

# Recording Policy for Fostering Services



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## **1. Introduction:**

The Local Authority Fostering Service (Wales) Regulations 2018 and its associated Code of Practice for Local Authority Fostering Services 2019, require that Bridgend County Borough Council Fostering Service (Foster Wales Bridgend) has, and implements, a written policy that supports foster carers to understand the importance of record keeping and provides guidance for the completion of daily logs for any child(ren) they care for.

The following policy covers the following areas as set out by Regulation 37 of the above regulations:

- the records to be maintained by the provider on the children and foster parents using the service.
- the daily records to be maintained by the foster parents for any child placed with them.
- the timescales that records need to be maintained by the provider and foster parents.

## **2. Legal and Regulatory Framework**

The following set of legislation and policies have contributed to and been considered in developing this policy.

- The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- The Local Authority Fostering Services (Wales) Regulations 2018
- The Code of Practice for Local Authority Fostering Services 2019
- General Data Protection Regulation 2016
- The Fostering Panels (Establishment and Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2018

## **3. The Purpose of Recordings:**

Everyone who works with children who experience care will be involved in recording. Foster carers play a key role in the care of Children Experiencing Care and are uniquely placed to record important information while caring for a child.

It is essential that accurate records are kept, because:

- Records can offer children and young people an opportunity to look back at what has happened during the placement, and to understand why decisions were made.
- Records can help to promote a child's identity.
- Recordings can provide an opportunity to reflect and allow analysis of behaviour.
- They allow sharing of information with other professionals to enhance the child's life.
- They assist in providing continuity when there are changes in care.

- Records can provide accurate information that can be used in plans and assessments about your fostered child.
- The information may be required in court.
- Recording can be useful if allegations are made against a foster carer. It also forms part of ensuring foster carers are meeting the accountability and standards expected.
- Recording supports the supervision and professional development processes of a foster carer.

#### **4. Records to be maintained by Foster Wales Bridgend**

The following list is the list of records that will be kept and maintained by Foster Wales Bridgend with regard to the children and foster carers using the foster service:

- Name and Date Of Birth of children placed in foster care
- Name and contact information of all foster carers
- Date of the Foster Carer's approval by the Fostering Panel and the review date
- Dates of commencement and ending of children placed with foster carers.
- Assessments of foster carers and information required as part of the assessment process in accordance with the The Fostering Panels (Establishment and Functions) (Wales) Regulations 2018
- Correspondence received regarding foster carers that may include but not limited to compliments, concerns and complaints
- Records of visits to foster carers
- The total number of foster carers registered with the service.
- Records of receiving foster carer daily logs
- Records of concerns regarding a child or foster carer
- Training courses provided to foster carers
- Any other information that is relevant to fostering approval or suitability to foster.

Supervising Social Workers and Children's Social workers should follow the requirements of Bridgend County Borough Council's (BCBC) Social Services and Wellbeing's [Recording Guidance](#).

#### **5. The Content and Style of Foster Carer Recordings**

Foster Carers are expected to keep a record of all significant events and incidents during the child's placement with them. They must include anything that they think is important, even if it seems a small detail. However, they are not required to record anything or everything each day.

Foster Carers are encouraged to be consistent in the completion of recordings. The frequency of recordings may vary depending on the child they are caring for and their care and support plan. For example, where a child is recently accommodated there may be a need to record daily to understand patterns in the child's behaviour or

provide information to court, however if they have cared for a child for a number of years the need may be less frequent. The Foster Carer will discuss and agree with the Supervising Social Worker and child's social worker the level of recording that is needed.

Foster Carers should ensure that all records are relevant, accurate, up to date, and stored securely in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Recordings need to be clear and legible, and the language should be kept simple and free of jargon. These records should be useful to the child or young person now and in the future and the foster carer should write in a way that they would be happy for the child or young person to read what has been written. However, in the event of a child making a disclosure/allegation care should be taken to record factually what was said by the child. Recordings should offer a balanced view of the child's life and include the good points as well as the more difficult points. Where requests are made from children and young people to view their files, consideration will be given to any confidential or inaccurate information that cannot be shared and will be redacted.

Records should be kept in date order, on the recording log provided by the Fostering Service as per Appendix 1, with a separate log for each child placed with them. Recording logs should be completed either on paper and stored securely in a lockable drawer or suitable alternative or completed electronically utilising a password that only the foster carer and supervising social worker have, stored and shared securely with their supervising social worker. Hard copies of the recording log are available for use in emergencies.

Foster carers should avoid recording opinion and stick to the facts wherever possible, however, if there is the need to record an opinion about an event, the foster carer must make sure that this is clearly stated as their opinion.

Records should include the following:

- Details of the improvements and achievements of the fostered child.
- Any physical interventions. The record must detail what happened before, when it happened, and how it was dealt with. All incidents need to be reported to your supervising social worker within 24 hours in line with the requirements of the fostering service policy on the appropriate use of control and restraint. If there are any injuries because of the incident, these need to be reported immediately to the supervising social worker or to the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) if outside of office hours and ensure that the injured individual receives the appropriate medical treatment.
- Quotes or comments from the fostered child or young person. These can be useful for the child or young person to look back on and can provide important evidence for assessments.
- Details of delegated authority decisions and how you reach such decisions.

- Any significant changes in the child's behaviour (both positive and negative changes), and how this was dealt with.
- Family events and traditions, such as Birthdays, Holidays and Festivals, which the child is part of.
- Contact with other agencies and professionals.
- Details of any times that the child is away from the foster home, with friends, birth family, or missing.
- Details of contact visits, including how the child or young person responded, and any reasons for failed visits.
- Disagreements and complaints, and how they were dealt with.
- Details of visits by the child's social worker and the supervising social worker, including details of any missed meetings and any agreed actions.
- Details of any theft by the foster child, or damage caused by the foster child.
- Details of any specific events or changes in the foster carer household that may have an impact on the foster child.

Details of consultations with health professionals and administration of medication should be recorded in the Child's Health Record, in line with the Management and Administration of Medication for Fostering Services policy. However, daily recording logs should contain reference to any consultation or administration of medicine.

Details of any accidents/incidents that occur while a child is in the care of a foster carer needs to be recorded and reported in line with the Fostering Service Management and Administration of Medication for Children Looked After policy.

## **6. What information will Foster Carer's record**

Foster carers will be provided with a recording log for each child or young person placed with them as per Appendix 1. The Foster Carer must use separate logs for each child.

The following are examples of some kinds of information that a Foster Carer may need to record:

### Health and Development Records

- Details of developmental milestones and achievements – a developmental chart is available from your health visitor, or for younger children the information you record should complement the 'Red Log'.
- Patterns to allergic reactions, or asthma attacks.
- Symptoms and progress of any illnesses.
- Reference to appointments and telephone calls with medical practitioners.
- Reference to medication that you give to the child or young person, prescribed and non-prescribed.

- Record details of any chemical treatments for head lice.
- Record the child's response and any reactions.
- Record any self-administered medication for young people assessed as being of the age and understanding to self-administer.

## Education

- Record details of all visits and telephone calls regarding education, including Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings, parents evening etc.
- Record achievements and attainment at school, or school related activities.
- Record details of extra-curricular activities (social/ leisure/ play activities) in and out of school.

## Social worker and other professionals' visits

- All visits and telephone calls from Children's Social Care staff, including your supervising social worker, and professionals other than Health and Education.
- The record of all appointments for the foster carer should be kept separately.

## Contact

- Details of all forms of contact between the child or young person and their birth family; include details of all telephone calls, text messages, emails and visits.
- Complete the record if planned contact did not go ahead, recording the reason why the contact did not go ahead.
- Record the child or young person's responses and reactions to any contact arrangements.

## Missing from foster home

- The Foster Wales Bridgend - Missing policy should be followed.
- An up-to-date child information form should be kept for use by the police - this should be updated every 6 months.
- For some young people, assessed as being at risk from influences in the community, record their significant "comings and goings" and any regular visitors they have to the foster home.

## Incidents and Injuries

- Reference to any incident/ accident and record when the incident/accident form is completed and sent to the supervising social worker.
- Always inform the child's social worker and the supervising social worker of all significant incidents and injuries.



- Incidents include an episode of self-harming, any incident that involves the foster carer or a member of their household being harmed or injured by the child or young person.
- Details of any incidents, which involve physically restraining the child or young person.

The foster carer should always inform the child's social worker and their supervising social worker of any of these incidents.

### Family Life

- Record anything about family life that is significant or important. Family traditions and funny stories are important as these can help the child recall significant events and help with understanding their life journey.
- Record family events, religious events, family celebrations, the child's achievements, rewards and sanctions that were given and any staying visitors to the household.
- Record any positive behaviour or positive changes in behaviour e.g., if a child is kind or caring.
- Record any difficult behaviour that a child displays, how it was managed, what worked, what did not work, what the possible 'triggers' might have been.

Respite carers will be provided with recording sheets to be completed for each episode of respite care. The foster carer will give these sheets to your supervising social worker who will ensure they are uploaded to the child's electronic file and any pertinent information forwarded to the main carers SSW to share with the main carers.

## **7. Foster Carer responsibilities in relation to storage and confidentiality**

Whilst the Foster Carer records hold information on looked after children and young people, this is on behalf of The Fostering Service. All information provided about a child, who is or has been placed with a foster carer is confidential and governed by the Data Protection Act 2018. Information about a child, young person, or his or her family should only be provided to another person if it is for the purpose of the child or young person's protection or welfare, consent from the local authority should be sought before sharing any information unless failure to do so would present an immediate risk of harm to the child. Whilst the child is in placement with a foster carer, they are expected to keep information in a safe, secure and confidential manner in their home, whether the documents are electronic or in paper format.

Recording logs should be kept electronically using the word document your supervising social worker provides. When using a computer to record information, make sure the computer and the files are password protected with a secure password. Do not send confidential information as part of the email message itself, as non-BCBC

email addresses will not be secure. Foster Carers will only use initials and not names when sending a document electronically. Any documents to be sent via secure email using egress or password protected with the password shared via telephone with the receiving Supervising Social Worker.

We recognise that issues of confidentiality relate not only to record keeping, but also in a wider sense to conversations the Foster Carer may have with family and friends and in the community. There are situations where there is a legitimate need to share information relating to the background of the fostered child with family or friends who are involved in their care, for the purpose of the child's protection and welfare. However, seemingly innocent conversations within the community could lead to accidental breaches of the child's confidentiality. A breach of confidentiality could lead to a review, through the Fostering panel, of the suitability of the individual as a foster carer. If a Foster Carer has any concerns about confidentiality, or if they are worried, they may have accidentally breached confidentiality, they must talk to their supervising social worker.

## **8. Responsibilities of the Supervising Social Worker**

The supervising social worker is required to regularly read the recording logs, and record receipt of logs on the foster carer's electronic file before passing to the child's social worker to store on the child or young person's file within the children's social care electronic recording system (WCCIS).

For respite carers, the supervising social worker will ensure that the recording logs are shared with the primary foster carer to be included in the child's recording log where appropriate or passed to the child's social worker to upload electronically to the child's electronic file.

Where there is a requirement of court to submit recording logs the foster carer will need to send these to the supervising social worker, who will ensure these are submitted to the child's social worker, in line with the required deadlines. If the supervising social worker is absent from work, when the logs are required, the foster carer will send the recording logs directly to the child's social worker.

## **9. End of Placement Recording**

At the end of a placement, the record log will be sent to the supervising social worker and the child's social worker is informed the log has been collected. All electronic logs are to be deleted from the Foster Carer's computer. The Foster Carer is required to keep a record of the child's name, the date the placement commenced and ended, and the date when the information was returned to Foster Wales.

## **10. Further Information and Advice on Recordings**

Good practice tips:

- Be accurate
- Be concise
- Avoid personal views
- Record child's comments in the child's words
- Keep records separate for different children
- Record in date order
- Keep all information secure and confidential
- Write in a way that you would be happy for the child or young person to read what you have written

Talk to your supervising social worker if you are unsure of what you should be recording, and remember, the information that you record may be invaluable to your fostered child.

## Appendix 1 – Foster Care Record

### Foster Wales Bridgend

#### DAILY/ WEEKLY FOSTERING CASE RECORDING SHEET

|                    |                     |                 |          |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Date of Recording: | Child/Young Person: | Date Completed: | Page No: |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------|

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
|               | <b>Health – Any relevant appointments, injuries, illness or therapy? Please note any medication administered and applicable dates and any first aid administered.</b>       |
|               |   |
|               | <b>Education – Any matters arising, attendance or awards?</b>   |
|               |   |
|               | <b>Behaviour – Any significant behaviour or incidents (positive or negative)?</b>   |
|               |   |
|               | <b>Contact - Any visits that have occurred, issues or problems?</b>   |
|               |   |
|               | <b>Leisure – Any activities, outings or achievements?</b>   |
|               |   |
|               | <b>Please note: If there is nothing of significance to report insert not applicable in the column. Please use continuation form if you have more information to record.</b> |
| <b>Author</b> | <b>PLEASE LEGIBLY SIGN AND DATE ALL ENTRIES</b>   |

**CASE RECORDING SHEET (continued):**

| <b>Date of Recording:</b> | <b>Please use the relevant heading if you have continued information to record.</b> |
|---------------------------|---|
|                           |   |
| <b>Author</b>             | PLEASE LEGIBLY SIGN AND DATE ALL ENTRIES  |