



“FISS” – Foster carers Independent Support Service

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post: FISS Advisor- sessional/self employed

Main purpose: To provide professional, independent advocacy, advice and support to foster carers in line with the specification set out between FosterTalk and its clients; the Local Authorities and Independent Fostering Agencies with who FosterTalk contracts. To make contact, meet with and provide advocacy, advice and support to foster carers who have had concerns, complaints or allegations made about them.

The Advisor must be independent of the Fostering Provider; the Local Authority or Independent Fostering Agency that holds the foster carer's registration.

Accountable to: Manager of FISS/FISS Supervisor

Key tasks:

1. To approach any work with foster carers as a partnership, to work toward establishing a positive working relationship with an understanding of the principles of accountability, confidentiality and independence that underpin the Advisor's role.
2. To visit a foster carer's home as needed, to introduce the FISS service and provide support, advice and advocacy as required to the referred foster carer/s and other members of the household.
3. To continue to work with the foster carer/s and or household members through the process of addressing/resolving the concern, complaint or allegation.
4. To support and enable the foster carer in expressing his/her views and wishes.
5. To provide information, explore courses of action, and advise the foster carer of the possible outcomes of any course of action taken. This may include Local Authority processes such as complaints and child protection procedures, as well as any action that the foster carers are considering taking.
6. To continue to meet with the foster carer, speak directly to individuals, write letters with/on the behalf of the foster carer as appropriate and agreed, in order to help resolve the problem(s).
7. To attend foster carer support groups as agreed on specific occasions, in order to provide information about the FISS service to foster carers, establish positive relationships, and consult with carers regarding both FISS services and other issues pertinent to foster carers.
8. To respect rules of confidentiality and conduct in line with FosterTalk's Information Sharing Policy. To adhere to practice guidelines.

9. To liaise closely with the Manager of FISS, to make available time for consultation with him/her, by telephone, email and face to face.
10. To undertake training and attend FISS meetings as required by FosterTalk.
11. To keep records of work, including tasks carried out, time spent, and expenses incurred using FosterTalk's standard documentation.

FISS is a growing and responsive service that exists to respond to the needs of individuals, therefore many of the tasks and responsibilities may be unpredictable and varied. It is expected that FISS Advisors will be flexible when required, undertaking tasks that have not specifically been named in their task description, but come under their general level of responsibility. FosterTalk is committed to offering a high level of support to our FISS Advisors and will respond to those support needs promptly.

FISS ADVISOR - Person Specification

Factors	Essential/Desirable
Qualifications, experience & knowledge	<p>A qualified/experienced social care or advocacy practitioner</p> <p>An understanding of the fostering task along with issues that foster carers face when looking after children and young people along with an ability to develop knowledge of related fostering Legislation</p> <p>An understanding of child protection and complaints procedures and an ability to develop a working knowledge of individual Local Authority systems and services</p> <p>Evidence of related experience/training, and continued willingness to undergo additional required training for their role</p>
Skills/Abilities	<p>Adaptable communication skills for work with foster carers, children in placement, and Local Authority staff and members, both one to one and in meetings and groups</p> <p>Able to represent a foster carer's views and work on their behalf with clarity and accuracy</p> <p>A non-judgemental attitude of acceptance and tolerance for others, including foster carers, whose values and attitudes may be different to your own</p> <p>Able to give support to others and receive support and guidance where appropriate</p>
Personal Qualities	<p>A commitment to anti-discriminatory practice</p> <p>A commitment to foster carer's rights and needs</p> <p>A warm and accessible approach</p> <p>Sensitivity to the needs and wishes of the foster carer</p> <p>Reliable and consistent</p> <p>Non-judgmental approach</p> <p>Sense of humour and able to have fun</p> <p>Willingness to be flexible in meeting the needs of foster carers</p> <p>Ability to have a balanced, reasoned and measured approach</p>

