Recruitment Support Hub Handbook

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## What is the recruitment support hub?

The recruitment support hub is a collaborative partnership between local authority fostering services across [insert LAs]. We are joining together for the first time to recruit more foster carers and improve the journey for prospective foster carers.

We’re offering prospective foster carers increased levels of support through the recruitment support hub such as offering them a foster care buddy, who can support them from initial enquiry through to application and assessment.

Our recruitment support hub has been developed since August 2023 in collaboration with all local authorities to ensure we can learn from existing best practice in the region and embed this as part of our recruitment support hub.

## Who is part of the recruitment support hub team?

Our recruitment support hub team is working to support recruitment of foster carers across [insert hub name]. Our team is made up of:

* [insert name], Hub Manager
* [insert name], Social Worker
* [insert name], Recruitment Officer
* [insert name], Communications and Marketing Lead
* [insert name], Training Lead
* [insert names], Foster Carer buddy

[insert organogram]

Key contact details:

* [insert key contacts e.g. hub manager]

## Role of foster carers in the recruitment support hub

Existing foster carers are an important part of the recruitment support hub team and process. Foster carers will be available to speak to prospective foster carers as requested and provide ongoing support through the initial enquiry and application and assessment processes.

The role of existing foster carers is to:

* [insert responsibilities]

## What are the responsibilities of the recruitment support hub team and local authority fostering teams?

The recruitment support hub team will work closely with local authority fostering teams to support prospective foster carers from initial contact through to handover to the LA and provide ongoing support. Local authorities will continue to be responsible for assessment and approval of prospective foster carers.

### Initial enquiry/contact process

#### Website contact

The recruitment support hub website has been created reflecting regional content, providing overarching information on fostering, and outlining the local authority partners working as part of the recruitment support hub.

The recruitment support hub website includes the regional initial contact form [insert link].

[insert any information relevant to how the website contact will work with the back-end CRM].

[insert any auto message a prospective foster carer might receive following submitting a website contact].

#### Expectations of Local Authorities

* Local Authorities must remove their existing initial contact form from their websites and replace with their unique URL directing to the initial contact form to ensure all contacts are routed through the recruitment support hub.
* Local authorities will add standardised wording to their website, explaining the partnership and the role of the recruitment support hub.
* No initial contacts will be submitted to individual local authorities from the date of go live.
* [insert other expectations]

#### Telephone contact

The recruitment support hub has a dedicated telephone number which shall be promoted through all regional communications and marketing materials and the recruitment support hub website. This number is [insert] and shall be promoted by all local authorities on their websites.

#### Expectations of Local Authorities

* From go live, local authorities must [insert expectations]

#### Email contact

The recruitment support hub has a dedicated email which will be promoted through all regional communications and marketing materials and on the recruitment support hub website. This email address [insert email address] shall be promoted by all local authorities on their websites.

#### Expectations of Local Authorities

* From go live, local authorities must [insert expectations]

#### In-person events

Local authorities should continue to run local in-person events, where they run events and identify prospective foster carers they must complete the regional initial enquiry form to ensure the prospective foster carer is directed to the recruitment support hub. Local authorities must have regional recruitment support hub marketing materials at these events, which will be provided to each local authority.

[Insert information if the hub will also run regional events].

#### Expectations of Local Authorities

* From go live, local authorities must [insert expectations]

### Initial Enquiry/first conversation process

Within 24 hours of submission of an initial enquiry/contact or at a date/time requested by the enquirer the hub will contact the prospective foster carer offering a warm welcome.

The pace and content of this first conversation will be foster carer led and based on their readiness.

[include detail about who will conduct this part of the process and steps that will be taken].

### Handover to the local authority

To ensure a smooth handover from the recruitment support hub to the local authority there will be [insert process e.g. handover call between hub and LA, who is completing this part of the process].

#### Expectations of Local Authorities

* Local authorities will provide relevant staff contact details or a duty contact to ensure a smooth handover.
* [insert any other expectation]

## Governance and regional oversight

There will be a [insert frequency] governance board to monitor performance of the hub. [summarise terms of reference].

There will be a [insert frequency] operational group, which will deal with day-to-day operational issues and changes. [summarise terms of reference].

The hub manager will have regular meetings with local authority fostering service managers to answer local authority specific questions or issues.

## Policies

### Allocations policy

Where a prospective foster carer does not know where they want to foster, the recruitment support hub will follow the allocation policy.

[insert allocation policy e.g. council tax].

### Reporting

To maintain effective oversight of the recruitment support hubs performance [insert frequency] will be conducted and reported into the governance board. Data will be collated by the recruitment support hub team and presented in a dashboard.

The key metrics the recruitment support hub will be reporting to its DfE are:

The key metrics the recruitment support hub will be reporting to its governance board are:

We will also be collecting more granular local metrics to monitor performance and achievement of the overall outcomes of the recruitment support hub:

#### Expectations of Local Authorities

* To support reporting and oversight, local authorities will be expected to submit the following data on a [insert frequency]
  + [insert data required]

### Communications and marketing

The recruitment support hub is complemented by a regional communications campaign and brand. The regional logo and single call to action to the recruitment support hub must be included on all communications and marketing materials. The recruitment support hub will provide each local authority with marketing materials which include the regional logo and brand and brand guidelines to support local communications and marketing activity.

The brand guidelines are:

#### Expectations of Local Authorities

* Local authorities should continue local communications and marketing activity but must include the regional logo and single call to action on all digital materials from go live.
* [insert requirements of local authorities]

## Local authority information – offer, allowances and fees

The recruitment support hub will offer a warm and consistent experience for prospective foster carers from initial enquiry through to handover to the local authority. The hub will communication individual local authority offers including support, allowances and fees as requested by the prospective foster carer.

[insert each LAs offer]