



SilverLining
Fostering Agency

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

**SILVER LINING
FOSTERING AGENCY
2023-2024**

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INTRODUCTION

This statement of purpose has been developed in accordance with appropriate legislation and guidance including:

- The Children Act 1989;
- The Care Standards Act 2000;
- The Fostering Services(England) Regulations 2011;
- Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards 2011.



The Statement of purpose, produced in accordance with Fostering Services Regulation 3, includes:

- Statement of the Aims and Objectives of Silver Lining Fostering Agency; and
- Statement as to the services and facilities provided by the Silver Lining Fostering Agency.

A copy of this statement of purpose is available on our website and copies will be made available, upon request, to:

- Any person working for Silver Lining Fostering Agency
- Any foster carer or prospective foster carer
- Any child or young person placed with Silver Lining Fostering Agency
- The parent/person with parental responsibility for a child or young person placed with Silver Lining Fostering Agency.

It is reviewed and agreed upon annually by the Responsible Individual and Registered Manager. It is submitted on review to Ofsted and is published on the Silver Lining Fostering Agency's website.

About Silver Lining Fostering Agency

Silver Lining Fostering Agency, operating under the legal entity Silver Lining Fostering Ltd, stands as a dedicated and independent fostering provider. Our primary commitment is to recruit and support foster families, enabling them to provide compassionate care for children and young individuals entrusted to us by local authorities throughout the Southeast, London, and the Midlands boroughs.

At Silver Lining Fostering Agency, we pride ourselves on delivering professional and accessible support services to not only foster carers but also birth families and, most importantly, the children under our care. Our overarching goal is to expand placement choices for Children in Care, offering a diverse range of foster placement options. In pursuit of this mission, we integrate principles from systemic practice and the secure base model into every facet of our service delivery.

Our organization is steered by a team of seasoned and qualified professionals who bring innovation and a needs-led approach to our services for children and young people in foster care.

Silver Lining Fostering Agency is headquartered at The Vista Centre, 50 Salisbury Road, Hounslow TW4 6JQ. As a private limited company registered under the Companies Act 1989, Silver Lining Fostering Ltd. operates with the company registration number 11087540.

VISION

The vision of the Silver Lining Fostering Agency is to deliver an ambitious fostering service and create opportunities for positive change in children's lives.

MISSION STATEMENT

At Silver Lining Fostering Agency, our mission is to provide an ethical, innovative, and child-focused service to our key stakeholders — children, birth families, local authorities, foster carers, and staff. Placing the interests of the children at the core of our business, we strive to exceed the expectations of our service users.

CORE VALUES

When our individual values come together our unique company culture is born. Our shared values make us who we are, what we stand for, and how we act.

- We put children first- we defend and respect their voice!
- We are one team- together we solve seemingly unsolvable problems.
- We WOW our foster carers and local authority partners- we exceed expectations.
- We break down barriers, build relationships and intervene if someone is being marginalised.
- We build social value- we invest in our people, communities, and environment.
- We are adventurous- we question old solutions, and we are willing to change.
- We do the right thing- the highest level of integrity is fundamental to who we are.
- We hold ourselves accountable- we stay humble and celebrate successes.
- We do not settle for average- we have a warrior spirit; we aim big and make it happen.
- We lead by example- we elevate each other and grow together.
- We take adversity and challenges as an opportunity.
- We have fun while we work- we hustle hard, but we like to have a good time too!
- What we do makes a difference.
- We are Team Silver Lining!



AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES OF CARE

Silver Lining Fostering Agency is committed to upholding the highest standards of care for children under the care of our foster carers, demonstrating a steadfast dedication to professional integrity. Recognizing the financial constraints faced by our customer authorities, we are committed to delivering cost-effective solutions through the implementation of innovative and tailored care packages designed to meet the distinct needs of the children entrusted to our care.

Our agency is resolute in its commitment to meeting statutory and regulatory requirements, aligning with the following standards:

The Care Standards Act 2000

The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011

Fostering Services: The National Minimum Standards 2011, amended 2013

The Children's Act 1989, guidance, and regulations Volume 4: fostering services (referred to as statutory guidance) 2011

The Children's Act 2004

The Care Planning Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010

The Care Planning Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013

National Standards for Foster Care and Family Placements Services 2011

Our unwavering commitment to these standards is reflected in the integration of the messages from Every Child Matters into our agency's service delivery, planning, and performance monitoring processes. This holistic approach ensures that the well-being and development of every child remain at the forefront of our mission and values.



AIMS:

Silver Lining holds a steadfast commitment to placing the child or young person at the core of our focus. Our primary aim is to cultivate a positive, safe, and nurturing experience of substitute care within the familial environment. In alignment with the principles of the Children Act 1989, we recognize the optimal upbringing of a child involves their own home with the active involvement of both parents. Acknowledging the complexities of various family dynamics, we understand that this may not always be feasible.

In instances where it is in the child's best interests, Silver Lining Fostering Agency is dedicated to proactive collaboration with the placing Local Authority to facilitate the child's return to their parents or extended family.

A central objective of Silver Lining is to continually evolve our services, ensuring that children and young people under our care have the opportunity to develop and flourish across the five key outcome areas of "Every Child Matters":

Be Healthy

Stay Safe

Enjoy and Achieve

Make a Positive Contribution

Achieve Economic Wellbeing

Through these aims, we aspire to provide a holistic and enriching environment that empowers every child and young person to reach their full potential and thrive in all aspects of their lives.

Additionally, Silver Lining Fostering Agency is dedicated to ensuring compliance with fostering regulations and surpassing the Fostering Services' National Minimum Standards 2011.

Our aims include:

- Providing high-quality service for children and young people that robustly responds to their assessed needs.
- Placing children and young people with foster carers who have met the statutory regulations and national minimum standards.
- Supporting, supervising, and providing ongoing training to carers for comprehensive childcare.
- Promoting fostering positively.
- Facilitating collaboration among carers, professionals, agencies, and families involved in the child's life.
- Continually developing and improving services through internal and external evaluations and feedback mechanisms



OBJECTIVES:

In pursuit of our stated aims, Silver Lining Fostering Agency will employ policies, practices, and procedures to:

- Ensure high-quality care in a safe, healthy, and nurturing family home.
- Meet the individual child's needs, promoting their best interests according to the care plan.
- Provide 24-hour support for foster carers, children, or young people, and placing authorities.
- Protect children from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and deprivation.
- Value diversity and promote equality by recognizing the importance of children's ethnic origin, religion, culture, language, gender, sexuality, and disability.
- Develop a child's sense of identity and self-worth.
- Promote a child's health and well-being, including their physical, mental, and emotional welfare.
- Promote educational achievement and attainment.
- Support agreed contact with the child's family and friends, in line with the care plan.
- Prepare the child for adult life through the development of relevant life skills and knowledge.
- Seek and incorporate the views and opinions of children and promote participation in service planning and delivery.
- Recruit foster carers from diverse backgrounds to offer a range of placements reflecting children's needs.
- Achieve consistently high standards in recruiting and assessing carers.
- Maintain a properly constituted and independent Panel that has the capacity to robustly discharge its scrutiny and quality assurance functions.
- accountability and transparency.
- Ensure consistency and continuity in supervision, support, and information provided to carers.
- Promote and support the capacity, skills, and knowledge of foster carers by providing essential training aligned to foster carers personal development plans.
- Offer placements that carefully match the child's needs with the carer's skills and capabilities.
- Regularly review placement, anticipate challenges, and engage children and foster carers to ensure their access to relevant support and resources that promote placement stability and positive attachments.
- Be a responsible and competent employer, recruiting and employing qualified staff.
- Ensure and support the agency's capacity to support foster carers and children by ensuring that the agency staff are sufficiently resourced and trained with the right level of expertise and experience.
- Implement procedures for effective agency supervision and control.
- Supervise agency finances based on sound principles and recognized good practice.
- Organize and manage agency resources efficiently for the best possible service delivery and child safety.
- Maintain staff and management skill through effective training and development programs.
- Monitor and review agency policies, procedures, and practices regularly.
- Implement administrative procedures for efficient and effective duties.
- Maintain secure, separate, and accurate records for children, carers, and staff in line with legislation.



PRINCIPLES OF CARE:

Commitment to Equality and Diversity

Silver Lining recognizes the diverse society in which we operate, embracing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity. Our aim is to recruit people from all backgrounds, reflecting the demography of the regions we cover. Our Equality Policy applies to staff, foster carers, children, and young people. All staff and carers undergo mandatory training to understand and value diversity, ensuring that all individuals feel valued and are treated equally. We actively consider the needs of young people in the areas of race, gender, culture, religion, sexuality, ability, and geographic origin. Diversity is celebrated, and discrimination is challenged through daily living experiences.

Voice of Children

Silver Lining is committed to championing UNICEF's mission, advocating for the protection of children's rights. Our dedication to this cause is manifested in our proactive approach to involving service users, carers, staff, and stakeholders in the formulation of strategy, policy, and procedures. This inclusive process ensures an environment of ongoing and sustainable improvement through regular and thorough reviews.

Recognizing the importance of amplifying the voices of children and young people, Silver Lining supervising social workers consistently engage with each child to elicit their views about their care. This participatory approach acknowledges the invaluable insights that the views, wishes, and feelings of children and young people contribute to service development. Beyond mere acknowledgment, we are deeply committed to integrating their perspectives into all aspects of service design and delivery.

To facilitate seamless communication, children and young people under our care are provided with access to online feedback or survey forms, a complaints procedure as well as a guide ensuring they understand their rights but most importantly this platform empowers them to share feedback on any aspect of their care while in placement, fostering an environment where their voices are not only heard but actively shape the trajectory of their experiences. Moreover, we actively seek ways to develop and evidence the impact of their input in the continuous enhancement of our services, ensuring that the child's voice is not only captured but plays a meaningful and influential role in our practice.



SERVICES PROVIDED BY SILVER LINING FOSTERING AGENCY

Fostering Services

We pride ourselves on finding the closest possible match when children need to be placed in foster care and identifying any additional training, support or resource required. We work in partnership with Local Authorities and all other agencies to achieve the best possible outcome for all children who need to be looked after. Silver Lining specialises in offering the following types of placements:

Emergency placements

Silver Lining provides a 24 hour a day emergency service. Many carers choose to specialise in short-term placements and are able to accept unplanned, emergency placements. An emergency placement ideally should not exceed a few days and it would be anticipated that the child or young person should be moved to a more suitable placement within a week in a planned way.

Short-term placements

Provision of short-term care that could be for a few days, weeks, or months, whilst plans are made for the child's future by the Local Authority.

Bridging placements

We can provide bridging placements for children or young people while permanency plans are being formulated. In such placements, Silver Lining foster carers work with children/young people and their families toward reunification or prepare children/young people for joining adoptive or long-term/permanent fostering families, or for moving to a semi-independent or an independent living arrangement.

Respite placements

Respite placements are provided to give parents a break or offer additional support if they do not have their own support network. In addition, respite is also offered to our own foster carers and is available in order to support placement demands and needs.

Long-term/permanent placements

These placements are where adoption is not an option, and the foster carer will care for a child/young person up to and into adult independence.



Solo placements

Silver Lining foster carers look after children and young people who may make considerable demands upon them and also upon the services of the Agency. However, occasionally a child or young person has very specific and complex needs which, initially at least, require a higher than usual level of support, monitoring and supervision. Because of his/her needs, a child or young person may require constant individual attention and supervision that precludes the placement of any other fostered children/young people or prohibits the use of any remaining placement vacancies within the foster home. With such placements, there is usually higher-level input from the Agency.

Asylum seeker placements

Silver Lining aims to build a pool of very experienced foster carers from diverse backgrounds who are willing to advocate, access services, and work within the child's care plan in supporting and caring for unaccompanied children and young people from outside the UK.

Disability placements

Silver Lining has foster carers who have experience and skills in caring for children and young people who are disabled and/or require specialist medical care.

Sibling placements

Sibling placements are for siblings who all are placed together into a foster care household. Silver Lining believes in keeping siblings together within a family environment unless it is deemed inappropriate by the placing Authority.

Parent and child placements

Placements are available for mothers and/or fathers and their child, where foster carers can provide support and guidance to parent(s) and help them develop parenting skills. If requested, and by arrangement with the placing Local Authority, a formal assessment of parenting ability can be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced Silver Lining staff in conjunction with the Silver Lining foster carer.



MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE:

Company Director & Responsible Individual-

Sania Mehr Khan

MA in Social Work, BA (Hons) in Social Work, Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management, Diploma in Systemic Supervision, ILM Level 3 Diploma in Workplace Coaching.

Company Director-

Dipti Thakur Kazi

Master's in Social Work, Bachelors in Social Work, Diploma in Systemic Supervision, Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management.

Chief Executive Officer/ Registered Manager-

Sally Pillay

BA (Hons) in Social Work, Diploma in Systemic Practice- Management & Leadership, Certified Trainer in Secure Base.

Please refer to Appendix B for Organisational Structure

RECRUITMENT, ASSESSMENT, AND APPROVAL OF FOSTER CARERS:

Silver Lining Fostering Agency makes use of the competencies approach in all stages of the recruitment, assessment, and approval of the foster carers.

We endorse the view expressed in the Fostering Network Code of Practice that the use of common, standard assessment tools, such as those produced by the Fostering Network and the BAAF Form F, will enable fostering services to achieve uniform standards.

We, therefore, make full use of the above tools in the recruitment, assessment, and approval stages of fostering applications to Silver Lining.

We also seek to actively promote the Fostering Network values underpinning the competencies approach and to ensure that they are an integral part of the assessment process.

These are that:

- Child safety is paramount
- Individuals are respected
- Difference and diversity is valued
- Equality is promoted
- Discrimination is challenged
- Confidentiality is maintained
- Advice and feedback is provided in a constructive way
- Applicants are supported to demonstrate their competence
- Standards of childcare are explicit and agreed



RECRUITMENT

Silver Lining Fostering Agency subscribes to the following statement: "The aim of our recruitment campaign will be to attract potentially suitable people who may want to take up fostering and provide them with significant information for them to decide whether or not to make a formal application".(Fostering Network Code of Practice)

Silver Lining's advertisements and other recruitment materials aim to promote the Agency's specific selection criteria, which are as follows:

- Previous employment in children's services – paid or unpaid.
- Applicants with particular skills and experience in specific areas such as learning difficulties, medical problems etc.
- Applicants who show a willingness to work towards meeting care standards for fostering.
- Applicants with experience of the previous fostering and/or close involvement with someone who has already fostered.
- An ability to reflect on life experiences and to mature through them.
- An ability to see beyond children's behaviour, and to link it to past trauma, where applicable.
- An empathy for and natural ability to nurture children traumatized by separation from their birth families.
- Applicants able to accept teenagers.
- Applicants comfortable with parents visiting their home.
- If living with a partner/ spouse, the relationship should be established and secure. In addition, Silver Lining will expect the applicants to have space in their homes.
- Plenty of physical and emotional stamina.
- A commitment to attend training events and support groups.
- A willingness to support a child's/young person's attendance for accessing education, therapy, hospital appointment, solicitor/ Home Office appointment, etc.- including the provision of transport where necessary.

Priority will be given to progressing those applicants who appear to meet some or all of the above requirements.

Enquiry

All interested people who either respond directly to an advertisement or apply to Silver Lining in between recruitment campaigns will have their enquiries recorded on the agency's recording system.

If appropriate, the Agency will send out an information pack in order to help the enquirer decide whether they feel they have the necessary skills for the job.

Once the potential applicant has had an opportunity to find out about fostering and is keen to apply an initial assessment will be arranged.

Initial Assessment

An initial assessment may be carried out virtually or face to face depending upon the circumstances and needs of the applicants. During this meeting applicants will be given further information about fostering. The roles and responsibilities of Agency staff will be discussed as well as the assessment process itself. The need for all members of the household to consent to a DBS (Disclosure Barring Service, previously referred to as CRB) and other statutory checks will be explained and information on these checks (including medicals, references, Local Authority checks) will also be supplied. In addition, Agency requirements in terms of health and safety standards will be provided to ensure applicants meet certain essential criteria. If the home visit is positive, the potential applicant will be invited to make an application with the Agency. An application form can be completed following the home visit or alternately this can be completed later.

Planning the Assessment

All assessments will be carried out by appropriately qualified and experienced social workers.

The first assessment meeting will be to plan the assessment with the applicants. At this stage, the assessing social worker will provide the applicants with information on the assessment process.

The applicants guide explains what the competencies are and how applicants will be expected to help identify and collect evidence towards their assessment.

When they have the first assessment meeting with applicants, Silver Lining assessors will explain to them that:

1. Certain requirements will be made of them during the process e.g., completing a preparation training, consent for statutory checks and references etc.
2. That the assessment has two stages and that specified statutory and safeguarding checks are undertaken under stage 3. These include DBS, local authority, medical, references, and other checks are begun at this stage in respect of suitable applicants. If it is decided not to continue with an assessment because of information collected as part of stage 1, this will be communicated formally in writing.
3. Under stage 2 of the assessment, they will be able to see any "brief report" or final report and record any disagreement with it before this is considered by a fostering panel. In some cases, Stage 1 and Stage 2 will run concurrently.
4. The assessor's report will make a recommendation to the fostering panel about their suitability to foster, including those children whom they might best be matched with, as well as their training and development needs for the future.
5. Applicants will be encouraged to give honest answers and not to exaggerate or give false information about their skills and/or experience. Doing this may lead to them not being able to cope in certain future placements.
6. The assessor will explain the competencies required for fostering and give initial help and advice in enabling applicants to link evidence with the skills required for fostering e.g. 'can you think of a time when you needed to be patient? etc.
7. Leading on from the above, the assessor will also help the applicant identify skills or abilities they may find most difficult or need to develop.



Preparation Training

Applicants will be invited to attend a range of pre-approval preparatory courses. This may include trainer led courses, virtual courses or a combination of both. The Agency will provide specialist training where the applicants will be approved for more complex placements.

The Assessment Process:

Assessment of prospective foster carers is undertaken using a competencies approach and the BAAF Form F report. Having explained the competencies, the assessor will then discuss each of them with the applicant and explore how they may obtain the evidence for each competency.

Gathering evidence or information

A variety of techniques will be used to gather evidence or information regarding the applicants' suitability to foster. These may include:

1. The BAAF Form F guidance and competencies list to assist applicants and assessors to work out what existing skills they already possess and what new ones they need to acquire.
2. Ecomaps, family trees, and/or other personal history tools to gain information on an applicant's motivation to foster and how their history may impact future fostering.
3. Witness statements/personal references from other adults who can corroborate the applicant's ability to relate to and care for children - e.g., babysitting circle, helping at school etc.
4. Reflective Discussions
5. Records and reports
6. Homework assignments and case studies
7. Role playing and simulation
8. Observations from the "Skills to Foster" preparation course
9. Shadowing other foster carers for a day, if appropriate

Care will be taken by the assessor to stand back and pay due attention to the life history of the applicant - rather than concentrating solely on the applicant's current functioning and circumstances. The completed assessment will include a recommendation by the Silver Lining assessing social worker on the suitability of the applicant using the Secure Base Model's 5 domains i.e. Availability, Sensitivity, Acceptance, Co-operation and Family Membership.



STATUTORY CHECKS AND REFERENCES

Following written consent from prospective carers and their household members, Silver Lining will ensure that satisfactory clearance is received in relation to the following checks and references before the approval stage is reached.

1. Statutory checks

Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK, Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) on all household members, Children's Services Department's record, Cafcass (if appropriate), Ofsted (if appropriate) Registration and inspection units, Previous applications to foster, Overseas check (if appropriate).

2. References

Personal Referee Interviews, Employment & Previous Employment References (if appropriate), School/ Nursery/ Health Visitor (if appropriate), Ex-partners (if appropriate), Birth Children (if appropriate),

3. Health report

Fostering medical by applicant's GP followed by advice from agency medical advisor.

4. Health and safety inspection

Following satisfactory clearance in relation to all the statutory and other checks, as well evidence that the applicant complies with health and safety requirements, the Silver Lining assessor will reach a point in stage 2 of the assessment when enough information has been collated about the applicant in order for an assessment recommendation to be made. This may be in the form of a brief report or a final report to a fostering panel.

At this stage, the applicant will be told the recommendation and reasons for it. Feedback should be given in a clear and constructive way and recorded in order to meet legal and Agency requirements.

The structure of the final report will be within the framework of areas covered by the BAAF F Form, including the competencies and consideration of the applicant's learning and development needs to enable them to achieve the TSD (Training, Support, and Development) standards within twelve months.

Prospective foster carers will sign the assessment report prior to submission to panel and where applicants suggest changes to the report, these are negotiated with the assessing social worker. Applicants have the right to add written comments or other information to their report if they wish.

Copies of brief reports or the completed BAAF Form F report are circulated to the Silver Lining fostering panel members at least 5 working days in advance of their meeting.

The social worker will attend the fostering panel meeting to present her/his report. Applicants are invited to attend and may bring a supporter with them.



FOSTERING PANELS

In accordance with the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011, Silver Lining Fostering maintains a central list of persons suitable to sit on fostering panels whose overriding objectives are to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in foster care. Our fostering panels meet on a regular basis. Panels have a balance of gender, ethnicity, and qualifications and reflect our commitment to bring together individuals from different backgrounds. Some Panels may be face to face whilst others may be virtual. This depends on the complexity of the cases that the Panel is considering.

Each panel has access to specialist legal and medical advice as required. The Independent Chair has several years' experience of working with children and young people in a variety of roles.

A senior manager of the agency is the Panel Advisor. The central list of suitable panel members includes foster carers, a qualified nurse, teacher, a care experienced adult, early intervention practitioners, youth work practitioner and experienced social workers.

Silver Lining's fostering panel makes recommendations about the approval of prospective carer/s. The Agency Decision Maker considers the recommendations before notifying the applicants in writing. Where the decision is to approve them, the letter will specify any terms of approval.

Following approval, foster carers and Silver Lining sign a written agreement (the Foster Care Agreement) that sets out the terms and conditions of the fostering household's relationship with Silver Lining.

If, following consideration by the fostering panel, and a review of case papers and the final panel minutes, the Decision Maker considers that an applicant is not suitable to act as a foster carer the Decision Maker will write proposing not to approve them together with reasons (a "qualifying determination") and will invite them to submit written representation within 28 days of the notice or to request a review by an independent review panel through the IRM (further details can be provided).

If Silver Lining does not receive any representation within the above said period and there is no referral to the IRM, it may proceed to make its decision.

If Silver Lining receives written representation, it will refer the case to its fostering panel for further consideration; and the Decision Maker will make its decision, considering any fresh recommendations made by the fostering panel, and will notify their decision to the applicant in writing.

If Silver Lining receives any recommendations from an independent review panel through the IRM, the Decision Maker will take these into account and then make their decision and will notify their decision to the applicant in writing.

Silver Lining's Decision Maker is Dipti Thakur Kazi (Director).

During the fostering assessment process, the agency may decide to fast-track an application if there is a clear demonstration that the applicants are able to understand and meet the needs of our looked after children. This means that Stage 1 and Stage 2 will both be processed at the same time.

SUPPORT TO FOSTER CARERS

At Silver Lining Fostering Agency, our unwavering commitment is to provide comprehensive support and resources to foster carers, ensuring the highest standards of care for the children and young people entrusted to our care. Our multifaceted support system is designed to empower foster carers in their vital role, promote continuous professional development, and create an environment conducive to positive outcomes for every child in our care.

Supervisory Home Visits:

Foster carers undergo monthly supervision conducted by their designated Supervising Social Worker. This process serves as a reflective space for carers to analyse their practice, address the evolving needs of the children and young people in placement, and monitor their training and development progress. Supervision is rooted in the Secure Base Model which promotes a therapeutic style of parenting and the importance of attachment and is complemented by access to systemic supervision.

Unannounced Visits:

To ensure the maintenance of a consistently high level of care, foster carers receive two unannounced home visits annually. These visits provide additional assurance to validate the quality-of-care children receive when placed in our care.

Transport:

Foster carers are primarily responsible for the day-to-day transport of looked after children, including school runs and contact with birth parents. Silver Lining Fostering Agency endeavours to support transport needs via the provision of a fostering allowance with dedicated funding for transport, and should foster carers face challenges, additional advice and guidance is provided to support the travel needs for children in care.

Appreciation:

Silver Lining Fostering hosts an annual end-of-year party to express our appreciation and recognition for the hard work of foster carers. Achievements of children and young people are regularly celebrated through certificates and vouchers thus fostering a culture of acknowledgment and encouragement. Their achievements are also acknowledged with a letter from one of the Directors as well as a mention in our quarterly newsletters.

Record Keeping:

This is integral to foster carers support to children. They are required to maintain a daily log of children's lived experiences which is regularly reviewed for quality and compliance and forms part of the child's formal case records. These logs, crucial for monitoring the child's journey, are reviewed by the supervising social worker as part of the supervision and support to foster carers.



Policies and Procedures:

Access to the foster carer's handbook, containing key policies and procedures, is provided to all our foster carers. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures further ensures that carers have easy access to essential information to support them in providing a high standard of care for all children in their care.

Training:

Silver Lining takes pride in offering a robust training program covering a range of topics relevant to foster care of care, including behaviour management, health, and safety, first aid, attachment theory, fostering regulations, and legal aspects. Our commitment to continuous professional development is reflected in our training strategy and programme of scheduled training which is aligned with the Training Support and Development (TSD) Standards and supports the personal development plans of foster carers. The training program is not only nationally compliant but also tailored to individual needs and experiences as well as the agency's aspirations and commitment to providing the highest quality of care for children. Carers are offered opportunities to specialize in areas such as Parent and Child Fostering, Caring for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children, and Peer Mentoring. Training on the Secure Base model equips carers to integrate its five dimensions into their daily practice, ensuring a secure environment for children's holistic development.

Foster Carer Support Groups:

Regular support groups serve as platforms for sharing information and knowledge, accessing support from a group of peers and most importantly, fostering a sense of community among carers. These gatherings facilitate mutual learning, support, and socialization.

Allowances:

Silver Lining provides a generous fostering allowance directly to foster carers' bank accounts through BACS transfer. As self-employed individuals, foster carers are responsible for their tax and National Insurance. However, they also have access to information and resources to support them manage this aspect of their role. The allowances are reviewed annually in consultation with foster carers.

Respite:

Respite, when necessary, aligns with the child's care plan and requires local authorities' agreement. Encouraging the utilization of support networks, close family members, or friends known to the child is actively promoted where it is safe and appropriate for the child.

Support for Foster Carers' Own Children:

We recognize the essential role of birth children in fostering positive family experiences for children in care. Social workers regularly engage with birth children, seeking their feedback to inform the agency's business plans. The agency also extends additionally support and access to training for adult birth children living in the foster home as appropriate.



Reviews and Termination of Approval:

The Agency reviews all foster carers, approval annually or following a significant event or change within the household to ensure that the foster carer continues to be suitable in line with statutory requirements and that their approval terms reflect their ongoing development. The review is conducted by an independent reviewing officer.

The agency may only propose to amend a foster carers terms of approval following a review in accordance with Regulation 28(2) of the Fostering Services Regulations amended 2013. Reviews are presented to panel following the first year of fostering and any significant event including complaints or allegations. Applicants are invited to attend. Where a change of approval is proposed the agency must issue a qualifying determination and provide details of the applicant's right to appeal or access the IRM.

For all reviews, a full report including feedback the child's social worker, the foster carer and children in care will be prepared by the agency social worker and shared with the carer. The review provides an opportunity for the agency and carer to reflect on the past year and plan for the year ahead.

It takes account of:

- Recommendations of the previous review
- Enquiries made and information obtained by the agency
- Outcomes for children placed in this household since the last review
- Any significant changes in the household including accommodation
- Training undertaken by the carer and support provided.
- The views of the carer and all members of the household including children who are/have been placed during this period
- The views of placing authorities
- Updates on all statutory checks
- Annual updates on Health and Safety checks
- Any concerns, complaints, or compliments raised by the carers in relation to the agency

The review recommendation will then be presented to the Agency Decision Maker for approval. The carer receives confirmation of their re-approval in writing.

At Silver Lining Fostering Agency, our commitment to fostering excellence extends beyond regulatory requirements. Through proactive and tailored support, ongoing training, and a culture of appreciation, we empower our foster carers to provide exceptional care that positively impact the lives of the children and young people in care.



HOW WE SUPPORT OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

At Silver Lining Fostering Agency, the well-being of every child and young person under our care is a paramount concern. We have a dedicated team around the child who provides a core package of bespoke support to all fostering households who are experiencing challenging and difficult placements. This includes therapist, mentor, education advisor, LGBTQ champion and safeguarding lead.

Regular visits by Supervising Social Workers ensures a comprehensive understanding of children and young people's needs, with due consideration given to the collaborative roles of both agency and local authority social workers. This collaborative effort ensures clarity in roles and responsibilities, with a singular focus on safeguarding and promoting the best interests of the child and/or young person.

We offer tailored support for both Foster Carers and the children in our care, fostering a family-oriented environment. Our approach prioritizes flexibility, responsiveness, and forward thinking.

Our services include:

- Regular support groups tailored for children and young people.
 - Practical assistance with transportation and access to external facilities and services as agreed with the placing local authority.
 - Assistance and encouragement to pursue hobbies and interests, including holiday activities.
 - Support for contact with birth families where requested and appropriate.
 - Assistance with Life story work.
 - A Children and Young Person's guide, available in various languages, including audio for those who are unable to read.
 - Information on children's helpline through the children and young people's guide.
 - A UASC (Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children) guide translated into different languages, crafted with input from UASC currently under our care.
 - Support from a Young Mentor to aid in settling, learning about life in the UK, and preparing for independence.
- Silver Lining Fostering Agency has a dedicated team around the child who provides a core package of bespoke support to all fostering households who are experiencing challenging and difficult placements. This includes therapist, mentor, education advisor, LGBTQ champion and safeguarding lead.
- Support from an Education Advisor for those needing additional educational assistance. our Education Advisor collaborates with foster carers, virtual school, Child social worker and the team around the child to promote education, ensuring that our children and young people are offered opportunities to reach their potential and find fulfilment in their lives.

Additionally, we have been giving **Welcome Pack** to newly placed children with our Foster Carers.

Our **Welcome Pack** is more than just a collection of items; it's a gesture of care and consideration extended to children arriving at their foster homes. This pack symbolizes our commitment to their care and well-being, aiming to provide a sense of feeling loved — a feeling that may be unfamiliar to some young people.

The **Welcome Pack** is given to children and young people upon entering our care, it includes essentials such as a throw, toiletries, a night lamp/digital clock, a diary, a pen, a sling bag, some snacks etc. At Silver Lining, we prioritize building trust from the very first moment, ensuring our children get off to the best start possible.

Our goal is to ensure they feel loved and cared for under all circumstances, and we believe the **Welcome Pack** contributes significantly to achieving this.

In our commitment to improving the lives and life chances of care leavers, Silver Lining has recently introduced the **Start-Up Pack** for young people transitioning to independent living. This thoughtful pack includes essential items such as towel, bedding, a pillow, toaster, and kettle, providing practical support for a smooth transition.

REFERRALS AND MATCHING

The matching process holds utmost importance, involving a thorough assessment of the needs of the Looked After Child. We closely collaborate with the referring Local Authority to ensure that the proposed placement meets specific criteria:

- Child's expressed wishes and feelings.
- Individual matching requirements of the child, including child's physical, educational, emotional, health, cultural, religious, and social needs.
- Experience, knowledge, and skills of the carers
- Location and proximity of the foster home to the child's school and community
- Presence of other children in the placement and any risk arising from this.
- Consideration of the foster carer's own children and family members
- Considering the wishes of the child's family
- Meeting the requirements for contact
- Avoiding substantial risks to any member of the foster carers' household or their property

All relevant information is shared with the Foster Carer and their Supervising Social Worker, enabling them to make an informed decision about the matching process. The core of the decision-making regarding placement lies in aligning the needs of the matched child/young person with the skills of Foster Carers. A Matching pro forma is consistently followed throughout the referral, matching, and decision-making stages, fostering collaboration among the Foster Carer, Supervising Social Worker, and a manager.

Every placement undergoes negotiation with the child or young person's Local Authority, either through an individual placement contract or as part of a broader service provision commissioned by the Local Authority.

A risk assessment is completed on the making of a placement. It is not merely to identify risks, but to identify what steps can be put in place to minimize the risk and manage these. Risk assessments are updated at least annually and at any point when information comes to light which would require a fresh assessment.

Any gaps in matching are mitigated by ensuring carer is provided with the training and support needed to overcome the gaps.



CONTACT SILVER LINING FOSTERING AGENCY

Silver Lining Fostering Ltd.
The Vista Centre, 50 Salisbury Road, Hounslow TW4 6JQ
Tel -0208 150 7238, 07405 234 222
Email – info@silverliningfostering.co.uk
Website – www.silverliningfostering.co.uk

COMPLAINTS

If you wish to make a complaint
or have any concerns about a child in care with
Silver Lining or otherwise, please contact:

Sally Pillay–Complaints Officer
Tel – 0208 150 7238, 07405234 222

Please also see Appendix A for full details of our Complaints Procedure

SAFEGUARDING

For any Safeguarding matters, please contact our Designated Safeguarding Officer-
Sally Pillay.

Tel- 0208 150 7238

For details please also refer to our Safeguarding Policy.



APPENDIX A

COMMENTS, COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS – PROCEDURE

Contents

1. Legislation and guidance Principles
2. Who can comment, compliment or complain?
3. Complaints by or on behalf of children and young person's
4. Complaints by a foster carer
5. Stage 1 - Informal Stage
6. Stage 2 – Formal Investigation
7. Stage 3 – Independent Investigation
8. Ofsted
9. Remedies
10. Monitoring and quality assurance Representations



Legislation & Guidance

The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 regulation 18 sets out the statutory requirement for fostering agencies to establish a written procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children placed by the agency and foster carers approved by them. If the complaint is about a service directly provided by the agency, then the Complaints and Representations Procedure should be used. National Minimum Standard 25 states that fostering services should have a written policy and procedural guidelines on considering and responding to representations and complaints.

The Children Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services states that everyone involved with the fostering service, including fostered children and their families, should know about the complaints and representations policy and how to use it. Children and young people will still have the right to access to, and representation by, an independent advocate through their local authority and should be advised accordingly. Information about the complaint procedure must be included in the children's guide to the fostering service.

This is in addition to the requirement under section 26(3) of the Children Act 1989 for every local authority to establish a representations and complaints procedure. The placing local authority has a legal duty to investigate any complaint about its own services – including the social worker, care plan, or contact arrangements – and the Adoption and Children Act 2002 amended the Children Act 1989 to require it to make an advocacy service available to that child to assist them to make a representation.

The statutory framework is set out in the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 and the related statutory guidance (Getting the Best from Complaints: social care complaints and representations for children, young people and others, DCSF 2006).

Principles

Silver Lining Fostering Agency believes that foster carers, children, and young people have a fundamental right to have their views heard and to be taken notice of in the development of the service. These views may be in form of a complaint about the service, constructive ideas for how to improve the service, or in the form of a compliment about how a service was delivered. All comments, compliments, and complaints provide vital information to inform the future policy, planning, and development of the service as well as identifying the areas of the service which are successful and valued. They help to identify any gaps in service provision and should lead to the development of better services. When something goes particularly well, or particularly badly, we need you to let us know that we can repeat successes and correct mistakes. Your comments and complaints are an essential part of this process.

Who can comment, compliment or complain?

Any child, foster carer, member of staff, family member, or indeed any person who has had an involvement with Silver Lining Fostering Agency is entitled to comment about the quality of any of the services, whether positive or negative. A foster carer, relative, or friend can also do so on a young person's behalf.

A comment or complaint may include such things as quality of communication, staff behaviour or attitude, decisions we have made, support for carers or children, or quality of care in the home.

If the matter is urgent e.g. a Child Protection issue, an allegation, or an incident involving the child's health and safety, call the office or the out-of-office hours' number on 07405234222.

Complaints by or on behalf of children and young persons

Any looked after child or young person may complain about an aspect of their care to their placing authority, whose own complaints procedure will be available to the child via the social worker.

However, if the complaint relates to an aspect of the service provided by Silver Lining Fostering Agency, an agreement will be reached with the placing authority about which agency will investigate the complaint.

When a complaint is made directly to Silver Lining Fostering Agency by or on behalf of a child, the placing authority social worker will be informed. Agreement will then be reached with the placing authority about which agency will investigate the complaint.

Complaints may be made by the child, foster carer, parent, social worker, friend, relative, or Silver Lining Fostering Agency's staff member. The complaint may concern any aspect of the service received from Silver Lining Fostering Agency. Our Children's Guide contains written information on how to make complaints, including the availability of independent support and advice.

Children will be assured that their complaints will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly and they will receive written notification of the outcome.

Children will be reassured that by making a complaint they will not be subjected to any form of punishment or reprisal

Complaints by a foster carer

Complaints may be made to any Manager about any aspect of the service received from Silver Lining Fostering Agency. The complainant will receive written acknowledgment of the complaint and details of the planned investigation. All complaints will be investigated in accordance with the Stages set out below.

No person who makes a complaint will be subject to any form of recrimination or reprisal. All foster carers at Silver Lining Fostering Agency will have access to independent advice and support.

Stage 1- Informal Stage

We hope that most things someone is concerned about can be settled by speaking to the person they normally deal with, or by a discussion with that person's immediate line manager, and this is the informal route we would like people to try first.

We would always encourage foster carers to talk with their supervising social worker or their line manager about any complaint that they have and to try to resolve the matter with them. Unless matters are urgent, we expect informal routes of resolution to be explored first.

Stage 2- Formal Investigation

If someone is not satisfied with the informal response they get, or if they wish to complain formally to Silver Lining Fostering Agency, they can do so at any time to the Complaints Officer at the address given below. They can call or put their concerns in writing if they wish.

The Complaints Officer

Silver Lining Fostering Agency

The Vista Centre, 50 Salisbury Road, Hounslow TW4 5AH info@silverliningfostering.co.uk

Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within seven working days, including an indication of whether it is planned to try to resolve the complaint via internal investigation or, in the case of potentially serious complaints, to move straight to the independent investigation stage.

The Complaints Officer will ensure that the complaint is properly investigated. This stage of the process should be completed within 28 days of the commencement of the investigation unless it is exceptionally agreed with the complainant this period may be extended. The Complaints Officer will ensure that there is a written report to include findings and recommendations for the resolution of the complaint which will be available to the complainant.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request within 28 days of the date of the dispatch of the report to them that the matter be referred to Stage 3.

Stage 3- Independent Investigation

A request for an independent investigation should be made in writing to the Complaints Officer.

The request will be acknowledged in writing within seven working days, including details of the proposed investigation.

An Independent Person will be appointed to investigate the complaint. This person will hold a professional social work qualification and have relevant experience in foster care. The Independent Person will interview persons involved in the complaint and will have access to all policies and procedures and, with relevant permission, access to the foster carer's and to the child/young person's files and records. They will prepare a report of their investigation, including conclusions and recommendations for the resolution of the complaint. This report should be completed within 42 days of the acknowledgment letter unless it is agreed with the complainant that this period may be extended.

The Complaints Officer will consider the Independent Person's report and write within ten days of its receipt to the complainant setting out their proposals for resolving the complaint. Details of the investigation/proposed resolution will be available for information to the fostering panel.

This marks the end of the complaints process. If the complainant is not happy with the final outcome or indeed at any stage of the process, they can contact Ofsted.

Ofsted

Any foster carer or a child/young person may choose to contact our regulator, Ofsted, directly regarding any complaint/allegation concerning the standard of service provided by a foster carer, or about the management of our service.

Silver Lining Fostering Agency will co-operate fully with any investigation conducted by Ofsted.

Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Fax: 0300 123 3159

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk



Remedies

If we make a mistake, we will apologise and try to take remedial action to put things right. We may ask the complainant to suggest what they would like us to do. We will always try to put them back to the position they would have been in but for our mistake. We will also try to ensure not to repeat the same mistake.

For example, we may decide that one or more of the following can be done to put things right:

- Provide or change a service to the complainant
- Provide an explanation or information to the complainant
- Review service user literature (leaflets, website, posters, and so on)
- Review a policy or procedure
- Arrange training or guidance for employees

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

All complaints, representations, and allegations against foster carers are monitored by the Registered Manager and reported to the management group. Their outcomes are annually evaluated as a basis for informing future service provision. Comments and compliments are also collated, analysed, and included in management reports. Information from these processes is shared with staff and the fostering panels.

Representations

Foster carers and applicants to foster are entitled to make representations, in writing, or in person, to a Silver Lining Fostering Agency fostering panel in relation to their approval as foster carers - in instances where the agency makes a "qualifying determination" in relation to one of the following areas:

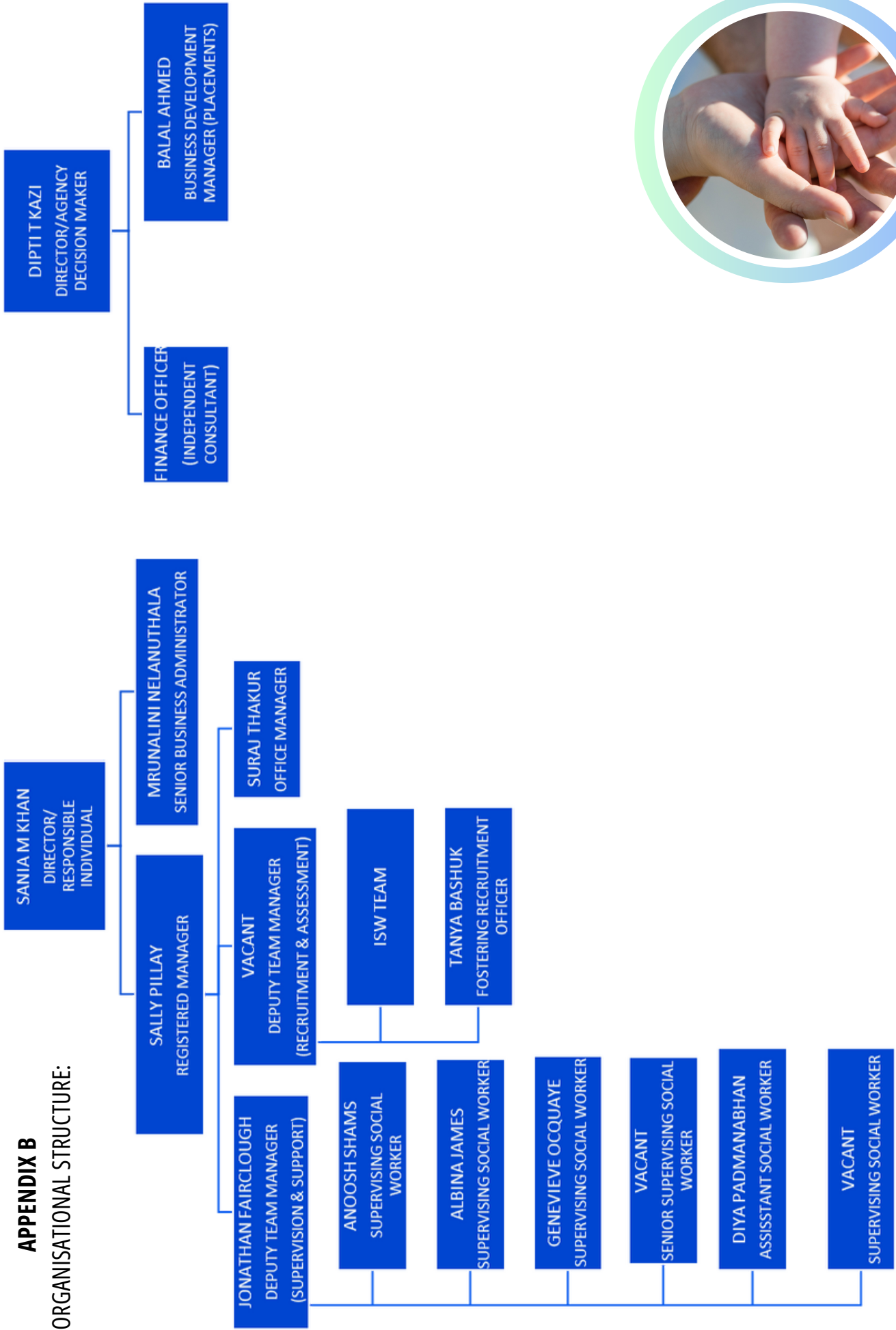
The agency proposes not to approve the applicants as foster carers. The agency proposes to change the foster carer's terms of approval; The agency proposes to terminate the foster carer's approval.

In these cases, the foster carer/applicant will receive a letter containing the qualifying determination and will have 28 days in which to confirm whether they wish to make representations or to refer their case for review to an independent fostering panel.

The Silver Lining recognises that carers have choices and that in some instances decisions are made to move between approving agencies. In these circumstances, the Fostering Network Protocols are followed, and the agency works closely with responsible Local Authorities to ensure that the care experiences of any children in placement are not detrimentally affected by the transfer.



APPENDIX B ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:



WRAP AROUND SERVICE

