

Statement of Purpose

Chairman's Introduction

Having held senior management positions in local authority social services departments, I founded SWIIS in 1988 to provide recruitment solutions in social care. Due to the many successful and productive professional relationships with social services departments, SWIIS has since then been able to expand its range of services in both social and health care. As part of this development, in 1999 I established SWIIS Foster Care and SWIIS Foster Care Scotland Ltd in 2004.

My vision for setting up SWIIS Foster Care was, and remains, to meet the growing need for quality assured placements offering the highest standards of care for children and young people, and to provide real placement choice for local authorities.

Experience to date has been very positive with real differences being made to the life chances of children and young people placed with us.

My expectation of SWIIS Foster Care – Scotland Ltd is that in addition to meeting or exceeding all the National Care Standards, our foster homes should be places where I would be happy for my own teenage children to stay and make the most of their educational opportunities.

I believe our commitment to putting children & young people at the centre and working in genuine partnership is reflected in the following document and I commend it as an accurate reflection of the organisation as at January 2005*.



Dev Dadral
Chairman, SWIIS International plc

* This statement will be reviewed and updated annually. Some sections will be updated on a more frequent basis.

“All providers must provide a statement of function and purpose when they are applying to register their services”

National Care Standards for foster care and family placement services

Vision

To create the best opportunities for young people in foster care that adhere to principles of dignity, privacy, choice, safety, realising potential and equality and diversity.

Mission Statement

Our ambition is to provide the best service for young people, carers and placing authorities. Our motivation is the belief that better lives, better opportunities and better outcomes can be secured for looked after young people by working in genuine partnership with a focus on the following themes:

- Child-centred philosophy
- Partnership approach
- Support for carers
- The value of education and a learning culture with commitment to training
- Continuous improvement

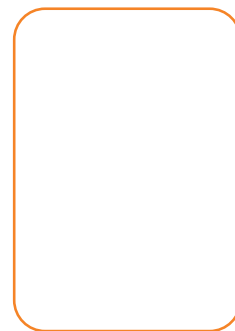
Principles and Standards of Care:

All young people deserve the best services possible. We want to provide safe, caring and stable placements and ensure that young people, their carers and others responsible for them receive all the support they need to achieve success. We aim to meet or exceed all the requirements of the National Care Standards for foster care and family placement services and we believe that our service represents both quality and value.

Aims

Our aim is to offer each young person a placement that meets their personal, social, health, development and education needs in the best possible way through:

- Recruiting and retaining a broad range of skilled and committed carers
- Matching each young person with the best family
- An integrated approach incorporating health, education and social work specialists
- A child centred service which involves young people, encourages their participation and treats all young people with respect
- Respect for individual differences and strengths including recognising issues of gender, religion, ethnic origin, language, culture, disability and sexuality in all placements
- Providing a high level of respite for carers, 24 hour support for carers and access to information, resources and practical help
- A service which actively values diversity and recruits staff and carers from a wide range of backgrounds that reflect the community it serves
- A commitment to training and personal development at all levels in the organisation
- A focus on continuous improvement, quality assurance and meeting or exceeding all the National Care Standards for foster care and family placement services.



Service Provided

SWIIS offers a full range of short term, long term or respite foster placement choice for young people aged 0 – 18 years who cannot live at home and require alternative family placement. Carers receive comprehensive training both pre and post approval and our thorough, competence based assessment process assists in ensuring the best possible matching.

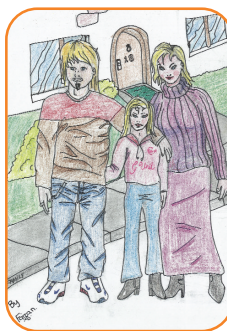
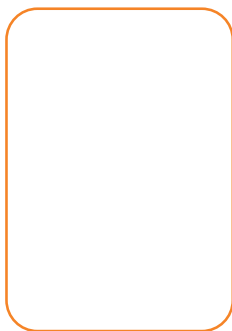
Each placement is managed and supported by qualified and experienced professionals from within our multi-disciplinary team including:

- Supervising link social workers
- Education case workers
- Health advisers
- Placement support workers

Therapeutic input is arranged through independent therapy providers.

Supervising Link Social Workers

Supervising link social workers carry a maximum caseload of 12 carers and keep in close contact throughout every placement. Link workers visit each placement at least twice a month and offer monthly formal supervision as well as participating in our on-call and duty systems which give carers 24 hour support.



Education Case Workers

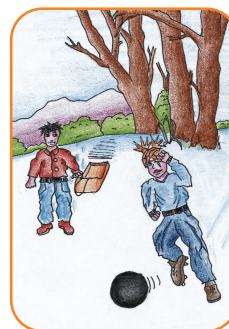
Our education case workers are fully qualified professionals with experience of inclusion and support for children and young people both within and outside the education system. A young person requiring additional education support will have their individual circumstances assessed and monitored throughout their placement and specific support within school, or to attend college, work at home or through leisure activities will be provided as appropriate. The education staff work closely with young people, carers and colleagues throughout the year and their input is not limited to school terms.

Health Advisers

Our health advisors have school, nursing or community health backgrounds and are able to provide advice and access appropriate health or therapy resources to meet young people's assessed needs. The health advisor works closely with carers and placing social workers to identify relevant health issues, monitor progress and also works directly with young people where needed. It is an additional part of the health advisor role to provide training and raise awareness of health promotion issues with all carers, young people and staff.

Placement Support Workers

Placement support workers undertake a range of activities with young people and carers to support and maintain placement stability. These could include helping with transport, arranging respite, providing short activity sessions, direct work with young people, running young people's groups, supervising contact or other practical support as appropriate. Placement support workers may also have involvement in foster care recruitment, training and support group activities.



Placements Provided

The aim is to provide the following placements:

Planned short term, task centred placements working towards specific goals. These may include assessment placements, bridging, preparation for permanency or return home, or placements which meet other specific care plan objectives.

Planned longer term placements for individual young people and sibling groups. We aim to provide carers who are available to make a longer term commitment either of permanence or stability for young people until they move on to independence or their next step.

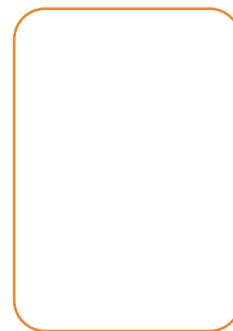
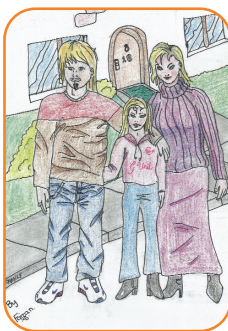
Sibling Placements as we recognise the importance of keeping families together and we plan to assess carers who have sufficient space, skills and energy to take on this demanding task.

Parent and child placements will be offered with carers who have experience and an interest in helping young parents to develop their parenting skills and who can offer assessment and monitoring as required.

Placements for children with disabilities will be offered on a full time or respite basis. SWIIS Foster Care teams will look to identify carers with skills and experience to meet this particular need and offer additional training where necessary.

Short break and respite placements to support a young person's current placement, provide respite for birth families or provide a "home base" for children attending residential schools.

Unplanned, short notice or emergency placements may also be available.



Procedures for recruiting, training, approving, supporting and reviewing carers

In line with The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 Regulations and Guidance, SWIIS Foster Care has a process and procedure for recruiting, training and supporting carers. During the initial stages of their application all prospective carers are provided with information about the agency, the fostering task, the assessment and checks process and the financial and support package. The agency has a specific policy in line with the Fostering Network Protocol in respect of applications from families who are already approved as carers by another agency.

We aim to complete the training, assessment and panel process within a 6 month timescale and all carers receive comprehensive initial training before moving on to a competence-based assessment and full statutory checks. Applicants are encouraged to contribute to their assessment reports and to attend the Fostering Panel in person to make the process as inclusive and representative as possible

The SWIIS Foster Panel has an independent chairperson and includes members with a range of child care, social work, health and education experience. Details of the Panel Chairperson for Scotland are provided in the insert accompanying this booklet. Full details of current Panel membership can be obtained from the Head of Foster Care.

Following appointment, all SWIIS carers have a programme of on-going training and support groups. They also receive regular visits and monthly supervision from their named link worker.

Annual foster carer reviews are carried out in accordance with the National Care Standards and Regulations and Guidance. These are chaired by an independent person and feedback is sought from placing agencies, carers, children and young people, education staff and any others involved with the placement. The review focuses on the carers' development and evidence of the competencies for foster care as assessed in the original Form F. Training attended and future training needs are also explored. Carers' annual reviews may be brought forward in certain circumstances where appropriate as detailed in SWIIS Foster Care procedures.

Young Person's Guide

SWIIS Foster Care provides a booklet for all young people and their families. This includes information about the agency, the services offered and a range of contact numbers. Details of the complaints/suggestions procedure and the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care are also included.

Status and Consultation

SWIIS Foster Care – Scotland Ltd is an independent provider of foster care services to local authorities. The company has offices in Dunfermline and accepts referrals for the placement of children and young people from all parts of Scotland. SWIIS Foster Care Ltd also has offices in Birmingham, Manchester and Newcastle.

SWIIS Foster Care – Scotland Ltd is a private limited company registered in Scotland. The Company is also registered, regulated and inspected by the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care. Copies of inspection reports and all other public documents can be obtained on request.

SWIIS Foster Care – Scotland Ltd is part of the SWIIS international plc group of companies.

Management Structure

National Management Group:

Dev Dadral: Director

Kate Cameron: Head of Foster Care - Scotland

The local team has regular meetings, practice days and training events

The Head of Foster Care – Scotland Ltd will meet with the English Regional Heads of Service and the National Management Group formally a minimum of 4 times a year.

