



**The
Fostering
Network**

Practice Support to Fostering Services

Judy Bell Practice Support Consultant

The Fostering Network Regional Conference

North West

6th February 2019

Presentation Overview

- Work of Practice Support Team (PST)
- Role of regional consultant
- Up to date issues in your region
- Our current work and plans to support your practice

PST – WHO ARE WE?

NORTH EAST

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YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDE

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NORTH WEST

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MIDLANDS

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LONDON & EAST

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LONDON & SOUTH EAST

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SOUTH WEST

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Practice Support Team Manager

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Support Services Administrator

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What do we do?

- Promote good practice
- Facilitate regional forums
- Represent member views
- Contribute to sector practice developments
- Update members on the work of The Fostering Network
- Develop training and consultancy
- Act as a source of advice, information and support for organisational members



Our aim

Our central aim is to promote good practice in fostering, ensuring that children and young people benefit from foster care, that they have a voice and are able to reach their full potential.

What topics would you expect to be in the top five that fostering service staff ask us about?



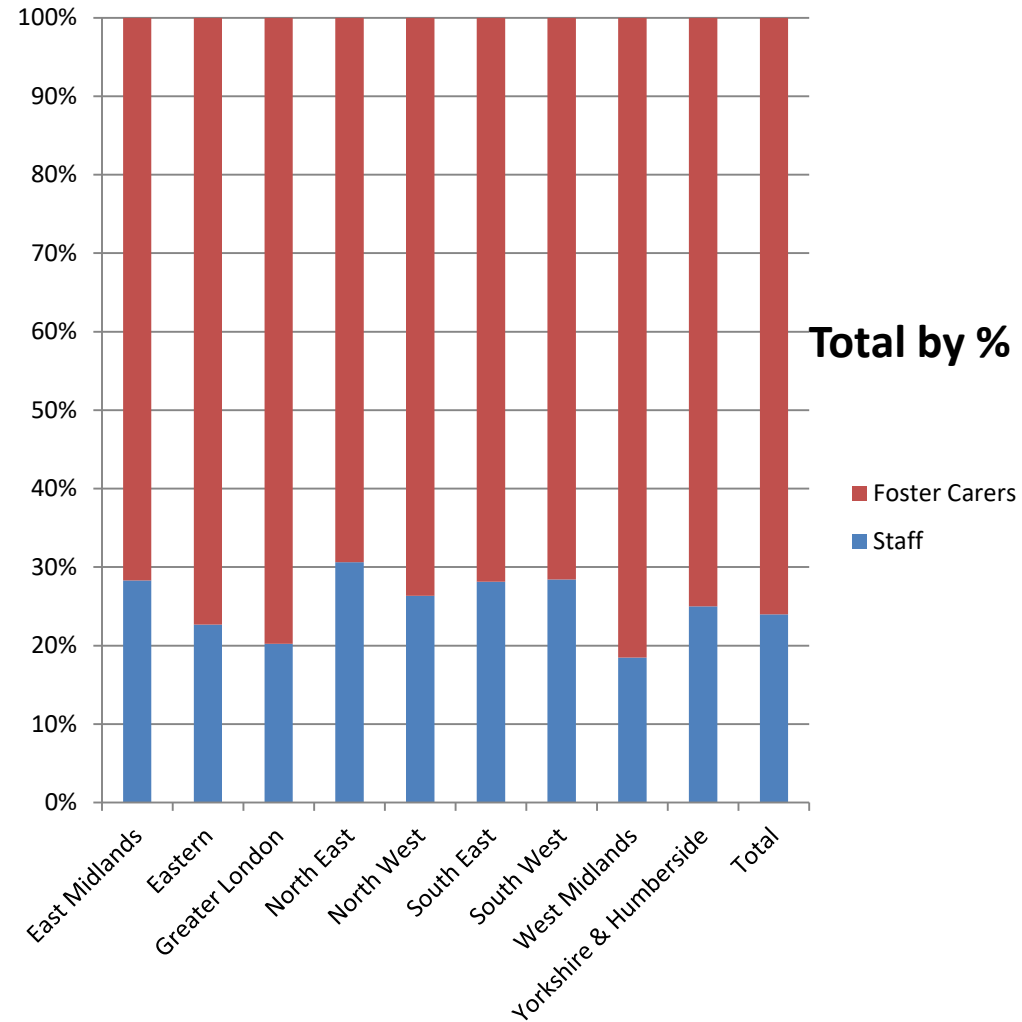
Top five topics for enquiries to PST across England

- Kinship care/connected persons
- Approval and assessment of foster carers
- Legislation, regulations and guidance
- Fostering Panels
- Record keeping

Top five members' helpline topics over the last year

- Financial issues
- Allegations and Standard of care concerns
- Review of approval
- Disruption of placement
- Record keeping and data protection

Total helpline calls by region



What does this information tells us?

- Type of enquirer
- Understanding of the legislation
- Time and resources
- Confidence in practice



Top five practice issues raised by fostering service members in the North West region

- Assessment & Approval
- Kinship care/connected persons
- Fostering panels
- Health and safety
- Training

Followed by

- Fostering Network services/projects
- Managing personal information
- DBS checks
- Annual reviews
- Support care/respite care

Practice enquiries – what do we know?

Discuss the practice enquiries on your table with others and agree your answers



Your feedback

- *‘Really useful to talk this through’*
- *‘Your views are really welcomed’*
- *‘Really appreciate this update – it makes clearer what we can advise the applicant’*
- *‘We will be using this information in our thinking’*



Practice Forums in the North West

PST meet regularly with our members at a number of different forums. In the North West . . .

We directly facilitate:

- NW IFP Forum
- NW Foster Panel Chair forum

We attend and provide information to:

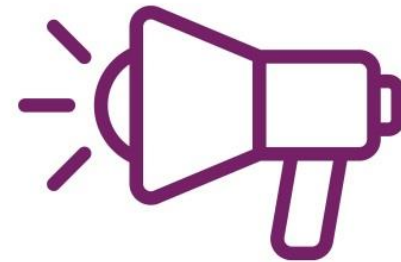
- NW LA Fostering Leads
- NW LA Training forum
- NW Foster Care Association forum (to be relaunched)
- CoramBAAF NW Practice Forum

We would like to develop:

- NW LA Connected Persons forum

Representation

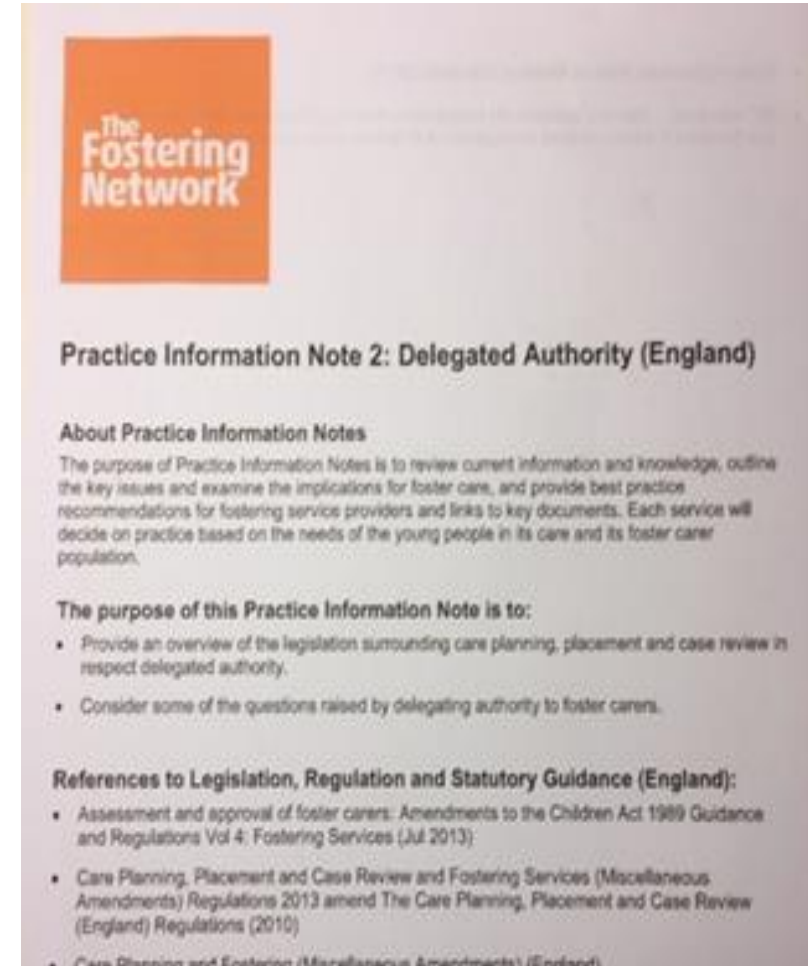
We consult with you and represent your views to a range of key national steering groups as well as organisations such as the Department for Education and Ofsted.



Practice Information

We produce Practice Information Notes (PINs) on topics such as:

- Smoking and e cigarettes
- Exemptions
- Foster Carer Reviews
- Delegated Authority

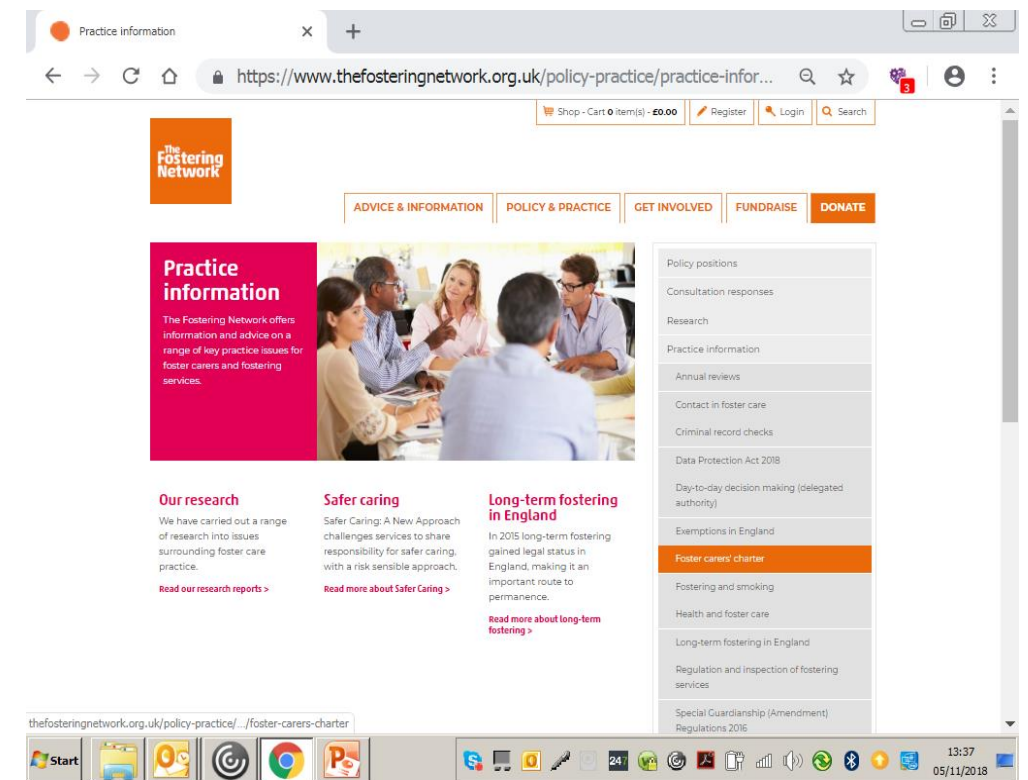


Webpage development

We write practice information on our website for our members and are committed to adding to this content over time.

- Gaps?
- Ideas for new topic areas?

Let us know and we will consider these as part of our programme of development.



Our message

- There are different but overlapping concerns between staff and foster carer members
- A greater understanding of regulations, guidance and good practice can help to develop better support to foster carers, and have a positive impact on work with young people.

Contact details

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Thank you

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