**Practice Guidance – Changes to Contact Arrangements – Covid 19**

The Family Contact Centre will be closed, initially for two weeks, from Friday 20th March 2020 at 6pm, originally with a plan to re-open from Monday 6th April although this is increasingly unlikely.

FCC are cancelling all weekend contacts directly with families and foster carers. From Monday 23rd, we will deploy our staff to work remotely and will be scheduling video calls with all of the 97 families on the current caseload. These calls will be at various frequencies depending on the current contact arrangements / agreements and will be based on a minimum of a 30 minute supervised video call between child(ren) and parents / family members listed on the existing contact agreements. The service will operate remotely from Monday to Friday 10am to 6pm only.

The centre are in the process of sending out information about the video call system to supervising social workers - asking them to forward information and links etc. to foster carers. We will be also be emailing the allocated social workers directly and asking for consent to book in the video call contact session and / or to allow for case updates to take place; to share any considerations or risk information concerned with a specific family.

From this Monday 23rd March the centre will be closed to the public but operating with a skeleton management team until Wednesday 25th March. We will be co-ordinating contact arrangements. We can be contacted via fcc@earlystartgroup.com (throughout the closure period) and on our main number 0203 373 4300 up until Wednesday.

We realise that these arrangements may not be ideal for every family. However, they are a good option to work remotely and keep families connected at a time when a lot of children, carers and parents are self-isolating and the Government is advising against non-essential travel. We will keep you posted as develops but please contact Roweida 07807819114 or Nadia 07870515790 directly, as above, if you have any concerns or questions.

Justin Elder

Managing Director