Foster Carers Recording Policy

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Accessibility

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# Standards and Regulations

Fostering Services National Minimum Standards:

* [Standard 1 - The child's wishes and feelings and those significant to them](http://www.minimumstandards.org/fost_one.html).
* [Standard 26 - Records](http://www.minimumstandards.org/fost_twentysix.html).

Related Information

* [Data Protection Act 2018](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/data-protection-act-2018)
* [General Data Protection Regulations – 'Right of Access by the Data Subject' (Information Commissioners Office)](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/)

Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care:

* [Standard 1 - Understand the principles and values essential for fostering children and young people](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bracknellforest/files/foster_care_tsd_standards_guidance.pdf).
* [Standard 2 - Understand your role as a foster carer](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bracknellforest/files/foster_care_tsd_standards_guidance.pdf).
* [Standard 4 - Know how to communicate effectively](https://www.fosteringhandbook.com/bracknellforest/files/foster_care_tsd_standards_guidance.pdf).

# Introduction

A child's records are an important source of information for them. They provide information about the sequence of events which brought about Children's Social Care intervention into their life and (in many instances) explain the reasons for decisions about their care. These can be key to helping a child to understand themselves and their past. It may also be helpful for the child in later life when they want to understand more about their childhood.

As a professional it is really important that Foster Carers contribute to these records and keep a Record of events about all children/young people placed with you.

This will help you to contribute to making plans about the child/young person's future.

Records also help to make sure that situations are clearly understood and this can help if allegations are made against Foster Carers. They may also be used to contribute towards a Court hearing or to make important decisions about the child/young person.

If you think that something is so private that the young person should not see what you are going to write, you should contact your supervising social worker to talk about this and how this should be recorded.

Children’s Social Care follow the guidance from Language that Cares - [TACT-Language-that-cares-2019\_online.pdf (sharepoint.com)](https://bfcouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/caf/dept/ADMKPS116/Useful%20Resources/TACT-Language-that-cares-2019_online.pdf) When completing your record sheets it is important to remember that children and young people may access their records as adults and will have the opportunity to read the record sheets you have shared.

# What to Record

Case records should reflect children's lives and how they are being supported. They should reflect a child's achievements and clearly relate to the plans for their futures. Records should help a child understand their histories, background and experiences. They are able to see them, challenge them or contribute to them as they wish, with appropriate support.

At the Placement Planning Meeting, it should be made clear to parents, and children (depending on their age) what you will be recording, how this will be used and how long the records will be kept. This helps to develop an open and honest relationship; you will only be recording exactly what happens.

The following information should be recorded in daily record sheets –

* Significant events for the child such as birthdays, celebrations, religious/cultural events that are important to them;
* Contact - with the child's family/others, how was the child, how was the family/others, when they did not turn up and any reason given;
* Details of visits, meetings with social workers or other professionals and the child's reaction if any;
* School/nursery/educational setting - any important conversations you have with school, open evening, concerns or good things;
* Dates of medical or dental appointments and treatment given. Include dates of cancelled or rearranged appointments;
* Dates and types of immunisation;
* Date, type and length of any illnesses;
* Details of any accidents or injuries, however slight. Name any witnesses and action taken. Record the time, date and name of the social worker to whom the incident was reported;
* Comments the child makes that give you cause for concern, record these using the child's own words;
* Details of the child's behaviour that causes concern. Record their actual behaviour, what happened before the behaviour and how you dealt with it;
* Any positive improvements, achievements and significant events for the child;
* Dates when the child is away from the foster home – with family, friends, school trips, introductions to new carers;
* If the child/young person goes missing;
* Details of times when the child is with other carers such as babysitters and who they were;
* Any involvement with the Police;
* Details of any theft or damage caused by the child;
* Details of any specific incidents e.g. if the child goes missing, events or changes of circumstances of your household. Include any complaint disagreements with the child or their family;
* Any significant milestones in the child's development such as their first word or first steps;
* Any other significant event or information.

# What not to record

The child and young person’s Record sheets must be a factual account of their lives. They should not include a Foster Carers own opinion or view. This will be discussed as part of a Foster Carers supervision visit and will be recorded in accordance with the visit record.

Record sheets may be read by a child, young person or their family. All recordings should be made in a way that does not use jargon or discriminatory language.

# Frequency of Record Sheets

When a child or young person is moved into the care of Foster Carers the Record sheets are to be written daily for each child, on a separate record.

Children and Young people that have been matched long term with Foster Carers and are settled in the home, can have the Record sheets written weekly instead. This is to be agreed at a Child Looked After review meeting and all professionals must be in agreement for this to happen.

Record sheets should be completed within 48 hours and must be submitted via the online link every two weeks at least. When a child or young person is initially placed with Foster Carers they may be asked to submit these weekly.

It is important to keep the Record sheets up to date in case they are needed, as detailed above, for court or in relation to allegation for example.

# Format of Record Sheets

The Fostering Service will provide Foster Carers with an online link where they will be able to complete the Record sheets. Guidance and training is provided to all Foster Carers on this and ongoing support is available.

There are two types of Record sheets that can be selected from the link provided, depending on if they are to be recorded daily or weekly. Please see appendix (to be attached when created by Mosaic team)

# When a child moves Placement or a Foster Carer De-registers

When a child or young person moves placement the online link for their Record sheets will no longer be accessible by the previous Foster Carer. This will be amended within the department and no action is needed by the Foster Carer.

When a Foster Carer ceases being an approved as a Foster Carer for Bracknell Forest Council, they will not be able to access the online link. Access to this will be amended within the department and no action is needed by the Foster Carer.

# Safe Storage of Records

When Record sheets are submitted via the online link they will be automatically placed on Bracknell Forest Councils recording system, Mosaic. As such they will be retained on the file within standard retention timescales and will be stored safely and securely.

Foster Carers will be able to access up to 3 months of historic Record sheets via the online portal for their own reference. If they need to refer to previous Record sheet their Supervising Social Worker can obtain this for them.

By using the online link to submit Record sheets, no information or personal data is stored on the computer, mobile phone or tablet that a Foster Carer is using. This information is stored via Bracknell Forest Council servers.

There is an option with the online link to print the Record sheets. This could be used to print a paper copy or to convert it to PDF copy that could be saved on the computer. If you do this we need to ensure that these copies are also stored securely;

* Paper copies must be stored either in a locked drawer of your home or in the lockable box that all Foster Carers are provided with
* PDF versions must be stored in a password protected folder within your computer.

Your Supervising Social Worker may need to check this during supervision visits to ensure that we are complying with confidentiality procedures.

# Training and Support

The Fostering Service will provide training around recording, data protection and information sharing. As a Foster Carer you must complete this training within the first 6 months of approval. However if there is anything that is not clear then Foster Carers should seek advice from the supervising social worker and/or children's social worker.