



Tree House Care
doing the right thing for our children



FOSTERING SERVICE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Last updated: May 2026
Review due: May 2027

Ofsted Registration Number: SC033189

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TREE HOUSE CARE FOSTERING STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

INTRODUCTION

A copy of the Statement of Purpose is available to anyone via our website and more specifically to:

- OFSTED
- Any person working for Tree House Care
- Any child placed with or under consideration for placement with us
- All Tree House Care foster carers and prospective foster carers
- Local authorities or Children's Trusts who have placed, or are considering placing with us
- Any parent of a child placed with us, or under consideration for placement with us

This document will be reviewed and updated in the following circumstances:

- At least annually
- If there are any significant changes to the status and constitution of the agency
- If there are any changes to the Registered Manager or Responsible Individual
- If the purpose of the agency changes
- If there are changes to the services offered
- If there are changes to relevant legislation, regulations, or guidelines

VALUES

The strapline on our logo is “*doing the right thing for our children*”. This is important to us.

The values statements contained in the National Minimum Standards for Fostering are our foundation:

- *The child's welfare, safety and needs are at the centre of their care.*
- *Children should have an enjoyable childhood, benefiting from excellent parenting and education, enjoying a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills leading to a successful adult life.*
- *Children are entitled to grow up in a loving environment that can meet their developmental needs.*
- *Every child should have their wishes and feelings listened to and taken into account.*
- *Each child should be valued as an individual and given personalised support in line with their individual needs and background in order to develop their identity, self-confidence and self-worth.*
- *The particular needs of disabled children and children with complex needs will be fully recognised and taken into account*
- *The significance of contact for looked after children, and of maintaining relationships with birth parents and the wider family, including siblings, half-siblings and grandparents, is recognised, as is the foster carer's role in this.*
- *Children in foster care deserve to be treated as a good parent would treat their own children and to have the opportunity for as full an experience of family life and childhood as possible, without unnecessary restrictions.*
- *The central importance of the child's relationship with their foster carer should be acknowledged and foster carers should be recognised as core members of the team working with the child.*
- *Foster carers have a right to full information about the child.*
- *It is essential that foster carers receive relevant support services and development opportunities in order to provide the best care for children.*
- *Partnership between all those involved in fostering children is essential to deliver the best outcomes for children; this includes, local authorities, other statutory agencies, fostering service providers and foster carers.*

OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN

We work towards the following outcomes for children, which are:

- Children and Young People have stable, loving homes
- Enjoying & Achieving
- Making a Positive Contribution
- Achieving Economic Well Being
- Staying Safe
- Relationships and Friendships
- Feelings and Behaviour
- Health
- Learning and Education

More specifically we work towards the outcomes for the child focussed National Minimum Standards for Fostering (NMS 1-12).

SERVICE OUTCOMES

The Service Outcomes we work towards achieving are those set out in the National Minimum Standards for Fostering (NMS 13-31).

The Registered Manager's Monthly Report (NMS 25) to the Directors and six-monthly Regulation 35 Report includes outcome related information. We use outcome trackers on CHARMS.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Our purpose is to provide fostering services to meet the needs of each child placed with our foster carers and to fulfil the objectives set out in their care plans.

To achieve this, we will:

- Recruit foster carers to the highest and safest standards in assessment.
- Make available foster carers who are able to provide a safe, stable, non-stigmatising, caring home.
- Ensure children are seen regularly by our staff.
- Safeguard and promote each child's physical, mental, emotional welfare and development in partnership with local authorities
- Balance the child's individual needs with our responsibilities to other children living at the foster carer's home.
- Facilitate and provide support as appropriate to ensure that children of school age have access to education appropriate to their age, ability, and level of attainment.
- Ensure that young people over school age are offered an appropriate programme of vocational preparation, training, or work experience.

- Ensure that foster carers adopt a proactive approach to each child's health care needs.
- Not place any child under 5 with foster carers where we know any member of the household smokes or uses e-cigarettes/vapes.
- Ensure that the foster carers provide each child with the opportunity to participate in a range of social, recreational, and leisure interests.
- Ensure that foster carers provide appropriate opportunities for each child to acquire daily living skills.
- Ensure that foster carers promote family time contact with each child's family and others in accordance with their Care Plan.
- Ensure that each child is treated as an individual through participation in review meetings and in the decision-making process.
- Allow each child to exercise their right to representation and to make complaints.
- Ensure foster carers are attentive to each child's individual needs and rights in relation to age, race, language, sexuality, disability, gender, and meet their specific cultural and religious needs.
- Undertake a Home Safety Checklist on each fostering household, which will be reviewed and updated at least annually (usually during an unannounced visit to the fostering household).
- Continue to develop and build on our therapeutic model.

SERVICES PROVIDED

We provide safe and nurturing foster homes by matching children's needs with foster carer households.

If we get the matching right, this will reduce the chance of breakdown and provide greater stability for children.

We provide a range of fostering homes, which include:

- Emergency and respite
- Short term and task centred
- Medium term
- Long term
- Sibling groups
- Therapeutic

We can also supervise family-time contact.

We do not currently make parent and child placements or family and friends placements.

Our approach includes:

- All our carers are expected to attend our six-session Attachment Level One training.
- All our carers will have the opportunity to attend our six-session Attachment Level Two training. Both Level One and Level Two are provided by a qualified therapist.
- Consultations with a qualified therapist are available for all our foster carers.
- Children can be placed under our bespoke therapeutic placement services with intensive therapeutic support.

SUPPORT TO FOSTER CARERS

All carers sign a comprehensive Foster Carer Agreement.

Health & Safety and Whistleblowing Policies are in place for staff and carers.

All carers are required to draw up a Family Safe Care Plan, as well as an Individual Safe Care Plan for each child.

All carers have our foster carer handbook containing relevant information and guidance. It is accessible in electronic format on the carer section of our website. They also have a copy of our Therapeutic Handbook for Foster Carers.

All children are given an age-appropriate Guide.

Carers are allocated a supervising link worker, who will lead them through an induction programme. The supervising link worker will be responsible for undertaking regular supervisory visits (minimum of monthly), weekly telephone contact, support, advice, regular support groups, training, and development. Our foster carers are within two hours travel time of their supervising link worker's base.

All carers can access support 24/7 through the out of hours service staffed by our qualified social workers.

Further support is provided by our Fostering Support Assistants including sleep advice and participation events.

Matching takes account of things such as appropriate skills, experience, training and preferred geographical location.

Foster carers are paid on time. Holiday allowance is paid as part of the weekly allowance. Carers receive both birthday and Christmas allowance for each child they care for.

A caravan at Skegness is available to use at minimal cost.

All foster carers receive our own regular newsletter with useful information.

Local foster carer support groups are held approximately monthly.

The processes for recruiting, approving, training, supporting, and reviewing foster carers evolve all the time. They are described in more detail in our policies and procedures and are available on request.

We facilitate regular events for foster carers, their families, and their foster children to attend. This includes Christmas (or New Year) activities, fun days, and consultation events.

Therapeutic consultations for carers are highly valued and an important source of support.

As at 1st May 2026 we had 58 foster carer households and 69 looked after children.

At the time of writing approximately 65% of our children have been with their carers for a period of 2 years or more. We believe this to be above the national average and is evidence of our good matching and support.

All foster carers have their Fostering Network membership fees paid and are able to access their support and advice services.

Statutory checks are renewed periodically, as and when required.

ALLEGATIONS

Where foster carers are the subject of allegations of abuse or neglect the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures will be followed, consulting with the Designated Officer for the Local Authority (usually known as the LADO).

The foster carer will be informed of an allegation as soon as possible and following advice from the strategy meeting. Where agreed, the foster carer's supervising link worker, in liaison with the local authority representative, will inform the carer about the investigation. This would usually include:

- The substance of the allegation
- Who will be involved in the investigation
- The planned process and time-scales
- The right of the foster carer(s) to access independent advice and support.

When an allegation is made, we strongly recommend that carers access support and advice from the Fostering Network.

We will help carers to understand the process, ensuring that they are given all appropriate information. Consideration will be given to support for the foster carer's children, and where necessary, wider family.

In some circumstances a decision may be made in the strategy meeting or by the police that the carers cannot be informed as it may compromise the investigation.

When the outcome of the allegation and investigation is known, a Review will be held and presented to our Foster Carer Review Forum or Foster Panel.

The foster carer will be invited to attend (with a supporter) if the matter is referred to panel.

Independent support will continue to be available throughout the review process until consideration of the case by the Agency Decision Maker (ADM).

The supervising link worker will have continuing responsibility for support and being the link between us and the foster carer, even when the carer has independent support.

A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service may be made depending on the outcome of the strategy investigation and Foster Panel/ADM.

PARTICIPATION

There are a range of ways children can participate. We encourage every child to take part in their Care Planning reviews. The Children's Guide gives a range of ways in which children can make representations and complaints.

We periodically undertake children's surveys and occasional events where children can make their views known.

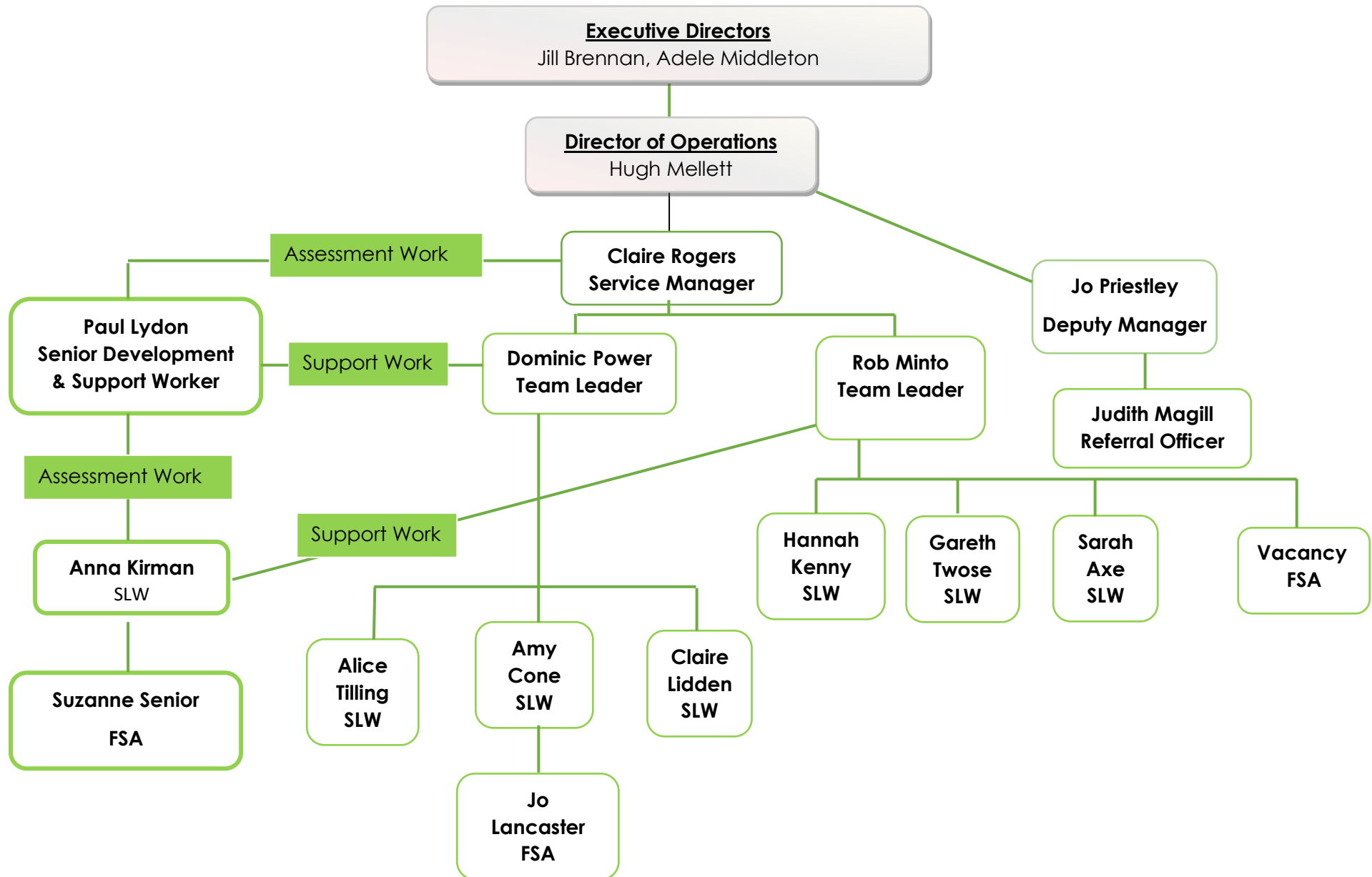
To ensure every child's voice is heard, we have a range of tools to support those children with limited communication.

Supervising Link Workers see every child regularly as part of their supervisory visits throughout the year.

Examples of Children's participation in the past year include:

- Following last year's pilot of differing groups and activities for our children and young people, we have continued to do this in 2026.
- An interactive Tree House Care Christmas Movie, starring our own children and showcased for our families at local cinema screens.
- For Sons & Daughters Month in October 2025 we celebrated all our children who foster, sending out thank you letters and a gift.
- Created social stories for children for different life events, such as going on holiday, which children have really enjoyed and have helped them to take part in new ventures.
- Supporting children with voicing their emotions after some big challenges over the past year.
- Adding to our Engagement and Participation books, both in hard copy and digital version available providing an overview of everything we have done.
- The creation of new children's and young people's guides, with input from our children & young people, including a letter written them for children moving to our carers.
- A repeat trip to Alton towers during August 2025, and consultation about a different theme park for our summer 2026 activity is currently taking place.

Fostering Team Structure



Staff experience is summarised below:

Name	Year of Qualification	Year of joining Tree House Care Fostering
Claire Rogers (Service Manager)	2005	2012
Jo Priestley (Fostering Manager)	1984	2004
Robert Minto (Team Leader)	2004	2016
Dominic Power (Team Leader)	2007	2020
Amy Cone (Principal Practitioner)	2011	2014
Sarah Axe (Principal Practitioner)	2009	2016
Anna Kirman (Senior Supervising Link Worker)	2015	2020
Gareth Twose (Supervising Link Worker)	2007	2022
Alice Tilling (Supervising Link Worker)	2021	2024
Paul Lydon (Senior Development & Support Officer)	2009	2024
Hannah Kenny (Supervising Link Worker)	2023	2025
Claire Lidden (Supervising Link Worker)	2013	2025
Joanne Lancaster (Fostering Support Assistant)	-	2024
Suzanne Senior (Fostering Support Assistant)	-	2022
Judith Magill (Referrals Officer)	-	2007

All qualified Social Work staff are registered with Social Work England.

Staff are based either in our Grimsby or Doncaster offices, or work from home. The Grimsby office acts as HQ, where all admin and central functions are located.

Claire Rogers is our Registered Manager, being approved by OFSTED in June 2017.

Our current OFSTED rating is Good.

Jo Priestley acts as Deputy Manager in Claire's absence.

We have procedures in place to ensure suitable and safe staff selection, including an Equal Opportunities Policy.

RECRUITMENT AND APPROVAL OF FOSTER CARERS

We have a programme of recruitment activity, using social media, advertising and events. During the period 1st January 2025 – 31st December 2025, we received 53 enquiries to become foster carers, 6 applications, and we approved 5 households.

Paul Lydon leads on recruitment and assessment with support from Rob Minto who oversees the marketing side. Claire Rogers, Registered Manager takes on management responsibility for this area of work.

We collate information about referrals to help us plan services and recruitment drives. We keep similar information about foster carer enquiries, and the relative success or otherwise of various recruitment campaigns.

Enquiries and applications are welcomed from people regardless of gender, marital status, sexuality, race, disability, religion, culture or employment status. The timescale between the application form and approval will usually be within eight months.

We take into account geography for new applicants based on specific postcodes, determined by our ability to support Foster Carers and the likelihood of us being able to match children geographically. All prospective foster carers must have at least one spare bedroom.

There is immediate exclusion of any applicant who has been convicted of an offence against a child, or any serious offences against an adult. All prospective foster carers who have offences against their name will have a conviction risk assessment undertaken.

Monthly Recruitment meetings are held to ensure we keep on top of enquiries, initial visits and applications. This meeting confirms which enquiries and applications will progress.

If appropriate a home visit will be arranged. An initial visit is a two-way discussion about fostering and whether fostering is right for the enquirer. One of our experienced foster carers often contacts the enquirer after the initial visit and feeds back.

Once we accept an application a qualified social worker is allocated to undertake an assessment. They produce a report which covers individual profiles of applicants, relationships and partnerships, support network, children in the household, childlessness/limitation of family size, description of family life, valuing diversity, parenting capacity, and more importantly an analysis of their potential strengths and weaknesses as a foster carer. We currently use the CoramBAAF Form F.

The assessment is based on a two-stage process, which usually runs concurrently. Stage 1 is the statutory checks and personal references. Stage 2 is the home study, when the assessing social worker will need to visit the home, usually a minimum of eight visits or sixteen hours (approximately), to spend time working with the applicants on their assessment. The assessment is a joint project and needs full participation from applicants and their family.

Stage 1 checks

- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- Local Authority checks
- Employer and/or current fostering organisation references
- Medical Reports
- At least two personal references
- Ex-partner reference (s).

A Home Safety check will also be carried out alongside a risk assessment on any pets in the home.

If any of the Stage 1 checks are returned indicating that the applicant is unsuitable to foster, the Agency Decision Maker will make the decision whether to continue or terminate the assessment. Explanation will be given to the applicant about this decision.

If during the Stage 2 home study, concerns are raised about the applicant's suitability to foster, and we recommend terminating the assessment, a brief report will be completed and presented to foster panel. The Agency Decision Maker will make the final decision about terminating the assessment based on the brief report and recommendation from panel.

The applicants will have the chance to read and discuss any amendments. This report will be presented to the Foster Panel which prospective foster carers are expected to attend in person at a face-to-face meeting.

The Fostering Panel is made up of a variety of professionals and independent members, including educationalists and those with a background working in health and social care.

The Fostering Panel has an Independent Chair, David Palmer, a qualified social worker since 1988. His roles have included Case Conference Chair, Independent Reviewing Officer, and LADO.

The panel makes its recommendations, but the final decision is made by the Agency Decision Maker.

Hugh Mellett (Director of Operations) is ADM for Tree House Care for all matters that go to Fostering Panel.

Upon approval as a foster carer, we advise them in writing and allocate a supervising link worker. They will receive an induction that outlines expectations, policies, procedures, and remuneration.

Foster carers are reviewed annually, with the first annual review being presented to Foster Panel. Any review which has not been presented to panel in six years and Specific Event Reviews, are also heard at panel for additional independent scrutiny.

Other reviews will be presented to our Foster Carer Review Forum. Forum will decide if a review should be referred to panel. For further information on our Foster Carer Review Forum and Foster Panel please see their respective Terms of Reference.

Jo Priestley, Deputy Manager, usually chairs our Foster Carer Review Forum, though this can be delegated.

Brian Evans has been working with us as an independent ADM since 2023. He has a wealth of experience within management teams in various children's services including fostering. He qualified in 1993 and is registered with SWE.

Jill Brennan acts as back up ADM should either Hugh or Brian be unavailable.

Foster carers can of course at various points go through THC complaints process or Independent Review Mechanism.

TRAINING FOR FOSTER CARERS

All prospective foster carers are required to attend the Prepare to Foster (P2F) training usually prior to their approval. These are held on a regular basis throughout the year. Alongside P2F, prospective foster carers are expected to attend accredited training in First Aid, Safeguarding, and De-escalation.

Other basic subjects covered in the P2F sessions are:

- Promoting identity
- Managing difficult behaviour
- Working in partnership with birth parents and other professionals
- Legislative framework
- Child development
- Attachment and loss
- Safe caring
- Risk Assessment and Management
- Why children come into care
- Awareness of child abuse
- Safeguarding children/child protection
- Diversity – challenging discrimination
- Moving on
- Preparing for a child moving to foster care
- Documentation and Record Keeping
- Meetings about the child
- GDPR

Each carer (prospective and approved) will have a Personal Development Plan which will outline their training and development needs for the forthcoming year, which is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

As at 31st December 2025, 100% of our carers, approved for more than a year, have achieved their Training Support & Development Standards. We believe this to be above the National Average.

Post-approval training is held at various locations, usually during term-time, within school hours, and occasionally weekends. We also have online training which many carers access. This links to our Themes of the Month training annual calendar.

There is an expectation that all carers are committed to ongoing training.

We have a "Pay to Train" initiative in place which has had considerable success in increasing the take up of training.

It is a requirement that all foster carers attend De-escalation training.

Training relating to meeting individual children's needs will also be provided.

SERVICE MONITORING, QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION OF STAFF

All staff have a named supervisor and line manager. The required standard for supervision is monthly 1:1 for all staff. Management guidance, advice, and support is always available on an ad hoc basis.

All staff have an Annual Appraisal.

The Registered Manager produces a report for the Directors covering supervision, referrals, foster carer enquiries, notifications, incidents, vacancies, new placements, key documentation, information about fragile placements, updates on development issues, and most importantly, outcomes for children (NMS 25).

Audits are regularly undertaken by the Managers to look at the quality of recordings and to ensure that supervisory visits are held within timescales and matters raised dealt with promptly.

Regulation 35 reports are produced on a 6-monthly basis.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This is refreshed at least annually and is revised and updated on a regular basis.

The Regulation 35 Report considers achievements and actions every 6 months.

Since 2017 we have been working with John Anderson, Independent Therapist, to draw on his and our experience into a single theoretical model that is influencing practice at all levels.

Tree House Care have been successful in the following tenders for foster placements:

- White Rose Consortium
- North West Consortium
- Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire (D2N2)
- Leicester City and Leicestershire
- Northamptonshire

The terms of these agreements can be found in the relevant contracts.

Achievements in the past 12 months include:

- Ofsted Inspection December 2025 with an outcome of Good
- Undertaken an audit and action plan on children's quality of life (swimming, riding a bike, getting involved in hobbies and activities) which children said were important to them.
- Commissioned external training by experienced and respected trainers in brain development, attachment and therapeutic parenting.
- Commissioned specialist 1:1 consultation sessions with specialist therapeutic social worker who is also one of our external trainers.
- Held family activity days for our foster carers and children.
- Continued events to mark our 25th Anniversary.
- Lessons to learn exercise with a well-regarded and respected independent social worker, supporting our development and improvement plan actions.
- Internal regular case audits as part of our lessons to learn actions.
- New and improved children's and young people's guides, with direct written input from our children.
- The start of our journey to better understanding the needs of our neurodiverse children, including partnership working with a specialist assessment and training provider in this area (see below).

Since 2025 we have been working in partnership with the Oakdale Centre, a team of psychiatrists, psychologist, counsellors and psychotherapists who have expertise in

- Attachment
- Neurodiversity

We will have trained two Neurodiversity Coaches by the end of Summer 2026. We have a Director led working party on this and this is a very exciting area we want to develop.

FOSTER PANEL REPORTS

An annual report on foster panel is produced each year by the Service Manager and Panel Chair.

Feedback on quality issues is recorded on every case presented at panel, summarised by the Chair. These are incorporated into a regular report and discussed at the Service Manager's regular meeting with the Chair.

The Panel Action Tracking report is a regular agenda item of Business Panel to feedback to Panel Members.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETINGS

The Directors meet on a monthly basis and consider:

- Management Information Reports covering referrals, children we care for, foster carer enquiries and assessments, and foster carer recruitment
- Human Resources and the Human Resource Manager's Report
- Monthly reports from the Registered Manager (NMS 25) and six-monthly Reg 35 Report
- Health and Safety
- Detailed financial and business performance information

These meetings help to ensure that quality of the service remains high.

Meetings regularly review and update the Development Plan.

The governance arrangements are summarised by the diagram below:



COMPLAINTS

A Complaints Procedure is in place, along with a management monitoring system. We tend to try and resolve difficulties and conflicts through discussion and negotiation whenever possible.

Details of how to make a complaint or compliment can be found in our Policy and Procedure and in our Foster Carer and Children's Handbooks.

During the period 1st May 2025 – 30th April 2026, we received no complaints.

We continue to use our refreshed version of the children's complaints form, which is more user-friendly. Versions using Widget software for children with communication difficulties can be produced where necessary.

Information on making complaints can be made available in a variety of formats including translation into other languages, Makaton, Pictures, etc.

COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS INFORMATION

Contact details:

Tree House Care Fostering

The Old Vicarage
17 Heneage Road
Grimsby
DN32 9DZ

Tel: 01472 598334
Email: havingmysay@treehousecare.org

Website: www.treehousecare.org

OFSTED

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

Tel: 0161 6188524

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Children's Commissioner for England

Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
125 Kingsway
London
SW1P 3BT

General Enquiries

Tel: 020 778 38330

Email: info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.childrenscommssioner.gov.uk

Advice and help for children in care or living away from home

Freephone: 0800 528 0731

Email: help.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand/

Tree House Care Fostering is an independent fostering agency that seeks to provide the highest quality fostering placements and fostering services to looked after children.

Tree House Care Fostering Solutions Ltd is a private limited company registered under the Companies Act 1985 (Company No. 4456329).

We are fully registered with OFSTED (Registration No. SC033189).

STATUS AND CONSTITUTION

The company began providing fostering services in May 2000. The business is owned by Directors Jill Brennan and Adele Middleton.

Both Jill and Adele are professionally qualified social workers and have many years childcare experience between them both in the public and voluntary sector. They have both specialised in fostering services and are fully conversant with all aspects of the role and requirements of providing fostering services. Jill holds the Diploma in Management.

The Directors are ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance with all aspects of quality assurance in relation to the delivery of services and the financial viability to do so. The company is in a healthy position financially.

The Responsible Person is Hugh Mellett, Director of Operations. Hugh qualified as a Social Worker in 1984 and has many years in Senior Management positions.

Hugh joined Tree House Care in 2005 and can be contacted at:

Tree House Care
Headquarters
The Old Vicarage
17 Heneage Road
Grimsby
North East Lincolnshire
DN32 9DZ

Hugh's telephone number is 01472 598334 and his email address is hugh.mellett@treehousecare.org

The Registered Manager and Service Manager is Claire Rogers.

Claire can be contacted at:

Tree House Care
Headquarters
The Old Vicarage
17 Heneage Road
Grimsby
North East Lincolnshire
DN32 9DZ

Claire's telephone number is 01472 598334 and her email address is claire.rogers@treehousecare.org

SIGNED



Adele Middleton
DIRECTOR

SIGNED



Jill Brennan
DIRECTOR

SIGNED


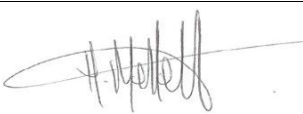


Hugh Mellett
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

SIGNED


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Claire Rogers
FOSTERING MANAGER

What types of data is involved in this process?	Names, job titles and work telephone numbers
Any Special category Data? If so specify	Yes, names, job titles and work telephone numbers
What is the legal basis for processing?	Requirement under Care Standards Act
Does it comply with subject rights?	Yes
Security issues?	No
Is any contract in place adequate?	N/A
Will staff be trained in new system?	N/A
How will a breach be dealt with?	N/A
What are the overall risks? What are the risks to individuals?	Minimal
What measures are to be taken to minimise those risks?	None necessary. Publication of details is a requirement of Care Standards Act.
Signature - Author	
Date	28/05/2026
Signed off by Data Protection Officer	
Date	28/05/2026

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	Date completed
Send to OFSTED via email	29/05/2026
Print hard copy for staff noticeboard	29/05/2026
Email copy to all staff	29/05/2026
Add to website	29/05/2026
Inform Foster Carers via Newsletter that the Statement of Purpose has been reviewed and is available via the Website.	29/05/2026