



National  
Fostering  
Framework  
Fframwaith  
Maethu  
Cenedlaethol

National Fostering Framework

# Phase Three 2017-18

Communication Bulletin No 2

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH THE NFF?

The Phase Two Report 2016-17 ([click here to view report](#)) was presented to Welsh Government at the end of March 2017 and a work programme for Phase Three 2017-18 has been agreed.

Funding for this work is coming from the £8million investment in Children's Services recently announced by WG, £400k has been identified for the NFF Phase Three work programme. At the end of September the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) agreed that £400k will be ring fenced for the NFF in next financial year 2018-19. This is recognition of the work achieved so far and ensures the work for 2018-19 will continue.

**The next annual National Fostering Framework Conference will be held on 15th March 2018 at the Metropole Hotel, Llandindod Wells.** Please put the date in your dairies, a flyer and booking form will be coming out in the New Year.

If you wish to get involved in any of the workstreams then please let us know. All contributions are welcome or if you wish to find out more please contact the Programme Manager, Jane Moore [jane.moore043@gmail.com](mailto:jane.moore043@gmail.com)

## WORK PROGRAMME FOR PHASE THREE

**Workstream 1: Create capacity for an extended National Adoption Service central team to provide the co-ordination and leadership for the NFF.**

Work so far and planned:

- Dedicated funding for the NFF until end of March '19 has been secured. Funding will then be reviewed.
- Work to develop a vision for a unified adoption and fostering framework is being commissioned.
- Discussions have been held with the Innovate to Save and the Invest to Save Projects have been held to explore possibility of securing additional resources from these funding streams.
- A Grant Monitoring Group is meeting monthly to provide oversight of the WG grant to deliver the Phase Three work programme

**Workstream 2: Development of Regional Work programmes based on regional priorities identified by the national performance framework.**

Work so far and planned:

- The NFF Strategic Steering Group and the Grant Monitoring meeting agreed £40k for this financial year to be available to each of the NFF regions to appoint a regional development manager to lead on the development of a regional work programme. Some regions have appointed a regional development manager others have 'seconded' a few staff to work together to develop and lead on a regional work programme.
- The Regional Development leads will work together to achieve a coherence in the creation of the regional development programmes.
- Now the funding for the NFF has been secured for 2018-19, the £40k for each region will be available for next year.
- The information and intelligence emerging from the national performance framework will inform the development of the work programmes

**National Performance Framework: A Few Key Messages from 22 Local Authorities**

- Use of LA’s own foster carers range from 12% to 70% and all Wales average is 37%;
- Use of Commercial IFA range from 3% to 50% and all Wales average is 22%.
- Of the **2,003** initial enquiries during 2016/17, 4% (n=73) were from households that had previously fostered through other organisations.
- Conversion rates from initial enquiry to approval range from 2% to 50% and all Wales average is 8%.
- **1,281** kinship foster care viability reports completed during 2016/17.
- **606** kinship foster care assessments completed during 2016/17. Conversion rate range from 3% to 67% and all Wales average is 47%.
- **373** kinship foster placements made available during 2016/17.
- **281** fostering placements and **195** households were lost to the service during 2016/17. Three LA’s were able to provide number of households but not corresponding number of placements.
- **271** foster carer places and **167** households were approved during 2016/17.

**Workstream 3: Implement the national performance framework across all local authorities to help shape the regional priorities.**

Work so far and planned:

- All local authorities have completed the national performance framework for 2016-17. This is a real achievement and it is recognized the volume of work by many colleagues in every local authority
- For the first time, we have an all Wales picture of our performance in some key aspects of our fostering services.
- An all Wales Report on the information gathered has been sent to all Heads of Children’s Services. The Report is anonymised.
- A Report for each Region has also been produced and sent to each of the Regional Heads of Service leads for the NFF. These Reports identify each local authority in the regions.
- The funding for the part-time performance framework post 2017-18 is secured and work has begun to put this post through the job evaluation process.

- Work to continue to link the NFF performance framework with WCCIS
- Work has begun to establish a similar performance framework within the independent and third sectors. Nine IFAS from the commercial and third sector have piloted the performance framework.

**Workstream 4: Create an all Wales brand for local authority fostering. Establish a marketing strategy at regional and central level for the brand.**

Work so far and planned:

- A media and marketing group has been working together for the last year.
- A national workshop took place on October 12th; it brought together all those involved across local authorities in the marketing and recruitment of foster carers. The national workshop gave an opportunity for a number of local authorities to showcase the work they have been involved in.
- A foster carer from Cardiff, who had originally been approved by an IFA, opened the national workshop and gave all those present lots of food for thought.
- Work has begun to create a part-time post to take forward this work.
- Heads of Service are also considering if a local authority could take the lead role for the remainder of this financial year for this work.

**Workstream 5: Increase capacity within the regions to respond to additional enquiries following the marketing activity.**

Work so far and planned:

- The Grant Monitoring and the Strategic Steering Groups agreed that the resource allocation for this particular workstream would be used to appoint a full-time regional development manager– as opposed to the original plan to appoint a part-time position.

# WORK PROGRAMME FOR PHASE THREE

## 2017-18 (CONT.)

### **Workstream 6: Develop a national approach to commissioning of fostering services.**

Work so far and planned:

- This work is being led by the 4C's
- Regional workshops have been held to promote the Inter-Authority Toolkit, to promote the sharing of local authority placements between authorities within and across regions.
- Work has begun and will continue to develop a common template for placement commissioning strategies

A national commissioning workshop is planned for the New Year; provisional date for this is January 30<sup>th</sup>.



### **Workstream 7: Develop consistent standards and Best Practice Guide for Kinship Care and an Implementation Plan.**

AFA Cymru are leading on this work and will build on the work of last year

- A draft 'Good Practice Guide' has been produced and is being consulted upon
- AFA Cymru are also represented on the harmonization of fees and allowances group to ensure the work on payments to kinship carers is coordinated with the work on the harmonization of fees and allowances for mainstream carers.
- Plans are in place to begin a dialogue with the judiciary to ensure a consistent approach within the courts.

### **Workstream 8: Continue work on harmonizing fees and allowances for foster carers.**

Work so far and planned:

- The Fostering Network led on this work in Phase Two 2016-17, mapping out the fees and allowances carers receive in each local authority
- A working group has been established with representation from each region and has been working on the plan to achieve greater harmonization
- A comprehensive paper is in the process of being produced which will outline the current position, the position in each of the regions, some of the key challenges and options for taking this work forward.
- If anyone else would be interested in joining us please let us know, you are very welcome



### **Workstream 9: Develop a national training framework for foster carers.**

Work so far and planned:

- AFA Cymru, The Fostering Network and Social Care Wales (SCW) have held a first meeting and an outline plan is in place to, in conjunction with the regions, to develop a draft national training framework
- Initial consultation events have taken place in north and south Wales
- A draft national training framework is being produced and Regional Consultation Events will take place in January and February.

# MEMBERSHIP OF THE NFF STRATEGIC STEERING GROUP

## Phase Three 2017-18

SSG Membership	Organisation
Phil Evans, Chairperson	ADSS Cymru lead for NFF
Clr Huw David	Bridgend County Council
Clr Geraint Hopkins	RhonddaCynonTaff County Council
Naomi Alleyne	WLGA
Stewart Blythe	WLGA
Tanya Evans	Blaenau Gwent County Council
Elizabeth Lockwood	Welsh Government
Huw Gwyn Jones	Welsh Government
Suzanne Griffiths	National Adoption Service
Ann Batley	Rhondda-Cynon-Taff County Council
Kathy S'Jacob	AFA Cymru
Maria Boffey	The Fostering Network
Colin Turner	The Fostering Network
Karen Benjamin	Children's Commissioning Consortium Cymru (4C's)
Debbie Jones	Voices from Care
Chris Dunn	Voices from Care
Dr Carolyn Sampeys	Looked After Children/Safeguarding, Public Health Wales
Dr David Williams	Welsh Government, CAMHS
Helen Kirkaldie	CAMHS, Aneurin Bevan HB
Dr Alyson Rees	CASCADE, Cardiff University
Marian Hughes	Gwynedd County Council
Craig McCloud	Flintshire County Council
Jonathan Jones	Welsh Government, Education, Supporting Achievement & Safeguarding
Stefan Smith	Camarthenshire County Council
Julie Thomas	Swansea County Council
Pam Clutton	CSSIW
Sarah McCarty	SCW
Jane Moore	Project Manager, National Fostering Framework (NFF)

The Strategic Steering Group has promoted the increased collaboration between all key stakeholders, created opportunities to influence the development of the NFF and provided the overall strategic co-ordination of all the elements of the work programme for Phase Two 2016-17 and will continue to do so in Phase Three.