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REVISION HISTORY				
Issue	Description of Change	Author	Valid From	Valid To
01	Initial Release	CH	19.09.07	18.09.08
02	Amended	AH	04.01.09	03.01.10
03	Amended	AH	16.06.10	15.06.13
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05	Reviewed & amended	AH	14.10.15	13.10.18
06	Reviewed & amended	AH	28.12.16	27.12.21
07	Staff List amended	AH	25.07.18	27.12.21
08	Placement Types included (pg 7)	AH	26.09.18	26.09.19

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS	
Document Number	Document Title

Issued by		Ashley Higgins (Registered Manager)
Authorised by		Dr Jonathan Khan (Managing Director)


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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

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Lorimer Fostering
Lorimer House, 2A Carrington Lane
Sale, Manchester
M33 5ND


STATEMENT OF PURPOSE & FUNCTION

Lorimer Fostering provides high quality family placements to young people who are unable to live within their family. We operate in the North West of England, and have foster carers throughout the area. Most placements within the fostering service are planned admissions, with particular attention paid to appropriate matching together with educational and contact issues. Foster Carers are well supported by a team of experienced Supervising Social Workers. The primary focus of the Fostering Service is the welfare and safety of the placed child.

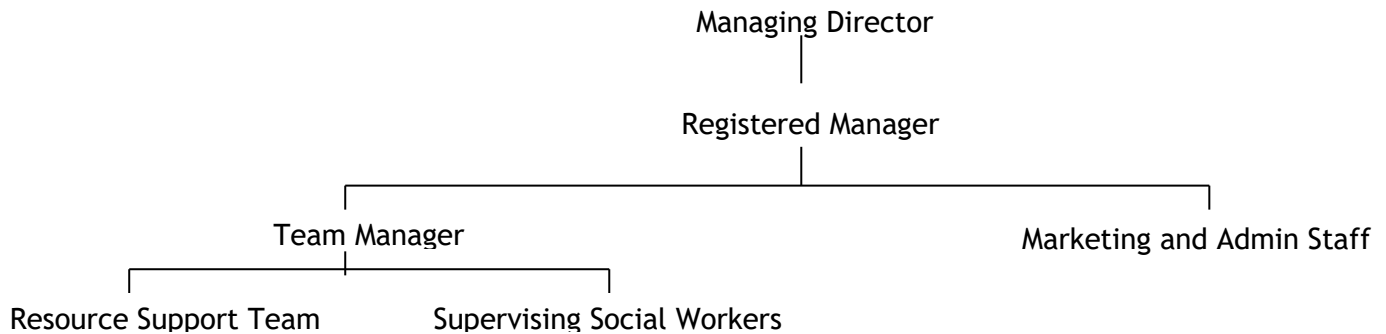
STATUS AND CONSTITUTION

Lorimer Fostering opened in 2004, and is an independent fostering agency, and a private limited company registered under the Companies Act 1985 (company number 04967352 - Lorimer Foster Services), with Memorandum and Articles of Association. The owner of the company is Dr Jonathan Khan.

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MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE, STAFF NUMBERS AND QUALIFICATIONS




DR JONATHAN KHAN is a qualified medical doctor, having worked in Paediatrics and has extensive experience operating a number of high quality children's services.

The Registered Manager, **ASHLEY HIGGINS**, qualified as a Social Worker in 2000 and has extensive experience of working in and managing children's residential services, particularly in challenging settings, working for St Helens MBC between 1992-2004 before joining The Lorimer Group as a Residential Service Manager. Ashley sat on the LFS Fostering Panel for 2 years prior to becoming the Registered Manager in January 2009. In addition to the Diploma in Social Work Ashley also has a Graduate Certificate in Management from Salford University.

The Team Manager, **WILLIAM WEST**, qualified as a Social Worker in 1990. Since that time he has worked as a Social Worker in a Local Authority, and has also undertaken Form F assessments for a number of independent fostering agencies.

The Supervising Social Work Team of **ANGELLA GILFILLAN**, **ADRIENNE HINDS**, **LIZ OBAZUKE** and **THERESA SAVAGE**, are qualified Social Workers, each with more than 3 years post qualification experience. They have all worked within the Local Authority setting and have an excellent understanding of the needs of Looked after Children, and Care Planning processes.

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In addition to this we also have a dedicated Assessment & Recruitment Social Worker in **LOUISE MASON**, who has many years experience of writing Form F's as well as working in a Supervising Social Worker role.

ALLISON STONE, the Placements Manager has several years 'hands-on' experience of working with young people, having worked previously in a residential setting before taking up her current position in 2003.


CLAIRE TAYLOR, the Resource Support Manager is a registered general nurse and holder of NVQ 3. She has many years experience of working with young people in the care setting.

JOHN CANNY, is a casual Resource Worker who has many years experience working as a teaching assistant/support worker within a school setting specialising in working with children and young people with special educational needs.

The Marketing and Administration team of **ZOE O'DONOHUE**, **BETH OWEN** and **DEBORAH JONES** have many years of marketing and administrative experience between them.

RACHAEL KHAN is responsible for the financial administration of Lorimer Fostering.


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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To provide looked after children and young people with foster placements that are safe, warm and nurturing.
- To ensure that placed children and young people are given every support they need to take full advantage of their educational opportunities.
- To ensure that placed children and young people are provided with the means and the support to be healthy.
- To ensure that placed children and young people are well supported to move on to independence or to a permanent placement.
- To ensure that foster care assessment is safe, thorough and completed in a timely fashion.
- To ensure that foster carers receive good quality, appropriate supervision, challenge and support, in the fostering task.
- To ensure that foster carers receive regular high quality training that assists them in the fostering task.
- To develop a service that is appropriately responsive to the expressed needs of carers and provides opportunities for consultation in relation to development

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SERVICE PRINCIPLES

- The service has a duty to placed children, young people and their families and foster carers to make sure that all aspects of the service are as safe as possible.
- All placed children and young people have the right to form secure attachments within a warm, nurturing and respectful fostering household.
- All placed children and young people should have the opportunity to achieve to their fullest potential, and the role of the foster carer and the fostering service is critical within this.
- Everyone has the right to say so if they are not happy with arrangements, and to be listened to, and taken seriously.
- The needs and welfare of placed children and young people are paramount and will be the primary consideration of the agency at all times, including where this may be at variance with the financial interests of the agency or the foster carer.

PLACEMENT TYPES

All placements with Lorimer Fostering carers are made and monitored in accordance with the Fostering Regulations. We strongly believe that ensuring the right ‘match’ for the young people with our Foster Carers can enhance the experience of a placement for the young person.

Emergency

Majority of our foster carers are able approved to provide unplanned emergency placements for an individual young person and sibling groups.


Respite

Respite placements are available on an emergency or planned basis. Our carers are flexible to take one off respite placements or on a regular basis.

Bridging

We have a number of foster carers whom are experienced in bridging children to adoption, permanence or independence. Bridging placements generally form part of the child’s long term plan and can last for anything up to 2 years.

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Short Term

All of our Foster Carers are approved to provide short term placements. These placements can vary in duration from a few weeks or months, while plans are being made for the child's future. Both the agency and our carers have a flexible approach and are prepared to adapt to meet the needs of the child.

Long Term

Foster Carers who are approved to provide long term placements must first evidence that they have the ability and are committed to offer a young person a home for as long as they need it. Long term placements are matched in conjunction with the placing Local Authority and other professionals, where necessary.

Solo Placements

Each young person has individual needs and circumstances that can be complex. To ensure the needs of the young person is met there may be situations where a young person needs to be the only child within a fostering household. Discussions at referral stage will be held in order to ensure the right 'match' is made.


Siblings

We have a number of Foster Carers whom are approved to take sibling placements of brother and/or sisters to ensure relationships are maintained between them. A placing Local Authority will always try to ensure that siblings are kept together within one fostering household wherever possible.

Staying Put

This is an arrangement whereby the young person will remain with their current Foster Carer(s) from aged 18 and older. This allows young people to stay with their foster family until they feel they are ready for independence.

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RECRUITMENT, ASSESSMENT AND APPROVAL OF FOSTER CARERS

A central concern of Lorimer Fostering is that the processes and procedures for assessing and approving applicants are thorough and safe.


All enquiries from prospective applicant foster carers are dealt with efficiently, with a comprehensive and attractive brochure being sent out to them within one working day. Two weeks after this, prospective applicants will get a follow up phone call, and if they return the paperwork subsequent to that, they will be visited by a qualified Social Worker within a two week period. This initial visit is intended to establish their suitability to be a foster carer, and will cover a range of issues. This visit is then recorded by the Social Worker as an Initial Visit report, and a decision is made by the Team Manager as to whether the applicant is suitable to progress to a Form F assessment. This is the point at which the assessment will be passed to an Assessing Social Worker, and the applicants will be put forward for the Skills to Foster training.

Lorimer uses the BAAF Form F competency based assessment framework. There are clear timescales in place for the assessment and approval of applicants, and for the checking processes that need to be done in relation to applicants. The Fostering Panel will only make a recommendation when all checks have been completed.

Ex-partners of applicants are always interviewed, unless there are very compelling reasons why this should not be the case, and these reasons would usually be to do with violence or control issues within that relationship.

Lorimer Fostering uses its own dedicated social work staff to do assessments, and also, from time to time, may use qualified Social Workers external to the agency. External Social Workers are always interviewed by the agency, and are the subject of recruitment checking processes, prior to being given any work. All assessors are provided with a copy of the policy on *Assessing and Approving Applicants*, which sets out the agency requirements and agency minimum standards in a clear and comprehensive way. All Assessing Social Workers have supervision sessions with the Team Manager in relation to the Form F assessment work; this enables Lorimer to be confident that all relevant matters are being addressed within the course of the assessment, and the assessment is being done in accordance with Lorimer Fostering timescales and standards. Completed

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Form F assessments are presented at the Fostering Panel, and applicants are expected to attend panel for this. The Fostering Panel will consider the application, and make a recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker, who is the Registered Manager, *ASHLEY HIGGINS*. The Registered Manager will make his decision, having taken into account the comments and recommendations made by the Fostering Panel. Foster carers are advised of the outcome of their application both by telephone and in writing, by the Registered Manager.

TRAINING, SUPPORTING AND REVIEWING FOSTER CARERS

All foster carers are encouraged to attend training, and children will not be placed with newly approved carers until they have completed both Skills to Foster Preparation Course and Child Protection. In addition to the Skills to Foster 3 day preparation course the agency provides an extra training day prior to approval which incorporates training on Record Keeping, Child Protection, Risk Assessment and Safe Caring.

Following approval Lorimer has a programme of Core Training including Child Protection, First Aid and Behaviour Management.


In addition, Lorimer Fostering will commission training based on the needs of carers and prevailing placement issues within the service; this could be for example around issues such as sexual exploitation or de-escalation techniques. Most training is commissioned from independent trainers, sometimes with a member of the social work team or a foster carer from the agency. Carers who have completed all of the core training are able to progress to NVQ 3 in fostering.

All carers, and significant partners, are also required to complete the TSD Standards within 12 months of their Approval, and Lorimer offer a range of materials, workbooks, support and guidance to assist them in this.

THERAPEUTIC APPROACH TRAINING - NURTURED HEARTS

Lorimer embrace The Nurtured Heart Approach® which is a relationship-focused methodology founded strategically in The 3 Stands™ for helping children (and adults) build their Inner

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Wealth® and use their intensity in successful ways. It has become a powerful way of awakening the inherent greatness in all children while facilitating parenting and classroom success.

The essence of the Approach is a set of core methodologies originally developed for working with the most difficult children. It has a proven impact on every child, including those who are challenged behaviorally, socially and academically. The Nurtured Heart Approach has been shown to create transformative changes in children diagnosed with ADHD, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Reactive Attachment Disorder and other behavioral, emotional and anxiety related symptoms - almost always without the need for long-term mental health treatment. Even children experiencing social cognitive challenges, like Autism Spectrum Disorder and Asperger Syndrome greatly benefit from the Approach, reducing the need for traditional mental health and medical interventions.


Traditional approaches often fall short of promoting the Inner Wealth essential for children to build successful relationships. This method has helped thousands of families, educators, and child advocates channel a child’s intensity in beautifully creative and constructive ways - helping children achieve new emotional portfolios of confidence and enduring levels of competency.

The Approach is simple and accessible and all of our carers are encouraged to attend a training session as well and staff members. Using resources like our books, online courses, and certification training, we hope to show you how utterly easy it is to not only improve your situation with a challenging or difficult child, but to transform the child through the awareness that their intensity is actually the source of their greatness.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPERVISION

All approved carers have an allocated qualified Supervising Social Worker, each of whom has a caseload of approximately 10 carers, which allows for a high level of support to be provided to each carer. As the assessment and supervisory functions are separated, this ensures that work can be planned and plans can be adhered to. The service has standards for frequency of visits, and where there is a child in place, this will range from once a week to once a month, dependent on the nature of the placement, experience of the carer and the challenges presented by the child placed with you. In the event that a worker is absent from work, cover

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will be arranged for the carer, who will be given the name of a person to contact. All carers have access to a qualified Social Worker from the agency 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

All approved carers receive access to our *Foster Carers' Handbook*. This was re-drafted by the agency, following consultation with some carers, and provides a comprehensive guide for carers in relation to a wide variety of issues, along with information about where to find additional helpful resources. All approved foster carers are automatically enrolled as members of FosterTalk, and have access to all of their resources, as well as their advice and representations service. This also includes access to thousands of discounts to High Street stores, leisure facilities, breaks away and days out.

Lorimer have a dedicated website, and uses our internal CHARMS system to aid communication between the agency and our Foster Carers. These are used to update carers on legislative changes that may affect them, and also to let carers know about developments and changes within the agency; carers are also often asked for their opinions about particular issues, and are encouraged to contact the Registered Manager if they feel they want to discuss particular issues. A *Foster Carer Forum* is held every 6 months, and the format has been composed in consultation with our Foster Carers to facilitate an environment that they feel best meets their needs. This often includes a guest speaker, followed by an opportunity for the staff facilitators to update carers about the agency, and consult with carers; carers are then able to have some time without any staff present, in order to discuss any issues relevant to them.

All placed young people receive a pack of age-appropriate materials for looked after young people, including the agency's *Young Person's Guide*, which was re-drafted following consultation with young people placed within Lorimer Fostering. When creating the guide placed young people were brought together in small groups to think about what they wanted from the *Young Peoples' Guide*, and also to complete the government consultation in respect of the green paper on *Looked after Children*. This was a very successful beginning to a young person's forum. Forums are now held for our children and young people in a fun and exciting environment; they are given the opportunity to communicate both with the agency and other children and young people in a relaxed setting. This is often then followed on by a fun activity suggested by the young people themselves during previous forums.

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Foster carers receive a weekly allowance for the placed child, and a weekly professional fee, these payments are made every 2 weeks, in arrears. Carers can also claim expenses to cover mileage in respect of young people.

Most young people placed by the agency are placed in a planned way, which allows time for gathering of information and introductions. At the point at which a referral for a placement comes into the agency, and a particular carer is being considered, the Registered Manager oversees the matching process; if he is unavailable, this is done by the Team Manager. Where possible and appropriate, young people are placed within or close to, their placing authority, this enables us to ensure that educational and contact arrangements can be managed by the agency. Each carer has a *Safe Caring Policy* that is particular to their placed child, taking into account the needs of the child, and the possible risks within the placement, this is reviewed regularly by the Supervising Social Worker. In addition, carers have a supervision contract that is particular to the needs of the carer in looking after the placed child.

Every foster carer is reviewed annually by the agency (on an 11 month cycle), although a significant incident, complaint or allegation, would also lead to a review, prior to the carer being able to take any further placement. Reviews are done by an independently contracted Social Worker with many years experience of conducting Independent Reviews. A carer's first review, or a review following an incident, would be presented at the Fostering Panel. Subsequent to that, carer's reviews are presented at panel every 3 years. In conducting a review, information is sought from placed children, Local Authority Social Workers, carers and the Supervising Social Worker. All matters involving a complaint or allegation against a carer are brought to panel as a means of ensuring independent scrutiny, rigour and safety.

Signed:.....

Position:.....

Date:.....

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