

Community Impact Assessment

West Midlands Fostering Framework April 2024

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➤ **Equality Assessment**

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Age - older and younger people</p>	<p>Children and young people (0-18) in care will be able to live in safe, secure and Ofsted-regulated foster homes with the added protection of being a framework provider.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>The framework will offer protection to CYP as it will be easier for the council to monitor their outcomes.</p>
<p>Disability - people who are living with different conditions and disabilities, such as: mental illnesses, long term conditions, Autism and other neurodiverse conditions, learning disabilities, sensory impairment and physical disabilities.</p>	<p>The framework will have a specific 'lot' for CYP with disabilities, additional needs and complex behaviours with stringent contract monitoring in place to ensure their needs are met continually.</p>	<p>CYP with disabilities are not placed with the right carers (or their knowledge of the disability(s) isn't enhanced) meaning they are not receiving appropriate care.</p>	<p>The local authority social worker will conduct risk assessments and regular reviews with the foster carer and provider to ensure they are upskilled and able to meet the needs of their CYP.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment - those people in the process of transitioning from one sex to another</p>	<p>Although gender reassignment is unlawful until aged 18, CYP may be expresses wishes/feelings around this topic during their childhood. The framework will</p>	<p>Foster carers may not feel comfortable in caring for CYP with aspirations to undergo gender reassignment. Similarly, CYP may not be comfortable living with carers</p>	<p>The views, wishes and feelings of CYP are always taken into account when a placement search is being sought, and any (potential) offer of a placement will always go to their social worker for approval who will ensure the needs of the CYP</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>allow for a 'matching process' so foster carers will only put themselves forward to care for CYP if they feel they can promote their best interests and be free from discrimination.</p>	<p>depending on their views about the subject – however the</p>	<p>would be met to the best of their knowledge.</p>
<p>Marriage & Civil Partnership - people who are married or in a civil partnership should not be treated differently at work</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p>Pregnancy & Maternity - women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby, including breast feeding mothers</p>	<p>The framework will cater for Parent and Carer foster placements. If a CYP was to become pregnant whilst in placement appropriate risk assessments and planning meetings would be held to decide on the best outcome for the CYP/baby in a planned way.</p>	<p>Foster carer/provider may wish to end the placement or feel they can't care for the CYP during pregnancy.</p>	<p>Appropriate risk assessments would be put in place to mitigate the risk for CYP and baby with any move being planned in the best interests of the parent and baby.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Race - people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins</p>	<p>All CYP will be treated equally, including their race and taking all other protected characteristics into account when searching for a foster placement.</p>	<p>The nature of the market (foster carers) will ultimately determine to what extent this is met however the same could be said without the framework.</p>	<p>Ensure relevant information is captured during the placement search and share with providers on the framework to ensure race/cultural needs etc are reflected to match appropriately.</p>
<p>Religion or Belief - people with any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief. A belief should affect a person's life choices or the way they live for it to be considered</p>	<p>All CYP will be treated equally, including their religious beliefs and taking all other protected characteristics into account when searching for a foster placement.</p>	<p>The nature of the market (foster carers) will ultimately determine to what extent this is met however the same could be said without the framework.</p>	<p>Ensure relevant information is captured during the placement search and share with providers on the framework to ensure religion/cultural needs etc are reflected to match appropriately.</p>
<p>Sex - men or women</p>	<p>N/A</p>		
<p>Sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes</p>	<p>The framework will allow for a 'matching process' so foster carers will only put themselves forward to care for CYP if they feel they can promote their best interests and be free from discrimination.</p>	<p>Foster carers may not feel comfortable in caring for CYP with specific sexual preferences. Similarly, CYP may not be comfortable living with carers depending on the</p>	<p>The views of CYP are always taken into account when a placement search is being sought, and any (potential) offer of a placement will always go to their social worker for approval who will ensure the needs of the CYP would be met to the best of their knowledge.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
		sexual orientation e.g. same sex carers.	

➤ **Workforce Assessment**

Who will be affected – consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
N/A			

➤ **Health, Well-being and Social Care Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
The framework needs to be fit for purpose to ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CYPs physical health and emotional wellbeing is prioritised at all times 	The framework will provide robust contractual Terms & Conditions with contract monitoring arrangements in place	As with any provider who is caring for a CYP, there will be risks associated with any placement given the vulnerability of	A robust framework contract will be in place to ensure the needs of all care-experienced CYP are met, with the council inserting clauses

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A CYPs independence is promoted and encouraged – which will be bespoke to each CYP • The CYPs future (i.e. move into adulthood) is thought about at all times 	<p>to ensure carers and providers are acting appropriately to meet the needs of our CYP in care, whom the Care Act 2014 applies to.</p>	<p>care-experienced CYP.</p> <p>For example, a provider could attempt to terminate a placement early, and although contractual stipulations will be in place to protect the local authority, this would still have a negative impact on the CYP.</p>	<p>to ensure any issues/concerns can be acted on to maintain and promote the wellbeing of CYP in care.</p>

➤ **Communities Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>The framework would impact on the care-experienced community. It's also envisaged that Staffordshire providers would join the</p>	<p>Local and regional providers would be on the framework, ensuring children continue to live locally</p>	<p>Children are placed out of county (OOC) if a local placement can't be sourced, however this would</p>	<p>More competition on the framework would increase the chances of CYP living locally.</p>

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
framework which would allow for CYP to stay within Staffordshire and their local communities (where it's safe to do so).	when it's safe to do so. The framework allows for placement searches to be made and secured as quickly as possible. Staffordshire children continue to live locally ensuring they make a positive contribution to their own community.	apply to 'spot' providers who aren't on the framework also.	However, improving our internal sufficiency would be of greater benefit in this aspect in terms of community capacity holistically.

➤ **Economic Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Staffordshire foster care providers have grown by approximately 50% over the last 3-4 years.	Most providers will be on the framework ensuring money from the public purse will remain in Staffordshire if our	As a foster care placement is based on a positive 'match' rather than a specific provider, national providers will also be on the framework, however it's	Invest in our internal foster care recruitment and retainment to ensure we have greater internal sufficiency and therefore less money leaves the local authority.

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	children are placed with these providers	imperative they are due to a sufficiency shortage nationally and locally.	

➤ **Climate Change Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
All contracts, monitoring and searches are done online to reduce our carbon footprint.	Ensure the carbon footprint is minimal to help tackle climate change.	N/A	The framework to remain paperless.

➤ **Environment Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
N/A			