



Child-centred care planning in times of austerity: investing in stability

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Nationwide Association of Fostering Providers

- The Nationwide Association of Fostering Providers (NAFP) is the only UK-wide trade association that campaigns solely for independent and voluntary sector fostering providers (IFPs)

- NAFP is a not-for-profit organisation and a company limited by guarantee

- Our mission is:

To be the voice of the independent and voluntary fostering sector for children and young people, and to promote high standards of professional and business practice within the membership

NAFP members represent 75% of children placed in the independent and voluntary sector across England, Scotland and Wales

Permanency/long term foster care/ Special Guardianship Orders

Significant numbers of children in care for whom adoption is not possible and/or desirable who still need a family to care for them

Research evidence that children who grow up in stable long-term foster care do as well as their adopted peers

Planning models for permanence in foster care vary greatly

Positive, planned decisions which actively involves the child and gives them, as well as their carers, the assurance that this is their home and will remain so until they are at least 18 and ready to move on

Quick take up for SGOs in first two years, slowing down over next three years, with regional variations, now 61% increase in spending

College of Social Work concerns SGOs as a way of saving money on long-term fostering

Issues from practice

Tensions between in-house and IFP – but not about one sector being preferred option

Long-term planning undermined when placements with IFPs made on monthly basis

Despite delegated authority, carers not be consulted in any meaningful way in making plans for child's future

Children who subsequently require a longer term placement moved from IFP carers

IFP carers asked to move to local authority (with unspoken suggestion that if they do not do this, then the child will be moved) or pressurised to move to an SGO

Working together: principles of good practice

Appropriateness of any changes in status or placement moves in the current and long-term best interests of the child

Views of the child or young person regarding placement moves or changes in status

Decisions made within the care planning process

Foster carers never required to change their provider in order to secure agreement to a long-term plan for a child

Foster carers should not be approached about recruitment or an SGO without the knowledge of their fostering provider

Decisions about placements should be based upon the quality of relationships and best possible long-term outcomes for children and young people, in a level playing field of value for money/quality

The challenge...

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