

Corporate Parenting Board

Quarterly Report

22/23



MIDDLESBROUGH
CHILDREN
MATTER



**Our mission is to show
Middlesbrough children
that they matter.**

Fostering Service 2022 – 2023 Quarterly Report, April to June 2022

Data collated as of the 30.6.22



	Quarter 4 (21/22)	Quarter 1(22/23)	
Number of Enquiries Number of Initial Visits	38 14	63 5	Cumulative data from April to June 22
Number of fostering families	119	117	As of the 30.6.22
Number of children placed Inhouse fostering IFA	180 145	191 145	As of the 30.6.22
De – registrations (households) Mainstream Connected Foster to adopt	5 (10 placements)	2 (4 placements)	As of the 30.6.22
Panel activity(households) Newly approved;			Cumulative data from April to June 2022
Reviews	9	40	
Mainstream fostering families	0	0 (1 awaiting ADM)	
Connected fostering families	8 (12 children)	2	
Matches for children and their long term fostering families	10 (20 children)	5 (6 children)	
Supported Lodgings	0	0	

What is working well

- We now have the highest number of children placed with in-house fostering families.

March 2019 IFA 154 Inhouse **124 - 44%**

March 2020 IFA 160 Inhouse **158 - 50%**

March 2021 IFA 163 Inhouse **164 - 50 %**

March 2022 IFA 145 Inhouse **180- 55%**

June 2022 IFA 145 Inhouse 191 - 57 %

- We have seen an increase in fostering enquiries due to the sustained marketing campaign; to date, we have received 63 enquiries which exceeds our target of 46 by the end of July 2022.
- 88% of Foster Carer reviews were held within timescales
- No connected carers assessments have gone out of the 24 week timescale
- We have timescales and practice guidance on connected assessments making them more robust and child-focused
- We have a stable team and two agency workers have now been recruited into permanent posts.
- The introduction of Birth Child, Therapeutic Parenting Support Groups, and a Men Who Foster Group are underway
- 10 workers within the team are undertaking a 12 month programme of Trauma-Informed Practice training with John Scadden.
- Trauma-Informed supervision sessions with foster carers, CLA social workers, and Education and supervising social workers have been introduced to support fragile placements.
- Management oversight and grip continues to increase and is supporting the improvement of practice and compliance across the service.
- The Pilot Constellation for the Mockingbird Project is in place and due to launch in September.

What are we worried about

- Connected Carer Referrals have increased by 33% due to influx of children coming into the care of the LA, which has increased workload for social worker, creating pressure on timescales and performance. This has seen a rise in 8 week extensions and tasks not completed in 16 weeks.
- While initial enquiries have increased many enquirers do not progress often choosing to progress with an IFA due in part to the current financial offer.
- In June a fostering family, long-term matched with 3 Middlesbrough children, transferred to an IFA at a considerable long-term cost to the LA; in addition, another fostering family has registered their intention to transfer to an IFA to improve their financial situation.
- The number of children that continue to be placed in unregulated connected care placements as a result of no ,or negative assessments.

What makes things more complicated

- At present we pay newly approved carers £0 per week and a banding payment can only be awarded once carers have completed their Training Support and Development Standards, usually at the point of their first review (12 months after approval) IFA's pay a full weekly rate per child from the day of approval recognising the crucial and professional role that carers play in caring for and supporting our children looked after.
- The current financial package offered by Middlesbrough cannot compete with that offered by IFA's and is hindering our campaign to recruit and retain our fostering families.

Plan

- We aim to be able to meet the needs of 70% of our looked-after children through in-house fostering provision by the end of 2024 and need to recruit a substantial number of fostering families to achieve this.
- We aim to review our financial offer to foster carers in order to compete with IFA's and support our campaign to 'keep Middlesbrough children with Middlesbrough Carers'.
- We are seeking support from an agency social worker, to relieve pressure on the team and service. To continue to ensure that children's permanency under connected carers remit remains timely and robust.
- The aim is that with increased and sustained marketing activity throughout 2022 the initial enquires will increase to 200 in 2023 which should result in 20 fostering families being approved in 2023.