

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
KENT FOSTERING SERVICE
FOSTERING PANEL CHAIR JOB DESCRIPTION

1. To Chair the Fostering Panel ensuring that all items of business are covered and that the panels operate in accordance with Fostering Regulations, National Minimum Standards and Kent County Council policies and procedures.
2. To utilise professional and personal skill to chair complex meetings.
3. To prepare for panel meetings, reading panel papers carefully in advance of the Panel meeting, identifying key issues and alerting the Panel Adviser if necessary to ensure, as far as possible, that the case is adequate for submission to panel.
4. To ensure that all those attending panel are treated with respect and courtesy.
5. To address diversity issues and promote inclusive and anti-discriminatory practice at all times.
6. To ensure that Panel members consider only those matters that pertain to duties, functions and business of the Panel.
7. To facilitate the active participation of all panel members in contributing to the panel's consideration of cases. To ensure that the Panel is clear about the reasons for the recommendations and that the recommendations are clear, well evidenced and have been accurately recorded to put before the Agency's Decision Maker.
8. To assist in developing, promoting and monitoring policies and procedures and high standards of work in the fostering service.
9. To contribute to an annual report on the business of the panel.

10. To ensure that clear and accurate minutes are written, which record in detail the reasons for the recommendations made by Panel. To record any serious reservations which panel members may have and to be involved in checking and agreeing draft minutes with other panel members before they are sent to the decision-maker within the timescales agreed.
11. To liaise with the decision maker, Panel adviser, Panel administrator and other senior managers as required and meet the required timescales for approving panel minutes.
12. To ensure, in collaboration with the Panel adviser, that senior managers are aware of significant issues in relation to both individual cases and more general matters.
13. Together with the Panel Adviser, to review the performance of central list and panel members on an annual schedule and ensure that these appraisals are completed.
14. To attend the required annual training face to face (or virtually when necessary) and e-learning.
15. To safeguard the confidentiality of all panel papers and panel discussions and ensure technology is stored securely.

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
KENT FOSTERING SERVICE
CHAIR OF FOSTERING PANEL
PERSON SPECIFICATION**

EXPERIENCE

- Experience, either professionally or personally or both, of the placement of children in foster families and of children being cared for away from their birth family.
- Experience of chairing complex professional and multi-agency meetings.
- The skills and experience necessary for chairing a Fostering Panel (Regs)

ABILITIES

- The authority and competence to chair a Panel ensuring that the business is covered.
- Ability to chair meetings effectively, to enable all Panel Members, presenting social workers and service users to participate constructively in all Panel considerations.
- Ability to summarise information to enable Panel to arrive at a recommendation with clear evidence and supporting reasons.
- The ability to analyse and explain complex information.
- The ability to identify key issues, problems and solutions.
- Ability to ask questions that are relevant, sensitive, diplomatic and appropriate.
- The ability to manage the expression of strongly held but possibly conflicting views by panel members and to help the Panel reach a Recommendation which takes account of all these views.

- Ability to warmly welcome people attending Panel and ensure that Panel Members are able to explore any concerns they have about matters placed before them.
- Ability to keep the child at the forefront of every recommendation.
- Ability to scrutinise, monitor and challenge practice
- Good communication and listening skills and an ability to read and process large quantities of complex and sometimes distressing information.
- Ability to use personal knowledge, skills and experience to contribute to discussion and decision making in a balanced and informed manner.
- Ability to work with other members of the Panel representing their own perspectives.

KNOWLEDGE

- Good understanding of the legal context in which decisions are made by Childrens Service departments about children and young people who require to be looked after in foster care.
- Knowledge of the fostering regulations as they relate to the approval and registration of foster carers including connected person carers.
- Good understanding of the needs of children and young people in general and of Children in Care including an appreciation of the effect of separation and loss on children.
- Awareness of the richness of diverse kinds of families and their potential for meeting children's needs.
- An understanding of the purpose and function of the Panel and of the Kent Fostering Service which the Panel is serving.
- A good understanding and appreciation of living in a multi-racial and multi-cultural society.

ATTITUDES

- A genuine interest in childcare in general and fostering in particular.
- A commitment to working within the principles of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, the Children Act 1989 the care planning and review 2010 and the Fostering regulations 2011 & 2013, Kent Fostering Statement of Purpose and Kent Policies and Procedures
- A commitment to keeping children as the focus of recommendations.
- A commitment to Foster Care as a means of meeting a child's needs for family life.
- To be attentive to the particular needs of individual children and their families and especially to their needs arising from their ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, culture and sexual orientation.
- A commitment to equal opportunities and an anti-discriminatory and inclusive approach to people.
- Confidence to express own point of view, ability to articulate this within Panel discussion and to listen to and give due weight to, the views of other Panel Members.
- A commitment to ensure Foster Carers are well supported in their role of caring for children with complex needs.
- A valuing of diversity in relation to issues of ethnicity, religion, gender, disability and sexual orientation.
- An understanding of and a commitment to the need for confidentiality.
- A willingness to increase knowledge and understanding of issues through reading, discussion and training.
- A willingness to contribute constructively to the annual review of their role as Panel Chair.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- Must not be a current employee of Kent County Council.
- Commitment to continuing personal and professional development to maintain and update knowledge and skills.
- Satisfactory DBS disclosure.