



# Orchard Care Statement of Purpose

## Issue 3

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## 1. Mission Statement

“We provide high quality foster care placements with the aim of affording children who need it a life enhancing experience which enables them to learn and grow in confidence empowering them to realise their potential.”

## 2. Introduction

Orchard Care is a private foster care agency run by people dedicated to helping children and young people. We are highly principled, forward thinking, caring with a great level of expertise.

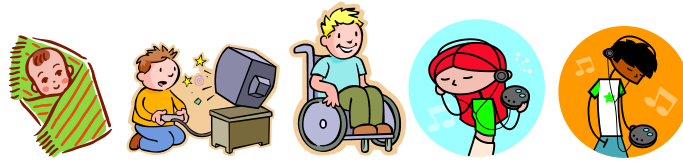
Our organisation is '**not for profit**' and offices are based in County Durham.

Because we are 'not-for-profit' all money is put back into the organisation for the good of children and young people, and to maintain very high standards of care and support.

All the staff from Admin to Senior Managers understand the need to support foster carers and young people as their main task. By working very closely together we aim to give the best possible care to the young people we look after. This method of working also enables all foster carers to draw on the many decades of child care experience within Orchard Care.

We believe that it is essential to provide good support in order to maintain stable and quality placements. So much so we achieve great success and 93% of our placements have had planned endings. This is done by practising in a particular way and through creation of a specialised service. This service is tailored to meet the individual needs of each young person and their carers. All our activity is research based and outcome focused.

### 3. What does Orchard Care offer?



Within Orchard Care we do our best to offer homes to a wide range of children and young people. Young people may be any age from 0 to 17.

They may be:-

- Children with disabilities
- Children who require palliative care
- Children with learning difficulties
- Children with special educational needs
- Children who need somewhere to grow up away from their family home
- Children with highly complex health and social needs

The collective decision to offer a placement depends on the skills, abilities and willingness of the carers and the support team to meet the needs of a young person.

We have a detailed matching process in which carers and key staff are fully involved along with the rest of the team, in deciding whether we can positively affect a young person's life.

### 4. Our Big Successes:

- **Placement stability**
- **Diverting children from residential care**
- **Helping children access full-time education – 100% of children we look after access full-time education despite 80% not when they arrive**
- **Providing homes for children with learning and physical disabilities – we have a number of carers with adapted homes and others willing to adapt their homes**
- **Caring for sibling groups**
- **Recruitment of carers from minority groups**

## 5. The Range and Quality Provided in Placements

Placements are subject to detailed preparation and planning including meetings and introductions **free of charge**.

Throughout this time negotiations and planning are focused on joining a child's social and educational history with current events to form a placement that is geared for success in all aspects of a young person's life. Educationally all children will have their history explored and recorded as a way of helping plan ongoing educational support. This work is undertaken by our most experienced staff as we believe achieving a deep understanding of support required at this stage is critical in determining good outcomes.

Alongside the education assessment a detailed social history is also taken and linked. Placement history and parental experience guide us in working with a young person and prospective carers in order to deploy the right amount of support time in the right ways to facilitate success.

All of this work including accessing a school place and formulating an inclusion plan together with inclusion in school are part of a standard cost (if and when required).

Also included is the ongoing overview by a teacher of the young person's attainment and enjoyment of education. This is reflected in regular contact by the teaching staff with the school, young person, carers and local authority and in regular reports particularly those for Looked After Reviews. In this way all Orchard Care placements build a careful reflection of exactly how a young person is achieving at any time. The service works flexibly to support a young person should the teaching or support staff note any difficulties. These can be dealt with "in house" and with minimum embarrassment to the young person e.g. offering catch-up Maths in the foster home.

Links are made socially and in terms of a young person's skills at going on in the world as part and parcel of all of our placements. We are skilled at helping young people identify understandable areas of development in their lives and offering them the emotional and practical support to achieve their potential.

Because of the way the team works i.e. daily communication between carers, support staff, professionals and social work staff about young people's well-being which is summarised weekly in a full team meeting, we are able to capture and work with important detail and support change and need as it arises.

Frequently we are able to anticipate and therefore divert from potential crisis by piecing together all aspects of what is going on for a child in placement at any particular time. All information is communicated to the on-call personnel on a daily basis and fed back to Orchard Care management also on a daily basis. Management are empowered to respond flexibly in the light of what is believed to be going on for a young person by creative deployment and sometimes withdrawal of personnel and activities.

All of the above is done in very close partnership with local authority social workers and with our foster carers. Information is gathered into reports for Looked After Reviews and any other major meetings as part of Orchard Care's service to you.

We believe that we provide a thoughtful, child-centred holistic service focused on achieving good outcomes for all who come to Orchard Care. The blend of staff and carers supported by specialist advisors and local authorities gives us an excellent basis on which to plan for success. We believe our practice is thorough and professional and delivers value for money and effective placements to you.

We have a proven track record which is very successful. In particular many of our successes have been diverting young people from residential care and enabling young people to access full-time education where it was thought impossible.

## 6. Objectives

- Appointment of staff and recruitment of carers who share child centred values and principles.
- To support young people and carers in flexible and practical ways to achieve positive outcomes.
- To ensure that all our activity is research based and focused on what works for young people, their carers and staff.
- To promote a sense of belonging.
- To ensure staff and carers are trained and supported to deliver high quality service.
- To be a “listening organisation”, responding structurally and managerially to feedback from all parts of the organisation.
- To provide individually tailored educational support to every child or young person throughout their time with us.
- To provide training and support around educational issues for staff and carers.
- To provide educational support both teaching and behavioural in school as and when helpful or necessary.
- To offer liaison via a qualified teacher with each child or young person’s school.
- To offer opportunities for children and young people to receive counselling and/ or other therapeutic interventions.

## 7. Values & Principles

Our actions are guided by our beliefs of honesty and respect for all.

The welfare of the child or young person is paramount.

Children and young people have a right to know who they are and not to be discriminated against for any reason.

With these values and principles we strive to:

- Make fostering as positive and stable an experience as possible for the children and young people.
- Put the needs and wishes of children and young people at the centre of everything we do.
- Ensure that the children and young people are treated as equal individuals and with respect.
- Help whenever help, advice or guidance is needed.
- Listen and acknowledge the views and opinions of the children and young people.
- Respond to feedback as part of continuous improvement.
- Provide good quality and committed care and support for the children and young people.
- Ensure that children and young people feel safe, secure and, above all, protected.
- Maintain the cultural and religious wishes of the children and young people.
- Always work through difficulties and do our best to solve problems.
- Involve all parties during decision-making and maintain strong partnerships between all.
- Ensure that the empowerment of children and young people is fundamental to our practice.
- Ensure that children and young people do not get passed between people.
- Reflect and self-criticise as part of the continuous improvement of our services to children and young people.

## 8. Standards of Care

We are committed to the provision of high quality family placement for children and young people.

It is our expectation that foster carers will play their part in ensuring that the direct care provided promotes and safe-guards the child or young person's physical, mental and emotional well-being.

Specifically this means foster carers, in conjunction with significant others will:

- ✦ Provide a safe, healthy and nurturing environment.
- ✦ Provide care which values diversity and promotes equality.
- ✦ Provide information which assists with the process of successful and appropriate matching.
- ✦ Provide care which protects each child or young person from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and deprivation.
- ✦ Actively promote and encourage where appropriate, contact with family and friends.
- ✦ Ensure that the child's opinions are sought over all issues which are likely to affect their daily life and their future.
- ✦ Ensure the child receives health care which meets his/her needs for physical, emotional and social development, together with information and training appropriate to his/her age and understanding to enable informed participation in decisions about his/her health needs.
- ✦ Give a high priority to meeting the educational needs of the child and ensure he/she is encouraged to attain his/her potential.
- ✦ Help the child/young person to develop skills, competence and knowledge necessary for adult living
- ✦ Promote Multi agency working with the child at the forefront of everything we do

Within Orchard Care what we are trying to create is a sensation of an extended family, within which everybody understands that they have an impact on everyone else and that everyone within this family matters.

We hope by behaving in this way that we can create natural opportunities for children and young people to have experiences outside of the home, perhaps with support workers or other carers, which in an ordinary family set-up would be provided by extended family. In this way we hope to both deliver support to the carers and to the young people at the same time.

We aim to have any ideas of separation and respite to be planned ahead and to arrive in a natural sort of a way through carers knowing each other and spending positive time with young people and avoiding a crisis situation.

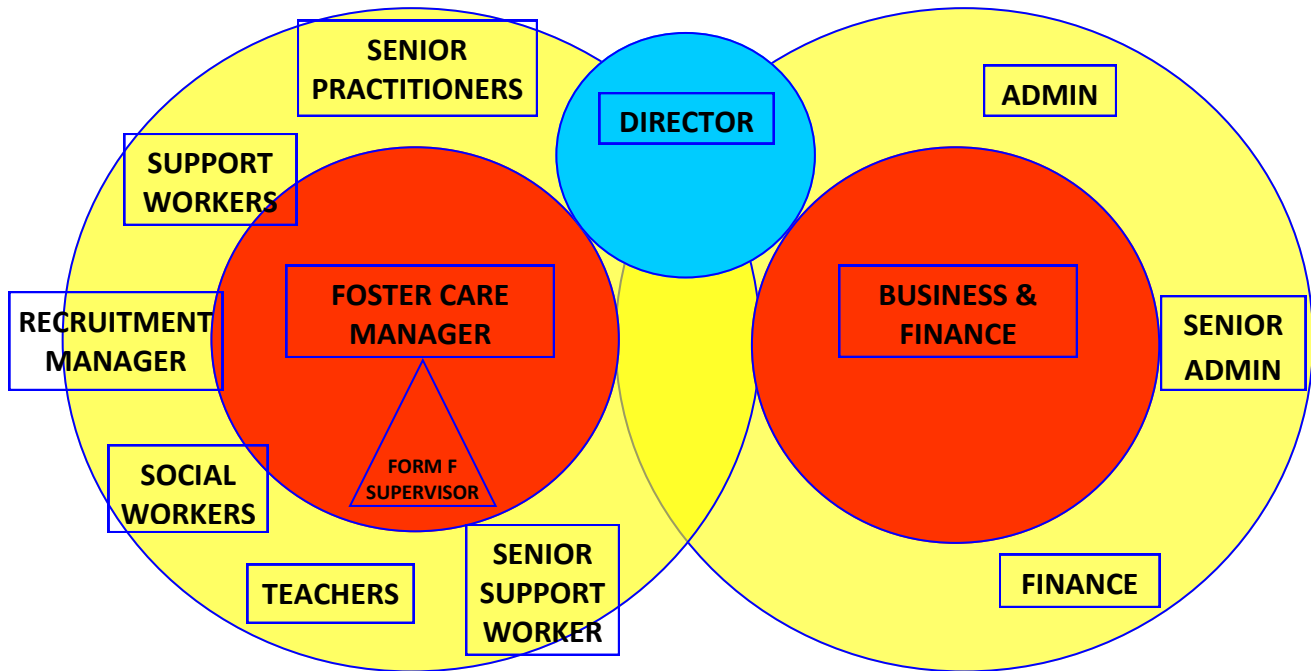
## 9. Investors In People

Orchard Care has successfully achieved and maintained Investors In People Award. The IIP award acknowledges certain standards have been met:

- ✦ An Investor in People **develops effective strategies** to improve the performance of the organisation through its people.
- ✦ An Investor in People takes **effective action** to improve the performance of the organisation through its people.
- ✦ An Investor in People can **demonstrate the impact** of its investment in people on the performance of the organisation.

## 10. Organisational Structure

We work as one big team and have clear job roles and lines of responsibility to run the organisation in a safe and efficient way.



We are able to support up to 36 sets of carers within our current structure.

## 11. Orchard Care: People in Numbers

Orchard Care is made up of a complex and carefully managed set of relationships. There are various groups of people who are all essential to maintaining the vitality and energy that we enjoy working with by providing successful placements and working relationships.

Put simply, however, we are comprised of the following groups (as of April 2010):

- There are currently 27 placing homes with 49 foster carers between them, meaning we have a very developed and experienced carer network
- 32 very individual young people from diverse backgrounds currently in placement with our carers
- A working team of 29 staff supporting these placements, with experience from social workers specialising Child Protection & Safeguarding, ex-residential unit support staff and highly qualified and experienced teachers
- A staff team that is pro active about having fun!
- A Panel of 9 who aid our decision making, recruitment and approval processes providing a good steer for the company

## 12. Staffing Experience and Training

My name is Maria Jones. I am Director, Responsible Individual and Decision Maker for Orchard Care.

I qualified as a social worker in 1980 and worked as a practitioner, manager and principal officer in five local authorities over a twenty three year period. In 1999 I became an independent consultant and trainer. From 2000 to 2004 I was involved in the development of foster care in the private sector where I saw an opportunity to create a foster care service designed for success.

The work of Orchard Care is a living expression of the values, principles and experience of the people within and connected to the organisation.

My involvement from 2005 in a Systemic Leadership programme provided an opportunity to consider ideas of how success and excellence show themselves in practice. A collaboration of Orchard Care staff, practitioners organisational consultants and social philosophers has worked together to create a context in which the health and happiness of children comes first.

Maria Jones - CQSW, MSc

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My name is Paul Anderson and I am a support worker for Orchard Care and have been since early October 2009. My job entails assisting colleagues and foster carers in the promoting of welfare and educational attainment to young people in care. My history prior to joining Orchard Care consisted of some informed experience working with Hartlepool Foster Carers Association and completing my Educational Studies degree at Hull University specialising in an early years branch way. I feel it has prepared me well for doing a job such as this, as the modules were wide varied. These included the psychology of learning, social policy and learning and learning disabilities, such as Autism. As somebody who is passionate about working to improve the welfare and educational needs of looked after children. I feel the opportunity I have been given with Orchard Care is an excellent one for me to embark upon a career in this field. In my spare time I enjoy doing an array of activities, with football being my main passion. I am currently thoroughly enjoying what I am doing and not looking too far ahead. Possibly one day, I may look to embark upon a career in social work, but for now I am passionate and committed to my role of support worker at Orchard Care.

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My name is Robin Taplin and I am a Senior Learning Support Worker at Orchard Care. I have worked in children's homes and on Activity Centres all over the country, where I've taught climbing, high ropes, archery, mountain biking and many other activities. As well as training for these activities, I have been trained in attachment theories, behaviour management, first aid, health and safety, working with children/disturbances and drug awareness amongst other things. I enjoy drawing, painting, football, climbing and being outdoors.

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My name is Kate Rishik and I am a Support Worker. From an early age, I have always been passionate about working with children and this is why I later went on to complete the BTEC National Diploma in childcare qualification.

After qualifying, I worked as part of a NHS team supporting families of children with severe complex needs in the community. I continued in this role for several years and gained valuable experience to which assists me today as a support worker within Orchard Care to deal with varying difficult situations. During my employment, I have continued to develop my skills through accessing all training courses offered to me.

I pride myself in providing holistic child centred care.

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My name is Jim Whitell and I am Recruitment Manager responsible for prospective foster carers.

Initially, I trained as a secondary teacher and later retrained as a primary teacher. I worked for many years in residential care both of the “shop floor” and as a Senior Manager, and have also worked as a manager on the education site of foster care.

Qualifications wise, I possess a Certificate in Education, a B.A. (Honours) and an M.A.

My interests are art, photography and reading.

I love my job as it enables me to meet people from all walks of life who have a desire to foster and seeing them progress through training into registration and finally with a young person in placement.

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Hi my name is John Louis and I have just recently joined Orchard Care as a learning Support Worker which is quite a change from my previous employment where I was as a firefighter with Tyne & Wear Fire Brigade for thirty years. After retiring in December 2006 I studied at Sunderland University to achieve a degree in fine art.

I have previously worked with children who have learning difficulties and also have two sons of my own so feel well equipped and look forward to the challenges my new post can offer. Most of all I hope this experience will prove rewarding for both the children and myself.

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Paul Caffery, I am a Teacher working with young people not in full-time education. Teacher of over 30 years experience, Key Stages 1-3, ten as a Primary Headteacher. The last 7 years as a supply teacher on medium and long term placements.

Education: Both Secondary Modern and Grammar School, transferred at 16.  
Victoria University of Manchester, Cert Ed. Middle School. Biology and Outdoor Pursuits.  
Open University, Post-experience diploma in the Development of Reading  
DfES/Department of Health. Days & Evenings, one year. Certification of the Teaching of PSHE & C.  
Lancashire Education Authority. Olympic Coaching Certificate ,Gymnastics.  
The Football Association. Football Coaching Certificate.  
English Basketball Association. Basketball Teaching Certificate.  
NYPDC. OCR/RAS Computer Literacy (CLAIT) .

Interests and Hobbies:

Climbing, living off the land, keen photographer of nature especially of butterflies, fossils, gardening, trees, D.I.Y., cycling, swimming, family archivist, astronomy, and alpine climbing.

mountaineering and walking, gymnastics, music hall & pantomime, the home front 1939–1945, the Arts and Ancient Egypt.

I bring bags of enthusiasm and a desire to enrich the lives of the young people in our Care.

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Caroline Peckitt, Administrator: Since leaving Six Form College in 1986, where I did a One Year Secretarial Course, I have worked within different organisations and obtained various qualifications and experience. My positions have mainly been within an office environment from large manufacturing companies to small solicitor firms and I have used various software packages and databases whilst in these positions, constantly improving on my capabilities, qualifications and experience.

Before commencing my employment with Orchard Care, I worked for a large Motor Retailer for six years, firstly as Credit Control Supervisor and then Debt and Enforcement Controller. Whilst in this position, I gained a lot of experience within finance and the County Court process and obtained various Law training; i.e. Certificate in Civil Litigation, Debt Recovery etc.

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Julia Ayre, Administrator.

Work Experience - 2 years as a Solicitors Secretary and 9 ½ years as a Senior Word-Processor Operator and Deputy Operations Supervisor for Lloyds TSB Plc. Since then I have worked part-time as a registered childminder for 7 years and ran a crèche for Sure Start whilst caring for my own 2 children.

Working part-time gave me time to further my studies, during that time I gained a GCSE in Human Physiology and Health and passed modules in Communication in a Health and Social Care Setting, Lifespan Development (including developmental delay) and Research. Also I have studied modules in Equality, Diversity and Rights, Personal and Professional Development, Project in Care and Psychology whilst working towards a BTEC National Certificate in Health and Social Care, during which I enjoyed a work placement in a Special Needs School.

I have been employed by Orchard Care for 20 months now, have attended the Choosing to Foster course, attained a First Aid Appointed Person Certificate, trained in Sage Accounting Software and I will soon have completed an NVQ Level 3 in Business and Administration.

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My name is Lorna Dormand and I have over 14 years experience in administration both in education and the private sector. In 2006 I took redundancy from the University of Sunderland to concentrate on degree and finally graduated in 2009. During this time I worked in the social care sector providing support to elderly and disabled individuals within the community. I am very enthusiastic about my role within Orchard Care as it encompasses both my passion for sociology and my skills as an administrator. I also enjoy spending quality time with my two beautiful children both on indoor and outdoor activities.

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Julie Peacock.

Since leaving school I have always worked in the social care sector, working as a Support Worker for social services helping and supporting people with a wide range of issues and disabilities.

I have also had experience of working in education as a Learning Mentor, providing support and guidance to children, young people and families both within and beyond school, helping them to overcome their barriers to learning and so to reach their maximum academic potential.

Working for Orchard Care allows me to do the job I enjoy, which I find very rewarding, and to be able to help and support children in order to make a difference.

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Fiona Cairns

I am a qualified social worker and have worked with children and families for the past twelve years. Initially I worked as a referral coordination for a local authority district office, working with families and coordinating services. I then worked in a secure children's home with children who were displaying behaviours placing themselves at great risk and children who had committed offences and been sentenced to a secure placement. Latterly I worked within a local authority fostering team, supporting foster carers, providing training and assessing foster care applicants. I enjoy working with and supporting foster carers to enable provision of secure, safe foster placements for children who need them.

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Nicola Savage

I am a Senior Learning Support Worker. I have just moved up to the North East from Liverpool five months ago. I have worked in children's homes across Liverpool for five years where I gained a lot of experience in managing behaviour, safeguarding children and drug awareness. I then took a job in a friend's nursery, as the hours suited my personal needs, where I gained my Level 3 in Childcare. In my spare time I enjoy activities like swimming and walking with my own daughter. I enjoy improving the life of children and ensuring they are safe and cared for and are being provided with an education.

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My name is Sarah Jones and I am the Business and Finance Manager as well as the Company Secretary, furthermore I sit as Company Representative on the Foster Care Panel.

Education:

A-Level Mathematics, Chemistry and Biology

BSc Biology

Certificate in Marketing

Level 5 Diploma in Management

Work experience:

Worked for a firm of Solicitors briefly went to University and held various positions including working in Greece with young people aged 0-17. Following my degree I worked for another Foster Care Agency where I trained and ran their Finance Department. I then began work at Orchard Care and was involved in the initial setup and registration process. I continue to be involved in general organisational running and I am extremely passionate about the work at Orchard Care supporting carers, young people and staff to achieve positive outcomes.

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Rodger Walker

Qualifications:

- \* Graduate diploma in Applied Social Studies
- \* CQSW – Sheffield University 1972
- \* NVQ5 Management Studies – Leeds City Council 2009

Previous Experience:

Generic Social Worker, Leeds City Council

Intermediate treatment worker(alternatives to custodial sentences for children & young people) Leeds City Council

Adoption Worker, Barnardos

Training Office (Child Protection) Leeds City Council

Principal Social Worker, Leeds City Council

Generic Social Worker, Leeds City Council

Principal Training Manager, Leeds City Council

Investors In People Registration Coordinator, Leeds City Council

Manager of Fostering and Adoption Sections and Family Resource Centres, Leeds City Council

Co-author 'Life Story Work', published by BAAF

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Marc Jones

My work experience to date is in marketing and branding as well as administration and finance. As a student I read Geography at undergraduate level and took a two year Management and Leadership post-graduate qualification working towards an MSc.

Working as an Office Administrator at Orchard Care is a key role in bringing the hard work that the rest of the team do together. As an Admin team we enjoy maintaining the company's reputation and quality of service by aiding communication and openness with all our carers and associates, and also by ensuring our governing bodies are more than satisfied.

There's plenty to do but always room for starting something new and interesting; I'm currently engaged in escalating and promoting our training programme, enabling people who partake to gain nationally recognised qualifications.

Sometimes, however I'm not working and invest my personal time in training and racing for long-distance triathlon.

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My name is Kate Arkle and I recently began employment with Orchard Care as a Link Worker whose main duties include assessing foster carers to the agency and supporting carers and children in the placements provided. I studied at Northumbria University, achieving my degree in Social Work, at which time I commenced employment within a Local Authority Child Protection Team working with a variety of children and families giving me the opportunity to gain a vast experience. I am committed to promoting outcomes for children and envisage that my post within Orchard Care will allow me to support in achieving this for the families I will be working alongside.

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My name is Michelle Kerr and I graduated in Bachelor of Social Work in June 2008. As part of my degree I worked in an Intercountry Adoption team for six months and I have also spent a year working with children with learning disabilities in a volunteering basis. Following my graduation I travelled around Australia and South East Asia for thirteen

months. Having returned from my travels I am now looking forward to starting my social work career. I am very excited about working with the Orchard Care team in supporting foster carers, children and young people.

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Angela Delacoe

I have been a senior support worker with Orchard Care since July 2009. I have been in education since 2000, teaching and supporting pupils, both adults and children with a range of learning disabilities and emotional issues, teaching within the context of the whole person, their life experiences, concerns and individual abilities, whilst adapting to their individual learning styles and the demands of a curriculum is a challenge I enjoy.

Orchard Care has provided me with the opportunity to do what i enjoy, using my experiences of working with young people in a caring and nurturing way, every day is as varied as the individuals we work with, helping others to reach their potential despite their troubled beginnings and challenges.

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Shirley Apperley

My experience since graduating in 1981 with a degree in psychology includes retail management, banking and a great deal of foreign travel by bicycle! At A Level, I studied French, History and English Literature. More recently whilst working as voluntary classroom assistant in a local primary school, I achieved the Cache level 2 and 3 teaching assistant qualifications. This enjoyable and rewarding experience has both inspired and motivated me to undertake a part time M.A Course in Special Needs and Inclusive Education in order to extend my understanding of how children learn and the barriers they may encounter.

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Susan Atkinson-Millmoor

I am a qualified, registered social worker currently working for a children's charity. My previous experience includes managing a fostering service in the private sector; holding a national position working alongside the Children's Rights Director; working as an inspector with NCSC then CSCI with both a children's and adults' caseload and working for many years in residential care for children and young people. I feel passionately about children's rights and their right to be heard.

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Linda O'Neill

I currently work as an Inclusion and Development Facilitator at an Outreach Service. Prior to this I have worked in the child care field for approximately 28 years. I am a fully qualified Holistic Therapist/ Practitioner.

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Polly Uddin

I am a support worker.

I work as a classroom assistant at a primary school at Middlesbrough. I also work as a childcare assistant at a children's centre where I work closely with young children and their parents and carers. I enjoy meeting people and generally get on well with everyone around me. I enjoy cooking and my hobbies are walking and swimming.

I can read and write Bengali and English, I can also communicate reasonably well in Urdu and Hindi.

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Kirsty Campbell – Senior Administrator

I recently began employment with Orchard Care as Administrator, to support the organisation and the office environment. Assisting with day to day activities and coordinating with other members, completing any necessary tasks at request.

Qualifications:

City & Guilds Level 2 & 3 Business Administration  
City & Guilds Level 3 Advice and Guidance  
City & Guilds Key Skills Level 2 Application of Number  
City & Guilds Key Skills Level 2 Communication  
IOSH Level 3 Health and Safety Management

Prior to employment I was Administration Manager where I developed my knowledge and experience within the company including management accounts, data input, data management and data analysis, audit experience, circulating key paperwork, invoicing, marketing, statistics and managing government contracts.

I am qualified to manage Health and Safety; with over 1 years experience as Health and Safety Manager, I ensured the overall safety off staff members, visitors and customers.

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Phill Brumwell

I have joined Orchard care as Foster Care Manager.

I am responsible for the delivery of high quality, specialist services to children, young people, their carers and their families.

I have also Managed a private Residential Children's Home and worked in Local Authority residential care since 2002, - previously I spent ten years as a professional footballer, as well as coaching football to young children.

I have completed extensive training in health and sexual health including C-Card and actively promote sex and relationship education. I have also completed level 3 health promotion studies in 2006, and Basic Expedition Leaders Award (BELA) in 2006. I remain a keen sportsman and use my enthusiasm, contacts, skills and the use of recreational activities to promote health and well being to all young people.

I believe in positive engagement with all carers, parents, agencies and young people, offering extensive support as well as new and exciting opportunities which will greatly develop self esteem, confidence and life skills. This is supported by my proactive and committed approach to helping young people achieve their full educational potential and preparing them for their life as an adult.

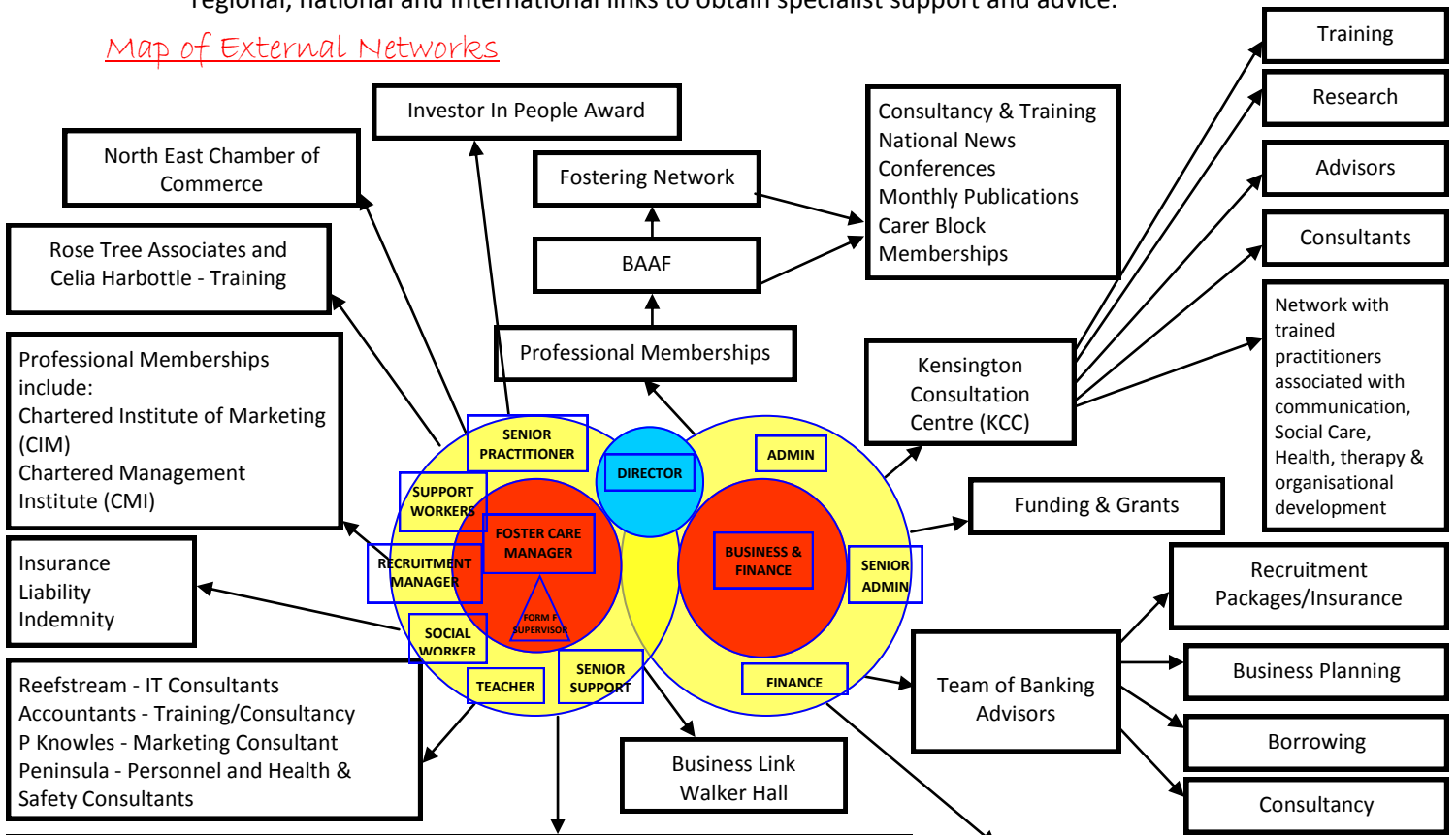
Qualifications:

In 2005 I completed NVQ level 3 caring for Children and Young People, Intermediate Certificate in Safe Handling of Medicines is currently undertaking his NVQ 4 in Care. In June 2008 I successfully completed CMI level 5 Diploma in Management and also NVQ level 4 Management award. In 2007 I attained his NVQ A1 assessor's award.

### 13. Specialist Advisors & Consultancy

As an organisation we are extremely well connected and are fortunate to have local, regional, national and international links to obtain specialist support and advice.

#### Map of External Networks



#### Panel:

**Marion Toms, Chairperson**  
I am an independent social worker with over thirty years experience of working in local authorities. I have a lot of experience in fostering and adoption work and currently chair a local authority's fostering panel. I have four children and love having grandchildren.

**Norman Gregson, Independent Member**  
I was a serving member of Her Majesty's Forces and on completion of my 22 years service, left to embark on the second chapter of my life. I currently work in Engineering and I am a devoted father of two. I welcomed the new challenge of being involved in foster caring as I am able to relate personally to this experience, and therefore have a sound realisation as to the needs of young people.

**Susan Atkinson-Millmoor, Social Worker**  
I am a qualified, registered social worker currently working for a children's charity. My previous experience includes managing a fostering service in the private sector; holding a national position working alongside the Children's Rights Director; working as an inspector with NCSC then CSCI with both a children's and adults' caseload and working for many years in residential care for children and young people. I feel passionately about children's rights and their right to be heard.

**Linda O'Neill, Social Worker**  
I currently work as an Inclusion and Development Facilitator at an Outreach Service. Prior to this I have worked in the child care field for approximately 28 years. I am a fully qualified Holistic Therapist/ Practitioner.

**Sue Smith, Independent Member**  
I am a mother of two, and currently a Primary School teacher. I qualified as a primary school teacher seventeen years ago and I was formerly a psychiatric nurse, specialising in child, adolescent and family psychiatry.

**Janet Gardner, Independent Member**  
I am the independent foster carer member of the panel. I have been a foster carer for four years and I specialise in short-term and emergency placements. I have two grown up children and live on a small holding where I have a menagerie of animals.

**Trevor Carter, Independent Member**  
I was a math's and I.T. teacher for over twenty years, and I like to think I was a 'teacher of children' as I have a good rapport with young people. Currently, I am an I.T. Consultant and a consummate volunteer. I am also a School Governor of a mainstream and a special school.

**Sarah Jones, Company Representative**  
I am the Company Secretary and Business and Finance Manager at Orchard Care. I have been involved in the creation and development of this organisation from the beginning and I come with a great enthusiastic drive to maintain and contribute further to the positive high quality care standards that have already been set by Orchard Care.

**Simon Robinson, Panel Vice Chair**  
I have been a member of fostering panels in the North East for 7 years and feel privileged to contribute to providing homes for those who need them. I work as a bank manager, am a parent of two teenagers and my hobbies are photography and climbing.

#### Specialist Advisors:

**PhD Researcher in Learning Difficulties.**  
Lecturer in Health and Social Care. 10years Consultant and Trainer in wide range of subjects (including Learning Disabilities and Autism, Behaviour, Diversity etc.)

Experienced practitioner in brain friendly learning and behaviour management of emotionally **behaviourally disturbed children in school.**

**Senior Psychiatric Nurse** practicing for 30 years. Qualified psychotherapist working with children and families.

**Senior Occupational Therapist** practised in a range of settings including psychiatric settings.

Artist and Art Lecturer (PhD), and developing their interest in **art as therapy.**

**Experienced fostering and adoption worker** consults to Orchard Care regarding quality and outcomes.

**Experienced Social Worker for children with disabilities** and consults re: quality and service development.

**School Governor**, ex-teacher and IT Consultant.

Advice BAAF

BAAF Training

## 14. Research and Developments

Recently, Orchard Care has been improving the experience of partnering and working with us to become more fulfilling and valuable. One approach has been to engage in an accreditation process, in collaboration with Rose Tree Associates and OCN Credit4Learning, for the training we already deliver. Whilst the quality and standard of delivery is still scrupulously monitored and improved, many courses now contribute toward building credits toward nationally recognised qualifications.

By taking this position we have made the training and development of our associates and professionals more meaningful both in- and outside the care sector. So whilst people might come to us to gain experience, education or guidance on specialist issues such as Diversity, Mental Capacity, or Managing Challenging Behaviour, they will also be taking steps toward further education and pursuing personal or professional goals and qualifications more competently and with a better chance of success.

Currently we are focussing on our existing network and developing a progressive framework for learning and development. In the very near future we will be using our energy to expand this offer and develop a framework robust enough to invite and include other fostering agencies, local authorities and training centres in our high calibre programme.

OCN Credit4Learning (OCNOTC) is an independent not for profit organisation and also a registered charity investing their resources into the improvement of existing services.

## 15. Compliments and Representations

At Orchard Care North East we believe that prospective foster carers, foster carers, children and young people and service purchasers have a fundamental right to have their views heard and for their views to be taken notice of in the development of our service. These views may be in the form of a complaint about the service, constructive ideas about improvements to the service or in the form of a compliment about how a service was delivered.

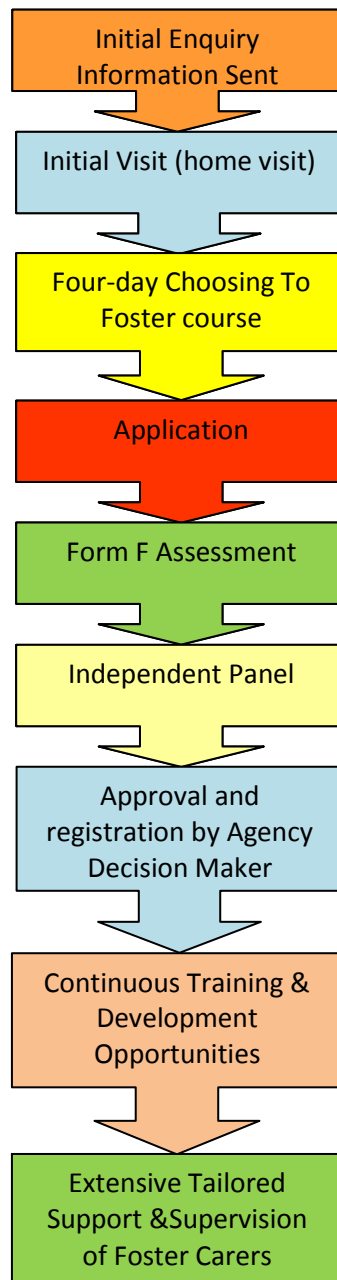
Orchard Care North East will ensure that all complaints are dealt with in a specific time framework and investigations are dealt with as efficiently as possible. All complainants will be kept informed at all stages of the progress of a complaint investigation and will receive written confirmation of the outcome.

Monitoring complaints and representations should lead to the provision of better service and identify any 'gaps' in the service.

Orchard Care have received 2 complaints in the last year and both have been offered independent support throughout the investigation and both complaints were not upheld.

Orchard Care North East also welcomes any positive comments about the service it provides. Furthermore, Orchard Care North East ensures that positive comments are recorded and used to inform service development.

## 16. The Recruitment Process of Foster Carers



## 17. Supporting and Reviewing Foster Carers

At Orchard Care we provide 24 hour support 7 days a week from experienced qualified social workers and managers to all foster carers and young people.

Specialist educational support packages are provided by our educational team of qualified teachers and Learning Support Assistants. Each foster home has teaching and support staff dedicated to supporting the educational needs of the young people in placement.

Regular and effective supervision is given to all foster carers on a monthly basis. Further to this a thorough review/appraisal is given on an annual basis. Our independent panel are also part of the review process.

In addition we operate an "Open Door" Policy whereby staff and foster carers may request informal supervision in addition to formal supervision at any time.

There is also an ongoing training programme for staff and foster carers, which is not only valuable and relevant but also accredited by OCN Credit4Learning. This means that by undertaking our training, people are also gaining nationally recognised qualifications in addition to our offer of the opportunity to train to N.V.Q. level 3. All carers are expected and supported to complete the CWDC foster care programme.