**ACE Quick Guide to Fostering for Adoption Placements**

FFA placement can **only** be made once the ADM for the relevant Local Authority has agreed the fostering for adoption arrangement, the **Reg 22c** form has been **signed** and the relevant orders are in place, ie ICO or s.20 for a relinquished child. If in care proceedings the court must be made aware of the plan to place the child in a FFA placement. The Reg 22c must also be in place before any arrangements are in place for FFA carers to visit a child who is still in hospital.

Prior to placement or at the point of placement at the latest, the FFA carers should be provided with from the **child’s social worker**, anonymised reports that summarise the child's background and health history and the rationale for the fostering for adoption placement. However, the birth family's right to confidentiality must be respected unless the court has given agreement to disclosure of personal and background information. The FFA carers for the duration of the placement should be provided with the same information and paperwork as mainstream foster carers, that are relevant to the child ie care plan, placement plan, review reports.

The financial arrangements need to be discussed with the FFA carers prior to the placement being made, to include the fostering allowances they will receive and what this covers, including the requirements of the Local Authority to record how allowances are spent.

As an FFA placement is foremostly a fostering placement, the child should be placed with the FFA carers formally by the **child’s social worker** as with any mainstream foster placement. At this stage of the process the FFA carers are not matched adopters for the child and therefore there is not the expectation for them to collect the child, unless this has been agreed as part of the placement by the **ACE social worker and child’s social worker**, ie where the FFA carers are bringing the child home from hospital. In these circumstances there remains the requirement for the **child’s social worker** to appropriately ‘place’ the child and complete the necessary paperwork in line with their local authority expectations.

FFA carers will be required to sign the **Foster Care Agreement** used by the child’s local authority, requiring them to comply with fostering regulations as foster carers. The **ACE social worker** will ensure that this is signed and shared with the relevant fostering service and the child’s social worker for it to be kept on file.

The prospective adopters will receive the fostering allowances (paid by the Local Authority to the FFA carers) but are exempt from any payment for skills scheme for foster carers as their primary approval is as adopters. The **child’s social worker** is responsible for setting up the payment of allowances with the fostering service and requesting the fostering service to open a file for the FFA carers.

The **child's social worker** is to complete all notifications in accordance with Care Planning Regulations, taking caution to ensure that placement details are kept confidential, this needs to be made clear to all other professionals including health and education.

Family time (contact) will be in place between the child and their birth parent during the FFA placement. The FFA carers **must** be provided with a copy of the contact arrangements, agreed at court, at the point of placement. To include the dates, times and location of all family time sessions. FFA carers are **not** expected to transport the child **direct** to the contact centre, to preserve the confidentiality of the placement. They are expected to support the transport and arrangements should be made for the FFA carers to meet the family time supervisor at a pre agreed venue local to the contact centre, where the transfer of the child will take place.

The details of the FFA carers **must** be kept confidential and should not be shared with birth parents or family under any circumstance, this includes their last name and address, telephone, email details.

FFA carers should not be invited to attend the same meetings as the birth parents/family, unless this has previously been agreed as part of the care plan. The **ACE social worker** is able to represent the FFA carers at meetings where separate meetings are not possible. When are reports are shared with birth parents, they should be checked by the **child’s social worker** to ensure that no identifiable details re the FFA carers are shared with birth family. In the case of medical reports for the child, birth family can be offered a separate appointment or call with the medical advisor to discuss the report.

**All** visits to the FFA carers and child by the **child’s social worker** and the **ACE social worker** should be shared with each party and kept on the relevant files for the Local Authority and ACE. This includes the FFA carers fostering supervision, which will be undertaken by the ACE social worker, unless otherwise arranged, which should also be shared with the local authority fostering service.

Visits to the child in the FFA placement should follow the statutory guidance, to include the child being visited within the first week of placement by the **child’s social worker** and no more than 6 weekly intervals thereafter. The **ACE social worker** will visit a minimum of monthly and will undertaken supervision with the FFA carers as part of the fostering role, this will be in line with the child’s local authority fostering service requirements.

All meetings for a child in care will take place as would be expected for any child in foster care, to include a placement planning meeting within 5 days of placement, statutory review within 20 working days of placement and arrangements for an initial health assessment to be made. The **child’s social worker** is responsible for making these arrangements and must share the information with the **ACE social worker** as well as the FFA carers.

Once the Placement Order for the child has been granted and the match heard at adoption panel and the ADM for the local authority has ratified the match; the placement under FFA ends. An adoption placement planning meeting still needs to be held, this will be chaired by an **ACE manager** or **Advanced Social Worker**, to put in place the adoption placement plan and this should be completed within 2 weeks of the ADM decision being made. The **child’s social worker** is responsible for requesting fostering allowances to be stopped from the date of the ADM, to ensure that FFA carers are not overpaid on the allowances. An adoption review chaired by the IRO should be arranged within 20 working days of the placement transitioning to an adoption placement.