



Fostering Recruitment Strategy 2016-18

Recruitment initiatives to increase the number of SCST foster carers

Strategy Summary

This strategy outlines Slough Children's Services Trust's approach to increase the number of in-house foster carers for vulnerable children in Slough. It includes appendices outlining activities and actions already undertaken and those planned to increase foster carer recruitment.

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Version: 1

Date: November 2016

Review Date: November 2018

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Introduction & aims

Slough Children's Services Trust, referred to as 'the Trust', was formed and assumed responsibility for children's services on 1 October 2015. Slough Borough Council's children's services had been previously completed three Ofsted inspections delivering judgements of 'Inadequate'. In October 2014, the Government issued a direction and a notice for removing children's services from local authority control and the Trust was established.

This document sets out the Trust's fostering recruitment strategy in accordance with the 'Statutory Guidance on Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Children looked after' (March 2010) While responsibility for meeting the 'sufficiency duty' remains with the local authority (*under Section 10 of the 2004 Children Act*), the Trust as the provider, alongside the council and all partners, must meet the 'duty to co-operate' regarding improving the outcomes and wellbeing of children in the local area.

This strategy will provide a profile of the Trust's current carers, consider local demographics and key issues impacting on recruitment of new carers. It will also consider the staffing profile and key responsibilities in the fostering service. The strategy will look at the key issues affecting fostering in Slough and should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Sufficiency Strategy 2015 to 2018. This strategy describes the way the Trust intends to recruit foster carers who live in Slough and the surrounding areas to meet the diverse needs of Slough's looked after children and young people.

National context

Around 30,000 more children come into care over the course of 12 months, with similar numbers leaving the care system to return home, move in with another family member, live with new adoptive families, become subject to a special guardianship or residence order or move on to adult life.

In 2015, a total of 42,030 looked after children were subject to care orders, which represents 60% of all children subject to legal orders. 29% (19,850 children) were being looked after on a voluntary basis, 13% on some other basis (placement orders, freed for adoption) while a small number of children were looked after under police protection or involvement with the Youth Justice System.

The rate of looked after children per 10,000 under 18 years on 31st March 2016 was 60. This figure varies significantly at Local Authority level from a low of 22 (Wokingham) to a high of 164 (Blackpool).

National statistics – Placements

- 70,440 children were in the care of local authorities on 31st March 2016, compared to 69,540 in 2015.

- 74% (51,850) of children looked after on 31st March 2016 were living with foster carers
- 11% (7,600) were living in secure units, children's homes or hostels
- 5% (3,810) were placed with their parents
- 4% (2,940) were placed for adoption
- 4% (3,040) were with another placement in the community
- 2% (1,200) were placed in residential schools or other residential settings
- There are around 44,625* foster families in England.
- The Fostering Network estimates that fostering services need to recruit a further 9,070 foster families in the next 12 months.

In January 2016 the Fostering Network reported that there was a national shortage of 9,000 foster carers. The demand for Foster carers outstripped supply. It was recognised that independent fostering agencies were five times more successful at recruiting than local Authorities.

Borough of Slough (Slough Context):

Historically, with its strong manufacturing base, Slough employment opportunities were predominantly for manual and semi-skilled work, but in recent decades the manufacturing sector has shrunk and the high tech, service and distribution sectors have increased.

Many settled Slough families originally moved to Slough for manual and semi-skilled work. Their children and grandchildren now need very different skills in order to secure local employment. The growth of the town and its multi-cultural community is largely due to the job opportunities provided on the Slough Trading Estate which has acted as a catalyst for other inward investors.

The presence of the Trading Estate both adds to the prominence of Slough as a major economic hub whilst also providing a home to 20,000 of the town's 86,000 jobs and for over 400 business including international names such as O2 Telefonica, Ferrari Maserati and Blackberry. Cumulatively these factors contribute in providing Slough with a solid economic base.

Slough's economy has a transient population, with a high rate of employees from outside the area. Only 10% of properties in Slough are detached houses, compared to almost one third of the South East position and half the national value.

The availability of housing and a spare room, as well as the size of Slough and high employment rates all have a major adverse impact on recruitment of foster carers. 20.8% of households show 'overcrowding' (as evidenced by an occupancy rating of -1 or less) compared to just 8.5% across England and Wales.

Children living in this area:

There are 40,000 children and young people under the age of 18 years living in Slough. They represent 28 % of the total population in the area approximately 25% of the local authority's children are living in poverty. Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 66% of all children living in the area, compared with 22% in the country as a

whole. The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Asian and Asian British (44%) and Black and Black British (12%). The Proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language:

- In primary schools is 58.7% (the national average is 19.4%).
- In secondary schools is 44.9% (the national average is 15.0%).

Children in Care:

At the end of November 2016 there were 184 children in the care of the Trust. There were 51 children placed with the Trust Foster carers (including family and friends carers) and 133 children were placed with external independent fostering agencies (IFA's). The aim of the fostering recruitment work undertaken is to reverse this trend of the majority of Slough Looked after Children being placed in IFA's with a target of a 70/30 split for 70% of those looked after children being placed with Trust carers.

The numbers of children looked after in Slough over the last three years are as follows:

	March 2013	March 2014	March 2015	September 2015 (the Trust)	November 2016
Numbers of looked after children	185	189	196	198	184*

Vision

The Trust's vision and purpose is to ensure children in Slough are:

'Safe, Secure and Successful'

The Trust has consulted with children, families, staff and stakeholders to develop our vision. Our aim is to provide:

- The best possible service – the Trust aims to be an outstanding service in five years
- The best possible outcomes for vulnerable children and families – ensure children and families are the focus of everything we do
- The best possible support to staff – to enable families to change and flourish

The Trust's Fostering Service

As at November 2016, the Trust has 40 Approved foster carers including 6 family and friends foster carers.

In May 2016, Slough Children's Services Trust restructured the Family Placements Services, through an Invest to Save bid. The Fostering Recruitment Team was created to focus on and improve the recruitment and assessment activities for foster carers, Home from Home and Supported Lodgings households.

The Team is comprised of:

- 1 Practice Manager who has 20 years of experience in working in Fostering including working for 9 years in an IFA
- 1 Consultant Practitioner who has over 10 years of working in Fostering Recruitment
- 2 social workers who are skilled at undertaking assessments and delivering the Skills To Foster training
- 1 social worker who offers consistency to all applicants in Stage 1
- 1 experienced social worker who has business and marketing skills
- 1 experienced part time social worker specializing in Home from Home recruitment
- 1 Recruitment Support Worker.

Ofsted Inspection Findings

The Fostering service is required to be inspected by Ofsted and as an IFA the service will be independently inspected as such. The regulations require that the inspection should take place within 12 months of registration as a new fostering service.

Slough Children's Service Trust and Slough Borough Council most recent Ofsted inspection for looked after children care leavers, fostering and adoption took place during November and December 2015. The findings highlighted areas for improvement within the Fostering Service as following:

There is an inadequate choice of placements for children looked after in Slough and there are no in-house specialist fostering schemes. The supported lodgings scheme provides just one placement and is significantly underdeveloped. Three quarters of all children looked after live outside Slough and over 29% live more than 20 miles away from their home address. Too many children are living away from their families, friends, schools and communities.

The number of in-house foster carers has decreased to 34, which managers acknowledge is far too few. The Council and the Trust have identified foster carer recruitment as a key priority and the recently written sufficiency strategy has set ambitious targets to rectify this deficit. Support services for Slough foster carers, such as a support line, have previously been cut back and as a result foster carers feel insufficiently supported. Developments since June 2015 are beginning to address this and foster carer payments have been reviewed.

In most cases seen by inspectors, there has been an appropriate focus on diversity when matching children with placements, with consideration of children's ethnic, linguistic and religious needs. Where these placements are trans-racial, social workers and managers have carefully thought about how carers should

be supported to meet children's diverse needs. However, because local placement choice is very limited, many children are not initially well-matched. First placements are often emergency arrangements and in these cases, a further placement move is usually needed. Managers acknowledge this is not good enough, but they are restricted by poor placement choice.

Details of how this is being addressed can be found on pages 9, & 10 as part of our fostering recruitment drive. The Trust has also introduced a placement matching policy which has been developed to ensure that children's ethnic, linguistic and religious needs are considered before placements are made. This will ensure the longevity of each placement is maintained reducing any placement move and disruption as a direct result of the children's ethnic, linguistic and religious needs not being met effectively.

In addition, the duty team request placement matches are made by the child's social worker and in most cases will send a number of options to the social worker and team manager so that appropriate matching considerations have been discussed and finalised by the staff members who know each child or young person with a high level of integrity. The Trust has introduced placement ending forms when short term placements end –either positively or in an unplanned way and are collating and evaluating this information to inform future practice.

Within the current cohort of children looked after, placement stability has declined in recent months. As at 31 March 2015, 10% had experienced more than three placement moves within a year. This is in line with England figures. According to the Trust's data, in October 2015 this figure had increased to 15%.

Longer-term placements for children are stable; in October 2015, 67% had been in placement for more than two years, an improvement from 58% in 2014. Children placed with independent fostering agencies (IFAs) and in residential placements are monitored and RAG-rated monthly for signs of instability and pressures, enabling managers to increase oversight and support where needed. Where providers are found by Ofsted to be inadequate, there is an appropriate process in place to review placements, but this process had not been applied rigorously enough. Between 1 October 2015 – 30 September 2016, there have not been any children placed in an inadequate rated fostering service. The Trust is a member of the South Central contract which requires providers to be rated as good or outstanding to remain on the framework contract.

Recruitment

Key Targets the Trust aims to meet:

- To increase the number of approved foster carers within the Trust in-house fostering provision. The targets for new carers to be recruited are 10 for 2015/16, 28 for 2016/2017 and 28 for 2017/18, in total a net gain of 66 carers. The Trust also aims to recruit 20 supported lodgings carers in 2015/16 and 10 per year thereafter
- To recruit foster carers within the in-house service for the age ranges 10 to 15 years, children with complex needs and disabilities and sibling groups, on the basis of current needs, in line with identified demand and identified gaps in sufficiency. These needs may change over time

- To continue to develop collaborative working relationships with external providers to ensure they are able to respond to changes in the need profile of young people so they are able to offer flexible, tailored placements and invest in a high quality workforce. This includes commissioning appropriate and sufficient supported accommodation for care leavers aged 16+
- To effectively use resources available to meet the needs of all children and young people
- To continue to invest in a high quality workforce
- To ensure that targeted and specialist services are available to support placements of children and young people in care, which offer stability and ensure that looked after children and young people live in environments that support them to reach their potential.

Recruitment priority

The recruitment of foster carers is a key priority for the Trust.

It is the Trust's aim to place children within their in-house provision as part of their care plan. If a placement cannot be sought within the Trust in house provision, network then placements will be sought from an external independent Fostering Agency from the fostering framework that we are part of.

As part of the Trust's ethos of working in partnership, a targeted foster carer recruitment campaign has commenced with The Cornerstone Partnership and Home for Good (a Charity Christian based organisation) who launched the 200 Children in Care project/scheme in November 2015. This targeted approach to recruitment through events and engagement with faith groups, businesses, universities, hospitals, aims to significantly increase the number of foster carers recruited.

These partnerships will pilot innovative ways of achieving the Trust's goals; and assist with matching more children with fostering families, including permanent foster care.

The Cornerstone Partnership is working alongside the Trust's fostering recruitment team to raise awareness about the need for foster carers within Slough.

Over the course of the partnership the recruitment strategy will include:

- 30 events at targeted places of work and community life including hospitals, supermarkets, schools, nurseries, libraries
- A campaign to engage the business community into supporting fostering and the Foster Friendly Employer policy
- Publicity around key events both nationally and locally

- A revised Refer a Friend reward scheme with increased ‘introduction’ payments to existing Foster Carers, Home from Home carers
- Internal communications and a campaign within the Trust and Council
- Training and review of working practices with the in-house team and managers
- Fostering Ambassador Programme involving five existing foster carers engaged with promoting the role of fostering within the local networks and communities

By working jointly with our partner agencies, the Trust aims to secure more loving and secure local foster homes for our children and young people.

The Home for Good Charity is working in partnership with the Trust within the Church community of Christian denominations to support and encourage the Church community in its recruitment drive.

The Trust’s Communications Team works closely with the Fostering Service, to develop marketing and communication about becoming a foster carer for the Trust.

The Trust has invested in a range of advertising methods as part of the recruitment drive. The Trust has identified & purchased two roundabout signs, located in Hounslow on Stanwell Road by the Colnbrook-by-pass to advertise recruitment of foster carers. There are plans to advertise on local roads around Slough and its borders to assist with raising the profile of the Trust Fostering Service and recruitment of carers.

The Trust has commissioned services from Net Natives a digital company who will run & advertise a fostering campaign. This will also assist in evaluating the service to raise the profile of fostering within the Trust.

The Trust is one of the nine local Authorities / Trusts who have adopted the Mocking Bird Family Model.

Recruitment Activity

There is national shortage of foster carers and recruiting such carers in the Slough area continues to be a particular challenge because of the lack of suitably sized, affordable housing as well as high levels of competition between neighbouring London authorities and a large number of independent fostering agencies all of which are seeking additional foster carers.

The Trust has a 12-month plan in place from October 2016 – September 2017, with clear timescales for promotional activity linked to information events, The Skills to Foster training, availability of assessing social workers and fostering panel meetings as follows:

During 2017 approximately 30 events have been identified for staff from the Trust to attend where we will have a stall and promotional materials with 2 workers at each event – please see appendix 1 for sample of events attended for 2016 and the Trust plans to follow this format, based on the number of initial enquires gained from these events.

There will be a stand at The Curve (library and cultural centre) in Slough, staffed on a monthly basis – again with promotional material and workers.

The Trust will hold an event for Faith leaders during InterFaith week, in the third week in November 2017. From the event held in 2016, the Trust has been invited to a number of centres of worship to either make a presentation or hold a stall with promotional materials and workers.

The Trust will be holding regular bi-monthly drop-in information sessions, where we will have a range of workers available and information leaflets. These drop in information sessions will be advertised at events being held and through social media, local publication and the Trust website. See Appendix 2, which also includes the ongoing Skills to Foster programme.

During Fostering Fortnight the Trust will be hosting a number of events, 2 each week, one during the day and one in the evening. The Trust currently has 4 Fostering Ambassadors from our established group of foster carers who also hold and attend promotional events on a monthly basis.

Ambassadors are planned to be used as mentors for applicants from when the Stage 1 Agreement is in place.

The Team also undertakes advertising via social media, which brings in approximately 4 leads per month, these tend to be of a good calibre.

Poster and banner advertising has also been used and plans are being made to increase this form of advertising, and will be used extensively during Fostering Fortnight. There is a planned recruitment drive for supported lodgings. See appendix 3 for the draft plan for supported lodgings recruitment.

There has also been significant activity with local faith groups, including attendance at services by Trust staff, Inter-Faith event, stands at local Mosques and the Head of Service appealing on Ramadan Radio for people to consider fostering. This work will continue alongside other marketing activities.

Recruitment for Home from Home carers is undertaken together with fostering recruitment. One family was approved during 2015 – 2016, and 2 more are under assessment as at November 2016.

The dates are set for the year ahead for Fostering Panel so that assessments can be presented within timescales. Additional panels can also be arranged – 14 panels were held October 2015 – September 2016.

Themes and Trends

The current themes and trends for the Looked After Population of Slough is one of children needing public care within the Slough area.

The five most prevalent parental factors for Looked after Children are:

- Known history of domestic violence-victim
- Known history of domestic violence – perpetrator
- Mental illness

- Problem drug abuse
- History of allegations of abuse

In March 2015, the age profile of Looked after Children in Slough shows that the largest proportion of children are aged 10-15 years, followed by 5-9 years, and 16 – 17 year olds for unaccompanied minors. The additional training being put in place for Trust foster carers such as Fostering Changes and the Mockingbird Family Model recognise the particular skills needed to care for older children and the need to improve placement stability by equipping foster carers to manage a range of behaviours.

Future trends will be monitored and the recruitment strategy reviewed so that it reflects the activity needed to ensure that the right foster carers are recruited to meet the needs of the children of Slough requiring a foster placement.

Initial Enquiries

From October 2015 there have been 172 fostering enquiries which have led to 45 initial visits which have been converted into 6 approved foster carers with a further 17 under assessment.

As at November 2016, the Trust's Fostering Service has 34 approved foster carers, and 6 family and friends carers. The Trust's sufficiency 2015-2018 has set ambitious recruitment targets for a minimum of 66 new foster carers be recruited and approved. For example, this could be 30 carers with two placements and 36 offering single placements for children. As at October 2015, six carer households have resigned and left the service.

The Trust recruited 6 carer households during 2015-16, which is no net gain, however indications are that this figure will significantly increase during the year ahead. Therefore, the recruitment targets set need to include consideration of carers leaving the service, and to achieve a net gain of carers the Trust needs to recruit at least six - eight additional fostering households per year. Recruitment targets for 16/17 and 17/18 are to recruit a minimum of 28 new foster carer households per year.

The Trust is committed to improving the recruitment of foster carers by completing the following initiatives:

- The Cornerstone Partnership has been commissioned to support the Trust in achieving its goal of 25 new carers over the next 12 months and conducted an analysis of the current situation to inform the new comprehensive marketing strategy. The 3 year target for recruiting carers across the service is 66.
- Since October 2016, there has been a dedicated fostering recruitment manager and team in place, as a result of an Invest to Save bid. The team includes a dedicated worker in place, to respond to all the initial enquiries and home visits to prospective foster carers.
- Thirty recruitment events have been arranged by the Cornerstone Partnership to include activities ranging from local community events to presentations to businesses such as British Airways.
- Recruitment events utilise stands and posters, a pre event internal communications campaign, social media pre and post event to build interest and where possible press activity. The community outreach events will be focused

within large organisations and established networks that will enable access to a wider range of potential carers to assist recruitment.

- The Fostering Service continues to work closely with local faith groups and Home For Good – a Christian based organisation dedicated to recruiting and promoting fostering and adoption. In 2015 during Interfaith Week, the Trust held an event with local Faith leaders, and a similar event is planned for 2016.
- Fostering Ambassadors have been recruited to represent and promote the Trust’s Fostering service at these events. A Fostering Ambassador’s role is to promote fostering in all its forms in their local community in order to encourage others to consider becoming Trust foster carers.
- Findings from Cornerstone analysis identified some clear strengths within the service; staff are friendly, knowledgeable and experienced and there is a desire to raise standards and to address the previous negative perceptions of Slough Fostering prior to the Trust being in place.
- Coram (our improvement partner), has developed and implemented a joint tracking meeting, which is focused on the achieving permanent care for children and young people and preventing delay. In November 2016, a tracking tool and performance surgeries will be implemented, to monitor the progress and timescales of foster carers assessments.
- An area for improvement identified by Cornerstone’s report is:

The conversion rate resulting from marketing activities to initial enquiries:

While there are a significant number of home visits made that do not convert to an assessment, our data tells us that for some applicants their personal circumstances do not lend themselves to fostering. However, we do keep in touch with the prospective carers that may be able to progress at a later date.

Some applicants decide they are not suitable for fostering and do not wish to continue. Some applicants did not progress further due to the lack of space in their home for a foster child, a smoker who wanted to care for children aged under 5 (against policy and BAAF guidelines), a family who were very isolated, or no immigration status to remain in the UK, safeguarding concerns or lack of understanding about children and childcare experience.

The data below shows the Recruitment Team activity between October 2015 and the end of August 2016. The national conversion rate is approximately 11%, with the Trust currently achieving around 7% conversion year to date. However, further new assessments are commencing, so this figure is likely to increase. Our marketing activities are kept under review, the Fostering Recruitment Manager meets our marketing agency on a weekly basis.

Recruitment	Figures	Conversion rate from Initial enquiries
Number of fostering enquiries	172	
Number of fostering initial visits	45	25.8%
Registration of Interest forms left with prospective carers	38	22.5%

Skills to Foster training	16	9.3%
Assessments allocated after training	16	9.3%
Number of foster carers approved	6	
Assessments in Stage 1	8	
Assessments in Stage 2	8	
Assessments completed and awaiting panel	1	
If all 17 assessments are approved plus 6 already approved	23 approved	13.4% (above the national conversion rate)

The Fostering Service needs to ensure the Trust is able to offer the best choice and range of fostering placements for children and to ensure there are sufficient and skilled foster placements available for our children: Over the next three years, the service will need to achieve 93 children placed internally and 40 placed in external Independent Fostering agencies (IFA's). This will ensure the Trust achieves 70% of children placed with Slough foster carers and 30% with external IFA providers.

IFA carer placements will need to be reduced incrementally to 40 children placed in 2018, by the targets set at 15-16 80, 16-17 60, and 17-18 to 40 children over the next three years. Children will remain in their settled placements where they have been permanently matched and this is in their best interests. Children's circumstances will be kept under review and where possible new children looked after will be placed with the Trust's carers.

External Fostering

The Trust is part of the South 11 Fostering Framework; the contract for this was re-negotiated in 2016. Providers have had to bid to be a part of this framework, and the purpose of this contract is to set costs, and expectations of quality and provision so that there is consistency by external providers. There are currently two Trust placement officers in post who undertake placement searches for children in Slough requiring a foster placement, and the commissioning approach is currently under review. There is a RAG rating in place for internal and external placements, so that social workers can be alerted at the earliest stage when placement stability is under threat.

Placement stability

Placement stability is another key area of focus for the Trust in providing the best possible opportunities for young people to achieve their potential, and making the best placement match for the child or young person. The Trust operates a staged process to placing children and young people in care, which implements a series of checks and balances to ensure this is the right type of support for the young person and that the most appropriate placement is made.

The percentage of children looked after with three or more placements in year rose significantly from 5.6% in March 2015 to 15.2% in August 2015. 30 of 197 looked after children have had three or more placements in the last 12 months; this is an increase of 16 in the course of a year. In the same period, the total number of children looked after increased by 9. The England average for placement stability is 11% and the target set by the Trust's Sufficiency Strategy is to achieve 10% by 2016-17 and 5% by 2017-18.

Conclusion

The targets set for recruiting additional foster carers are ambitious ones, but successfully achieving the additional investment from Slough Borough Council has enabled the Trust to employ additional staff to focus on this area of work, and early signs are that this is paying off. However, raising the profile of fostering and the recruitment of new carers needed has to be through a variety of methods and working in partnership with external agencies, including Cornerstone (an experienced marketing company), Home for Good and Net Natives.

It is the Trust's aim to ensure the majority of our looked after children are placed with carers with the Trust, Furthermore, the Family Placement Service's training programme is aimed at providing consistency of care for children from fostering through to adoption, and the 'offer' to our carers has increased to recognise this, including the implementation of the Mockingbird Family Model, and various other initiatives, including a comprehensive training calendar

The Trust has clearly recognised the need to invest in our Fostering service. There are plans to introduce a 3 Tier level of fostering which recognises the skills, qualities, knowledge & experience of carers. The tiered scheme acknowledges the difference between newly approved and more experienced carers. A group of foster carers have become ambassadors for the service and are assisting in recruitment events.

The Trust will continue to review and monitor the outcomes for recruitment activities, and take up any new opportunities that become available. We will also continue to work with partner agencies to ensure that we achieve the best possible outcomes for children requiring foster care, and that Slough children are safe, secure and successful.

Appendix 1

Sample of Events 2016

East Berkshire College

Slough Library

Slough Fire Station

Armed Forces Transition Fair x 2 per year

Burnham Beeches Summer Fete

Slough Play Day – Salt Hill Park

Sainsbury's Taplow

Tesco Gerrard's Cross

Windsor Leisure Centre

Montem Leisure Centre

Royal County Berkshire Show

Slough Canal Festival

Cippenham Child Minders

Special Voices Coffee morning/lunch

Interfaith event

Wexham Park Hospital

Upton Hospital

Burnham Christmas Fair

Clewer Youth & Community Craft Market

Cippenham British Legion Craft Day

The Curve – monthly

St Mary's Wexham Christmas Fair

Attendance at various faith events

Business events in and around Slough, South Bucks and Heathrow

Appendix 2

Skills To Foster Preparation Training

Day	Date	Time
Saturday	5 November 2016	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 1
Friday	11 November 2016	9.00 - 5.00pm – Skills to Foster Day 2
Friday	25 November 2016	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 3
Friday	6 January 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 1
Saturday	14 January 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 2
Friday	27 January 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 3
Friday	3 February 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 1
Friday	10 February 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 2
Saturday	25 February 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 3
Saturday	4 March 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 1
Friday	10 March 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 2
Friday	24 March 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 3
Friday	7 April 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 1
Saturday	15 April 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 2
Friday	28 April 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 3
Friday	5 May 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 1
Friday	12 May 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 2
Saturday	27 May 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 3
Saturday	3 June 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 1
Friday	9 June 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 2
Friday	23 June 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 3
Friday	8 September 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 1
Saturday	16 September 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 2
Friday	29 September 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 3

Friday	6 October 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 1
Friday	13 October 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 2
Saturday	28 October 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 3
Saturday	4 November 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 1
Friday	10 November 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 2
Friday	24 November 2017	9.00 - 5.00pm - Skills to Foster Day 3

Appendix 3

Information Drop-In Sessions



FOSTERING RECRUITMENT INFORMATION DROP-IN SESSIONS

Wednesday	January 4th 2017	6.30 - 8.30pm
Wednesday	March 1st 2017	6.30 - 8.30pm

FOSTER CARE FORTNIGHT

Wednesday	May 10th 2017	12.00 - 3.00pm
Wednesday	May 17th 2017	6.30 - 8.30pm

Wednesday	July 5th 2017	6.30 - 8.30pm
Wednesday	September 6th 2017	6.30 - 8.30pm
Wednesday	November 10th 2017	6.30 - 8.30pm

Appendix 4

Recruitment plan for our Supported Lodgings carers

Background

Slough Children's Services Trust has requested that The Cornerstone Partnership develop a recruitment plan to find new Supported Lodgings carers within their catchment area.

There are several options for Slough Children's Trust to promote their requirement for Supported Lodgings carers and together they form a cohesive plan.

The Cornerstone Partnership Ambassador Programme

The Cornerstone Partnership Ambassador programme has now been introduced in the Slough area and we anticipate that it will be successful in generating quality leads for foster carers from local community outreach events. The Ambassadors were initially selected for their role because of their enthusiasm and their ability to work on their own initiative and the training they have additionally received provides them with good customer service skills.

The training which is helping the Ambassadors to find traditional new foster carers is equally applicable in the recruitment of Supported Lodgings carers. However, the targeting of local events will be slightly different to those used for foster care recruitment since Supported Lodgings carers are likely in many cases to have a slightly different profile to that of a traditional foster carer. As an example, an individual may feel they are unable to make the time commitment to become a foster carer but may feel they can meet the requirements to become a successful Supported Lodgings carer.

We suggest that The Cornerstone Partnership Ambassadors each use one of their monthly events to target the recruitment of Supported Lodgings carers. Since individuals in this time pressed group are more likely to be in full time employment targeting businesses for lunchtime sessions and stations and other transport hubs when commuters are likely to travel are good choices for recruitment events.

Another group who may be interested in becoming Supported Lodgings carers are older people who have the time but maybe not the energy to be a traditional foster carer. Retired people are likely to appreciate the income opportunity being a Supported Lodgings carer affords and they have an abundance of life experience and patience to support them in their new role. We suggest local Women's Institute and Townswomen Guild meetings would be good venues for targeting older ladies.

On the basis that each Ambassador usually obtains 1 to 2 leads per outreach event, if each Ambassador dedicates one event per month to recruiting Supported Lodgings carers the programme could yield between 3 and 6 leads every month.

Leaflets

The effectiveness of The Cornerstone Partnership Ambassadors local outreach events would be reinforced by using leaflets explaining the role and qualification requirements of Supported Lodgings carers as a leaflet can be taken away and perused at leisure. It is a physical reminder of the opportunity to become a carer for those who are more cautious and are not quite ready to sign -up when they are initially approached at an event.

Leaflets can also be left in Doctor's Surgeries, Chiropodists, Dentists and Churches all of which are locations likely to be frequented by the targeted groups and which are unsuitable for Ambassador outreach events.

Refer-a-Friend

The Refer-a-Friend programme which is currently in place to support the recruitment of traditional foster carers and which successfully under-pins The Cornerstone Partnership Ambassador programme should apply equally to the Supported Lodgings recruitment programme.

3 Month Event Plan between December 2016 and February 2017 Inclusive to Generate Between 9 and 18 Leads in Total for Supported Lodging Carers

	December	January	February
Employed Target Audience		Business and Transport 1 event per Ambassador	
Older People/ Retiree Target Audience		WI and Townswomen Guild Meetings 1 event per Ambassador	
Supported Lodgings Leaflet Distribution		Churches/ Doctors and Dentists plus traditional Foster Carer recruitment events	