Foster Carer Supervision - Frequency Guidelines.

Fostering NMS standard 21

“Foster carers receive the support and supervision they need in order to care properly for children placed with them”.

GCC expectations relating to foster carer supervision includes:

1. All Foster Carers should have monthly supervision unless agreed with a Team Manager that it can take place less frequent.
2. Foster carers who appropriately have less frequent supervision must have a minimum of one supervision every 8 weeks.
3. Inactive FC should have supervision minimum of 8 weekly, the discussion should include timescales of when they will actively foster again and what support they need to do this.
4. All supervisions should be recorded and finalised on LL within 5 working days of the meeting.
5. FC should have a copy of the supervision meeting within 5 working days.
6. All foster carers will have a foster carer agreement which is updated as needed.

A caveat to the guidelines below the Supervising Social Worker should always consider the following points.

* There should always be additional communication and sometimes visits to the foster carers in between statutory supervision.
* If a foster carer requests monthly supervision, but the department considers bi monthly appropriate the foster carers request will be honoured.
* Three monthly joint visits with the child’s social worker is an expectation in addition to regular visits and statutory supervision.
* Statutory supervision should be coordinated with the child social worker to ensure visits are regular and carried out across the weeks rather than all in one week. This will ensure regular oversight of the child and placement.
* All Team Manager must agree to any change in frequency to foster carers supervision.
* Regular recordings from the foster carer will be expected in between supervision.
* The child social worker must be informed and agree with less frequent supervision.

These guidelines are not intended to be fixed criteria. All decisions relating to foster carer frequency should be discussed in social workers case supervision with the relevant line manager and also with the foster carer to ensure the guidelines are incorporated into any decision relating to the frequency of supervision.

Foster carers who should always have monthly supervision include those who are:

* have or are subject to an investigation or S of C up until their next annual review
* have a current exemption
* offering EDT placements only
* Friends and Family fostering arrangements
* not meeting the GCC fostering expectations relating to training, recording and support group attendance etc
* Providing a placement where children are sharing a bedroom with an active bedroom sharing risk assessment. In their first year of approval.
* In their first year of approval.

Foster carers who can be considered for bi monthly supervision include those who are:

* Providing short break and respite for specific children
* Family Link day care only carers
* long term matched with children and there are no othering ongoing concerns relating to the placement/foster carers, including the birth children’s views
* currently on hold and not actively fostering
* Only providing a Staying Put arrangement.