at annual appraisals and development meetings.

## Support

We base our philosophy at Kasper on a 'team approach' to fostering and, in promoting this, offer the following support services to our foster carers:

- **Named qualified supervising social worker**
  - A minimum of monthly supervision sessions with carers who have children in placement and a minimum of bi-monthly supervision sessions with carers who do not have children in placement.
  - Regular contact with carers who have children placed with them to include phone calls, attendance at Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings and Looked After Child (LAC) reviews, completion of Personal Development Plans and other meetings and consultations as required.
  - Frequent visits to carers who have Parent and Child Placements during the assessment period, and new carers and new children in placements will receive a higher level of support.
  - Birth children who live at home are contacted prior to their parent(s)' annual review and their feedback is gathered.

- **Sessional workers**
  - Direct work with children providing a range of activities (both in and outside the foster home); escort children to contact and supervise as needed; provide day time breaks for foster carers.
- **Specialist workers**
  - Independent workers who provide services to meet children's identified needs e.g. specialist teachers, psychotherapists, life story workers.
- **Out-of-hours support**
  - Telephone support and helpline available 24/7, including Bank and public holidays
- **Annual leave and respite care**
  - Carers are expected to have their own network of support. However Kasper also commits to offering up to 14 days' paid respite per year. Daytime respite care may also be provided where there is an identified need. Kasper is committed to assessing friends and family as respite carers where appropriate, as well as our own dedicated resource.
- **Support groups**
  - Regular support group meetings with other foster carers in the organisation are encouraged across the Kasper community.
- **Regular communications**
  - Regular newsletters and digital communications provide updates for staff, foster carers and children.
- **Activity days**
  - Fun days out and activities are offered to foster families, looked after children, birth children and family members.

## FOSTER CARERS' CHARTER

Kasper aims to provide stable and first rate foster care for children who are valued, supported and encouraged to grow and develop as individuals. To achieve this aim, we recruit, train and approve foster carers and deliver ongoing support to them.

### The foster carer's role

Foster carers are at the heart of the foster care service. They are assessed, trained and supported to look after children and young people in a family environment, providing them with stability, care and an opportunity to grow and develop and to reach their potential. Our working relationships are based on mutual trust and respect. This charter explains what we expect from each other.

### Kasper's commitment

1. Working in partnership
2. Information
3. Clarity about decisions
4. Support
5. Learning and development
6. Fair treatment
7. Communication and consultation

"Kasper will provide a secure base for carers, ensuring we are available to allow trust to develop with staff. We will sensitively help carers manage difficult feelings, ensure carers know they are part of a team, helping them know they are accepted and they are effective in their role as carers."

### Foster carer's commitment

1. Working in partnership
2. Respect for the child
3. Information
4. Learning, development and support
5. Communication and consultation

"As foster carers, we will be a secure base for children, be available to children, to help a child learn to trust us, we will allow children to be members of our family to help them feel like they belong. We will help children feel able, accepting them for who they are to help build their self-esteem and we will sensitively help them manage their feelings. We will advocate on behalf of the children in our care and ensure their voice is heard."

### Working in partnership

Kasper recognises that foster carers have skills and expertise, and make the biggest difference to the everyday lives of children in care. We will:

- Value your skills and expertise equally to those of other professionals.
- Recognise that you are the people who live with children every day and know them best.
- Include you in all meetings that affect you and the children you care for.
- Ensure that our fostering service will meet the standards set out in fostering regulations and guidance.
- Treat you without discrimination and respect you as a colleague.
- Respect confidentiality.

## Information

We know that information is vital for foster carers to provide care that meets the child's need. We will:

- Give you all the information you need to care safely for the child.
- Provide this information in writing prior to placement (except when there are emergency placements and it is not feasible to do so, when we will provide this information as soon as possible).
- Ensure that there is a placement plan drawn up in discussion with you and agreed with you in advance of placements (except in emergencies where this will be done as soon as possible).
- Provide you with information on all financial matters including tax, allowances and additional entitlements in your foster carer handbook.
- Provide you with full details of all relevant policies and procedures in your foster carer handbook.

## Clarity about decisions

We recognise that for children to live a full family life, foster carers must be able to make decisions regarding the children they foster. We will encourage local authorities and parents to delegate authority to ensure that, wherever possible, you are able to make everyday decisions so your fostered child is not treated differently to their peers and can feel part of your family. We will provide clarity about any decision you cannot take at the outset, so that everyone understands who is responsible for what.

## Support

We recognise that fostering can be an isolating and challenging task, and appropriate and timely support makes all the difference to the fostering family and to the child in your care. We will:

- Respond positively to requests for additional support.
- Provide you with monthly supervision and regular phone contact, as a minimum.
- Give you honest and open feedback, and provide you with access to 24-hour support from people with fostering expertise.
- Pay your allowances, expenses and fees in a timely manner.
- Pay fees that reflect the task.
- We will facilitate local support groups where you and your family can find support and share experiences with other fostering families.

In signing this charter, Kasper Fostering and the foster carer/s agree to reflect the spirit and intentions of this charter in their actions.



## COMPLAINTS & CHILD PROTECTION ALLEGATIONS

### Safeguarding and safe care

Kasper has adopted the principles of the 'Safeguarding Children Principles and Procedures' of Kent & Medway and London Safeguarding Partnerships. We also have our own child protection reporting procedure which we provide to all staff and carers, along with refresher training at planned intervals. The Kasper child protection procedures set down a clear format for reporting any child protection matter to the Kasper Registered Manager, Rebecca Askew, who is a senior and experienced social worker and acts as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The overall aim of our child protection procedures is to safeguard all children in our care. On receipt of any allegation, Kasper instructs the child's placing local authority; liaises and consults with the relevant area Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO); and notifies Ofsted where necessary. In addition, all new staff members joining the agency are subject to robust safer recruitment procedures. All agency administration and front-line staff have undertaken safer recruitment training.

Kasper is committed to providing a safe environment for all children, young people, foster carers and staff. As a childcare organisation we aim to ensure all our children can expect safe and effective care that helps achieve the best possible outcomes.

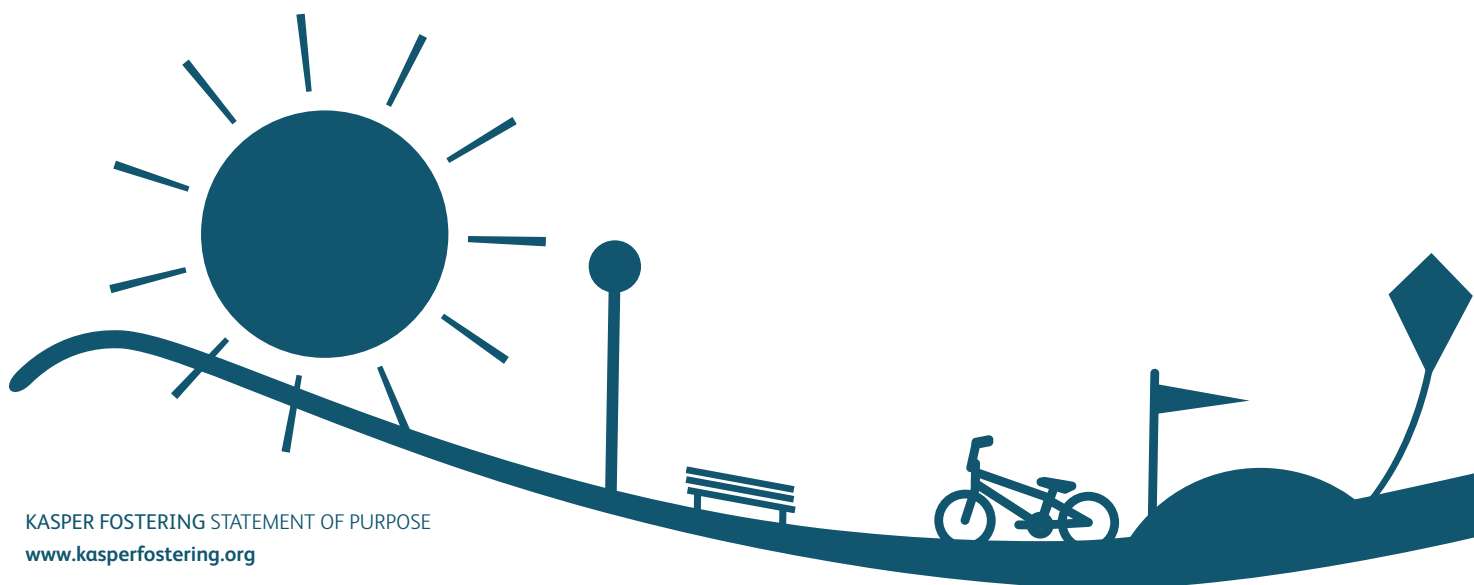
We aim to provide training and expertise in safeguarding, to ensure we are all aware of potential risks posed to children and families we look after.

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 in 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.

### Complaints

Kasper has a clear complaints procedure which is available on request. For a copy of our complaints procedure, if you are unhappy or wish to make a complaint, please contact the Complaints Officer (CO) and Responsible Individual Kate Lovell on 01227 275985.



## RECRUITING & APPROVING FOSTER CARERS

Kasper is committed to recruiting high quality foster carers who can provide placements that meet the needs of young people referred to us. We have a carefully designed selection process:

- Following an enquiry, a member of the recruitment team will contact the prospective applicant(s). Staff will complete an initial enquiry form obtaining basic information and answer any queries about fostering or the organisation that may arise.
- We send an information pack about Kasper, our services, the assessment process, support and development, fees and allowances.
- Later, if requested, we undertake a home visit at the home of prospective carers.
- Should the applicant(s) wish to proceed further and the visiting agency worker agrees they are able to meet Kasper's recruitment needs, the applicant completes and submits an application form.
- Applicants are then invited to undertake a 'Skills to Foster' preparation training programme. The course is led by social workers and experienced foster carers.
- Health and safety assessments together with statutory checks and personal references are applied for (including any references from employers and significant ex-partners). The applicant(s) will also be asked to undergo a medical with their GP. The completed Adult Health Form will be forwarded to Kasper's Medical Advisor for a health assessment and recommendations.
- After successful completion of the training programme, a suitably qualified and experienced social worker carries out a full assessment, alongside our conducting of Stage One checks. This information is recorded on the BAAF Form F 2018 that sets out 'evidence' of their ability and suitability to foster.
- If Stage One information is not satisfactorily concluded, the assessment may cease, if agreed by our Kasper Decision Maker.
- On completion of all satisfactory statutory checks, including a medical and completion of a Form F Assessment recommending approval, the applicant(s) attend Kasper's Fostering Panel where their assessment is considered.
- The Kasper Fostering Panel then decides whether to recommend approval and if so, the criteria, e.g. number and age of children to be fostered, by the foster carers.
- If a decision is taken not to recommend approval then the applicants are advised of their rights and route to appeal.
- This recommendation is then passed to the Decision Maker for a final decision.
- Following successful approval, all new foster carers are expected to undertake induction and core modules of training as part of their ongoing development, and are expected to complete Training Support and Development Standards.
- Safer recruitment principles are followed during the recruitment of foster carers and all our Form F assessors have been supported to undertake safer recruitment training.

## REVIEWING FOSTER CARERS

Foster carer reviews are to establish whether or not a foster carer and their household remain suitable to care for children, and to consider if their terms of approval remain appropriate.

In line with the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, (Regulation 28), and the Review Policy of the Agency, the approval of all foster carers is revisited on an annual basis. As well as consulting with the foster carer(s), feedback is also sought from; the fostered children and young people in placement, placing authorities, carers' birth children (where they live at home), schools and colleges, other members of the household and any other linked individuals who may inform the review process.

Foster carers are required to attend Panel for their first review. Health and safety checks are carried out annually on all foster homes and Safer Caring Family Plans are reviewed at least once a year. All statutory checks are renewed on a three-yearly basis.

## Membership & Affiliations

Kasper Fostering is a proud member of a number of organisations involved in fostering, children's services and practice excellence. We are an active member of local and national forums for Independent Fostering Providers in Kent and London, and chair the regional and national steering groups for The Fostering Network.

### The Fairer Fostering Partnership

The Fairer Fostering Partnership is a group of charitable and not-for-profit fostering agencies across the UK whose members look after over 2,000 children in care. It represents the views, perspectives and experience of its member agencies, of which Kasper is proud to be one. Fairer Fostering also has a lobbying function that aims to advocate for children in respect of regulation, as well as representing its membership at central government level.

### CoramBAAF

CoramBAAF is the UK's leading adoption and fostering membership association, which promotes the highest standards of practice in adoption, fostering and childcare services in social work, health, legal and other professional bodies on behalf of children separated from their birth families. BAAF aims to increase public understanding of the issues and to act as an independent voice for children, informing and influencing policy-makers, all those responsible for children and young people and public opinion at large.

### The Fostering Network

The Fostering Network is a leading fostering charity in the UK. It recognises and champions the vital role that foster families play in transforming children's lives. It works with fostering services to ensure they get the help and support they need.

### Foster Talk

Foster Talk is an independent, non-profit organisation providing professional support services to foster carers across the UK. From impartial advice to preferential pricing arrangements, they offer a comprehensive package over the last ten years.

### Investors in People

Investors in People is owned by the UK government and managed nationally at Head Office by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES).

Investors in People helps organisations embed excellence, recognise achievement and value people, with a powerful journey to accreditation that makes a real difference.

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[www.kasperfostering.org](http://www.kasperfostering.org)

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