# Children’s Services

# RECORDING GUIDANCE FOR FOSTER CARERS



Norfolk Fostering Service 

This document is intended to provide an introduction to recording for foster carer(s). The document is divided into three main sections:

* Recording guidance
* Appendices containing recording forms currently in use
* Workbook/activity sheets

You can use this document for guidance and information or as a workbook. Please discuss your learning, ideas and opinions about the document with your Supervising Social Worker during supervision sessions. He/she will be able to provide you with any additional help you may need.

The Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care require foster carers to meet 7 basic core standards post approval. Use of this document will provide you and your worker with some good evidence towards all of the Standards, but most particularly the following:

* **Standard 1** - Understand the Principals and Values essential for fostering Children & Young People
* **Standard 2** - Understand your Role as a Foster Carer
* **Standard 4** - Know how to Communicate Effectively
* **Standard 7** - Develop Yourself

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| By the time you have read these guidelines you should have:   * A clear idea of why you need to record * A clear idea of the way in which you should record * Had an opportunity to practice your recording skills and to reflect on your own practice * An awareness of national and local guidance and best practice in recording |

*"Relatively short relationships - but which really connect - may be remembered for a long time afterwards. It may be consoling or daunting for carers to realize that they may have an impact which could last well into the future even when they have relatively short contact with a child in their care."*

(Gilligan 57:2001 Promoting resilience)

## RECORDING GUIDANCE FOR FOSTER CARERS

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## Section 1 - Why keep records?

A Social Worker working with a child comments on the importance of positive recording:

*"In putting together the jigsaw of this boy's history, with its potential for fragmentation, I was able to use records from two previous carers who had retained their memories of this boy in their records, including photos. He could learn about himself as a three-year old and growing on from there.*

*Via their accounts he was able to see and hear from two separate sources about an active, lovable, affectionate, outdoorsy boy which reinforced the current carer’s ongoing attempts to challenge his self-view of a naughty, unlovable child. This was a revelation to him and also helped untangle some of his muddled memories about the past".*

It was clear that all his carers had not only provided, but also recorded for him for the future, his membership of their family - all the ‘usual, family things’ - which is a key component of successful fostering. Described as:

*‘growing from the parenting that was offered - the special family trips and outings and the ordinary routines of shared family life.’* (Schofield & Beek 20:2002 A & F Quarterly 26:2)

So now he knew that as a 3 year old he liked, amongst other things, a certain cereal for breakfast, and this was tremendously important for him.

The main reason for recording is that, like any caring parent, we keep information about our children for them to use in later life. In the same way as parents keep their children's early pictures, school reports, photos etc. and remember their children’s achievements and major events, we also need to act as a parent to our foster children/YP in keeping their memories safe. If we do not do this, then looked after children will have gaps in their knowledge. This will hinder them later in their life when they are more open to thinking about their upbringing and early influential experiences.

The Quality Assurance Support Officer, User Involvement Team, Norfolk Children's Services, tells us that in his experience, people come back to see their record for a variety of reasons. It is usually part of a healing process in which they are struggling to come to terms with the legacy of their early experiences, difficulties and abuse.

Some of the reasons they want to see their record are:

* They were too young at the time to remember what happened.
* They have no memories of their childhood (because it was so awful and traumatic).
* They want to check out their memories because they are not sure whether they can trust them.
* They don't trust what their parents have told them and expect us to be able to provide a more objective account.
* They have lost contact with their parents or have no parents to ask about their childhood and family history.

It is also worth adding some comments which have been received from people for whom we no longer have a record:

**X** "It's like they don't care, all over again".

**X** "Does my life mean so little?"

**X** "I've had these questions going round and round in my head for years and now I will never be able to answer them. It's like a door has been locked and bolted on my life."

(Quotes from Care-Leavers received by the Quality Assurance Support Officer, User Involvement Team, Norfolk Children's Services).

## Comment

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| The previous points show the importance of keeping a record for the child/YP.  The points below highlight both the importance of recording for you as the child's foster carer, and the diverse purposes that records have.   * To maintain a history for the child/YP. You may be the only person who keeps a record of the everyday life of the child/YP in your care in much the same way as a birth parent might keep mementos of trips out, certificates awarded as well as other important records such as medical appointments, etc. * To give you an opportunity to reflect on placements and to learn from mistakes and to remember things that worked well * To highlight your own training and development needs * To highlight issues for the child/YP which need resolving * To provide continuity for the child/YP * To save time and energy in the future as other foster carers and staff will be able to refer to them * To analyse patterns of behaviour so that improvements can be recognized and praised and problems can be identified early * To protect you from allegations and to safeguard the children and young people in your care |

Please see Activity 1 (Workbook Activity Sheets)

## Section 2 - The Main Principles of Care in Relation to Record Keeping for Children and Young People

### Dignity:

Dignity means that we recognise and value other people as equal human beings with the same rights as every other person.

This fundamental principle means that people, whatever their age, should never be treated in an inhumane or degrading way, but should always be treated courteously as people of value. You should always seek to maintain the dignity of everyone you work with.

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| The way in which we behave towards the people we support affects the way other people see us and the way we see ourselves. You should demonstrate through your actions and attitudes that all others are worthy of respect, even if we disagree with them! Respect means that we behave towards every person with consideration, valuing people, valuing their opinions, views,  achievements, backgrounds, no matter how different these are from our own. |

### Individuality:

Everyone, regardless of age, is an individual in their own right, with their own particular likes, dislikes, strengths and personalities. Members of staff and foster carers should always focus on individual needs rather than making assumptions about the needs of a ‘group’ of similar people/children. The needs of the child/YP you are looking after are the top priority in your work with the child/YP.

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| Individuality means that we recognise and respond to each person as an individual with their own unique personality, needs, perspective and strengths. |

### Privacy:

Privacy is a basic human need. We all need to do some things alone and have time to ourselves. Our personality, interests and cultural background determine our need for privacy.

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| Privacy, Dignity, and Individuality We respect people's privacy by ensuring that everyone is treated at all times in a manner which safeguards their dignity and does not expose them to any situation which might be humiliating or embarrassing for them, or cause them personal, or emotional discomfort or distress. |

### Cultural Differences:

You will be working with children/YP, families and colleagues who are from a variety of backgrounds. This could mean that some children/YP and their families have very different experiences to yours, for example:

* + They might live very closely with extended family members
  + Have lots more people in their family
  + Have far fewer people in their family
  + Have different expectations of the role of men and women
  + Have arranged marriages
  + Have no marriages
  + Have different ideas of what 'ability’ and 'disability’ mean
  + Expect sons and daughters to behave in different ways
  + Have different religious requirements
  + Have particular dietary requirements
  + Have particular family or cultural traditions

### Understanding Prejudice, Discrimination and Equal Opportunities

People who work in Children’s Services are concerned about valuing difference, prejudice, discrimination and equal opportunities. Understanding these concepts informs the work we do with children/YP and their families.

### Prejudice – what does it mean?

Prejudice means that we have preconceived opinions that are not based on reason and this may cause us to act in an unjust way on the basis of these ideas. Prejudice can mean that we believe other people are different from us and use this to justify unfair or intolerant behaviour.

In your day to day work supporting children/YP, you need to be alert to prejudiced attitudes which could lead to unacceptable behaviour.

### Discrimination – what does it mean?

If we behave in a discriminatory way, it means that we are treating people in a less favourable way because we see them as different from ourselves.

Discrimination can be against an individual, or a group, and can include racism, ageism or sexism.

### Equal Opportunities

If individuals and organisations support equal opportunities, it means that they recognise that all people are of equal value and share the same human rights. They should be treated fairly and provided with similar chances and experiences, regardless of disability, race, age or any other difference.

Please see Activity 2 (Workbook Activity Sheets)

## Section 3 – Confidentiality

The Data Protection Act 1998, the Department of Health Caldicott Standards, the Freedom of Information Act 2004 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 require all those involved in the handling of information to safeguard the integrity and confidentiality of that information held, whether it is in electronic or paper form. Information about a person must not be accessed or shared by any other person, unless there is a risk to any person if it is not disclosed, or unless it can be lawfully justified. Agreed sharing systems need to be in place, or the person who the information is about has given consent to their information being shared. You are in a trusted position as a foster carer and you have access to very personal information about individuals and their families, all of which is confidential, but all of which you need to share with your worker, and the child/YP's social worker. In order to do this, you need to ensure that:

* Any information given to you by Norfolk Children’s Services about a child/YP in your care in paper form is kept secure in your home using the equipment given to you by Norfolk Children's Services (lockable box).
* When you are using your Children’s Services Online account (also referred to as the Portal) you must protect the information held within the account accordingly (please refer to the Item 10 in the Foster Care Agreement which you have signed).
* You need to know which other members of the team working with the child/YP need to have access to the information you keep - usually your supervising social worker and the child/YP's social worker.
* If in any doubt about whom you are allowed to give information to - you must speak to your supervising social worker or team manager.

Confidentially is important to your role as foster carer(s) because:

* It shows that you respect the child/YP you are working with
* Information in the wrong hands can cause problems
* It is an important part of doing a professional job
  + Everyone has the right to privacy and dignity
  + Many of the children/YP, and sometimes the families you work with tell you very private things and you need to make sure that is secure and only passed on to certain people
  + you agreed to it when you signed the Foster Carer Agreement after you were approved as a foster carer(s)
  + you might cause a complaint if you disclose information to the wrong people

### Good Practice in relation to Confidentiality:

### You are responsible for:

* When using your Children’s Services Online account (also referred to as the Portal), you must ensure that you always lock your computer when leaving it. Do not leave it unattended
* Passwords to accounts must be kept secure at all times
* Putting confidential papers away safely after using them
* Not discussing matters which are personal to a particular child/YP or family in groups of other people
* Guiding children/YP gently away from talking about private or personal matters in public
* Taking it for granted that something personal is confidential unless the person concerned tells you otherwise.
* Not relaying to relatives anything that a child/YP may have told you about private matters
* Ensuring that there are no other persons present when meetings/visits/conversations are held virtually (eg.via Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp, Zoom, etc)

### Allowing other people to access your information:

An important aspect of confidentiality is checking people’s identity and why they want the information before you allow access. If you have any concerns, ask your Supervising Social Worker or team manager.

The people who you need to regularly disclose information to will be known to you and will in general be your Supervising Social Worker and child/YP's social worker.

Sometimes you may be asked to supply information by, for example, lawyers and children’s CAFCASS Guardians. Check if this is OK with your supervising social worker who will give you permission to share information to any other specifically named person.

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| Important guidelines: Confidentiality is about balance:  You need to weigh the rights of the individual against the danger that might result if you don’t disclose the information.  Always seek guidance from the child/YP's social worker, your supervising social worker, or team manager if in doubt. |

Please see Activity 3 (Workbook Activity Sheets)

### The use of Social Media:

Social networking sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Tumbir, internet forums and message boards etc.) are a popular way for adults and children/YP to communicate and they provide an opportunity for users to share information with existing friends and also find new friends with shared interests. However, there are many potential risks involved in the use of social media that foster carers must be aware of:

* Information posted on the internet is accessible everywhere and however private you think it may be, in the virtual world very little is completely private.
* Information might be disclosed whether inadvertently on intentionally, which could reveal information about a Looked After Child.
* Social media sites can also provide opportunities for the sexual exploitation and grooming of children/YP where gifts or rewards may lead to meeting a potential abuser offline.
* A young person in care may pass information to either family members or strangers through social media sites which might lead to them coming to harm.

### Good Practice:

* You should be mindful to make clear that any views posted are your own and not those of the agency and make sure that any comments you make do not bring the agency into disrepute.
* Confidentiality – matters relating to the organisation and children/YP in care should never be discussed or referred to on social network sites.
* Foster carers carefully consider adding children/YP as friends on their social media profiles and before doing so discuss with their supervising social worker and the child/YP’s social worker.
* No images or recordings of looked after children should ever be placed on social networking media sites such as Facebook or Twitter without a clear agreement to do so in the Placement Plan for the looked after child.

For further information, please refer to ‘Norfolk County Council Social Media Policy, Procedure and Guidance’ – accessible from NCC website or your supervising worker.

### Use of Information Technology in Record Keeping:

1. Foster carers are required by NCC to provide written accounts/reports relating to the children/YP in their care (“Our Life Together” etc.) using Children’s Services Online account (also referred to as the Portal). The documents are the property of NCC and the responsibility for the safe keeping and protection of these documents rests with NCC. Although these documents can be created and completed by the foster carer using their own IT equipment, they can be saved securely on the Children’s Services Online account.
2. IT files that are created as a part of normal family life (photos, videos etc.) should only ever be stored on IT equipment in the foster home that the foster carer is able to share with the child/YP in their care. Encryption of these files is not necessary, but consideration should be given as to where they should be stored, taking into account the looked after child’s wishes and feelings and remaining sensitive to the relationships in the foster family.

1. Foster carers must never transfer electronic files they store regarding the children/YP in their care to any other party (parent of child/YP or other family member, other foster carer, any other colleague, social worker) using information technology systems (personal Email, iCloud, Drop Box, One Drive, Google Drive etc). These systems do not have the correct levels of encryption to keep the files safe and secure.
2. Where it is necessary to transfer the electronic files outlined in 2.3 above, this can be carried out in one of the following ways:
   1. By using the NCC secure email method and **replying** to a confidential email sent by an employee of the council expressing a wish for the carer to send the files.
   2. By placing the files on an external storage device and passing the device directly and in person to the employee of the council who has requested the data.

For further information, please refer to ‘Norfolk County Council Policy Procedure for Foster Carers use of IT and Confidentiality’ - accessible from NCC website or your supervising worker.

## Section 4 - What should be in the child/young

## person’s record?

The records completed by both social worker and foster carer(s) working with children/YP in care are all designed to meet the individual needs of a wide range of children/YP. In order to do this effectively foster carers need to be able to identify and understand the purpose of the key records they receive when a child/YP is placed with them and to have clear guidance on the records they should complete themselves.

Please consider the following 3 case studies and use the table on page 40 to record your answers to the questions about a child/YP in your care. Remember that it is as important to record for older young people as it is the younger ones.

Please note: the following case studies are fictitious and do not refer to actual children.

### Case Study 1

#### Tomas Fern aged 10 months:

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| Tomas' mother died just after he was born due to complications. His father, Steven (aged 24) has been his sole carer since his partner's death. He has no real support from his partner's family (they all live in Barbados) and his own family live too far away to be of any real practical help.  Steven really doesn't know how he can continue to care for Tomas. He is finding it hard to cope with being a single dad and has not really come to terms with the death of his partner.  Steven has asked Children's Services to look after Tomas (Section 20, 1989 Children Act) whilst he tries to sort himself out, which includes the possibility of formally asking someone in his or his partner’s family to look after Tomas or perhaps adoption. |

Tomas has been placed in foster care in a planned way.

### Case Study 2

#### Serena Panang aged 6:

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| Since Serena was 4 years old she has been looked after on 4 separate occasions on a voluntary basis (Section 20 of the Children Act, 1989). On each occasion different foster carers have cared for her (2 were on an emergency basis) and none of the placements have been for longer than 6 months. Serena has always returned home as part of a planned piece of work.  However, following another emergency placement the local authority now feels that her birth mother should no longer care for Serena, as she needs a much greater level of stability than her severely depressed mother can offer her. Serena is currently the subject of an Interim Care Order. The local authority is seeking a Care Order. Serena's mother is opposing this.  Supervised Family Timet takes place five times a week. Two of the family time sessions take place in your home and are supervised by you. |

Although Serena has experienced the public care system a number of times over the last two years her recent admission to foster care is different. Previously there had been a plan to reunite her with her mother; this is not now the case. If you were her foster carer(s) you would need enough information to meet her needs and to contribute to the development of the long-term plan for her. This could be preparing her for a move to a long-term foster placement or adoption.

### Case Study 3

#### Nick Green aged 14:

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| Nick has been the subject of a care order (Section 31 of the Children Act, 1989) since he was 10 years old. He has been living in a small 5-bedded residential unit for the last year.  When he first came into care he was placed with foster carers, where he remained for nearly 2 ½ years. He eventually moved to the residential unit he is in now when his foster placement came to an unplanned end.  Until very recently he had been saying that he did not want to be fostered but staff at his residential unit have been working with him to prepare him for fostering and Nick has now decided that he is ready to be fostered again. |

Nick has been looked after for some time and his move is a planned one.

It is likely that Nick will continue to be looked after by the local authority for an extended period of time (potentially up to the age of 21 or 24 if in Higher Education). During this time, you as his carer(s), will need to keep a range of records about him.

### Comment:

In all 3 case studies you should be provided with the following information by the child’s/young person’s social worker. There should also be additional information and records, particularly for Serena and Nick, detailing their life, achievements and activities collected and prepared by previous foster carers.

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| * Placement Matching Form * Risk Assessment * Medical consent card * Placement Plan (you and the young person if applicable should be involved in completing this) * Care plan and/or Pathway plan (age dependent) * A copy of any minutes and decisions of the last Statutory Looked After Review |

You will also need to keep additional records of all 3 children which will include:

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| A record called **‘Child’s first name - Our Life Together’** on Children’s Services Online account (also referred to as the Portal) - to include:   * Achievements, activities, likes and dislikes, routines * Information that would help any future carers and that would be important to the child/YP in the future – for Tomas examples could be his ‘firsts’ – first tooth, first steps which may make a positive contribution to his Life Story Book. For Serena/Nick this could include favourite toys, music, TV programmes, hobbies, favourite people and friends * Outings, visits, experiences and child/YP’s responses * Important events or significant incidents * Details of family time visits, arrangements and your observations of responses, or moods, before and after visits * Times when alternative care has been given (babysitters, with details of who they were and what they did/day care/respite care) * Dates when an older child/YP is away from your home (staying with friends, birth family members or missing from home) * Details of any work undertaken with the child/YP in relation to the objectives in their care plan * Any positive changes or concerning changes in behaviour or mood. This should include details of the actual behaviour you observed, what was happening before it started and your own or anyone's response to it * Any involvement with the police - reasons and outcomes * Details of any absences from school, college * Details of any theft or wilful damage * Comments made by the child/YP which cause concern, and how this was responded to, by whom * Dates and details of meetings * Requests for help or assistance, and the response received   **Health records:**   * Dates and outcome of medical treatment (For Tomas, this will include a record of immunisations and developmental checks which may also be kept in his ‘red book’ issued by health visitor) * Dates and duration of any illnesses * Dates and descriptions of accidents or injuries, even if minor * Appointments/hospital admissions/operations, eye tests, dentists, etc. to include details of dates of appointments, summary of illness and any treatment/recommendations, name of specialist where relevant * Details of any medication required, arrangements for giving medication and consent for giving medication must be clearly detailed |
| Family Placement Medicine Administration Record Medication administered should be logged with date, time and initials and will still need to be completed manually and stored securely in your home. Please ask you supervising social worker for a copy of the record. |

Where possible, children/YP should be encouraged to take an active part in their record keeping – their comments, drawings, and their selection of photographs, they should be directly involved in the completion of these records. For a younger child, how about including their growing hand/foot prints in the record? Any other ideas? The list is endless! Be creative!

For all three of the children/YP in these case studies, if you were their foster carer(s) you would also need to ensure that these records are kept in the following way:

* ‘Our Life Together’ recorded on Children’s Services Online - you must record separately for each child/YP living with you.
* All your online recording will be accessed by your supervising social worker and the child/YP’s social worker on a regular basis.
* You should always tell the child/YP in your care that you keep regular records about them, and it is considered to be good practice to share records with them. Some carers regularly do this, and in these cases, the young people also have an opportunity to add their own version of events to the foster carer(s) records.
* Records should reflect the achievements and progress made by the child/YP. By recording these you can contribute in a positive way to formal meetings and can use them to praise those children/YP living with you when things have not gone as well as you might have hoped. When both of you reflect back over the time the child/YP has lived with you, carers can show how far children/YP have come and this can bea very positive experience for all concerned.
* Specific incidents, events or changes in circumstances of family members. This should include both members of the placed child/YP's birth family and your own family as this may have an impact on the placement.
* There may be times as a carer when you feel you need to add more details to the record to be able to clarify exactly what a child/YP has told you or to give more details of an incident that has occurred. You may feel you need to provide both the child/YP and social workers with a full and detailed account of the incident. Incidents could include allegations, disclosures, injuries or any other sensitive issues. If you need to do this, it is important that you record in your “Our Life Together” portal recording that you have submitted a separate record with a detailed account of the issue or incident. However sensitive, it is important for the child/ YP to have access to these recordings at a later date, to signpost where this additional information is held for future reference.
* Allegations, concerns and significant incidents should be recorded immediately via a Message on your Children’s Services Online account and any such incidents and recordings must be shared with the child/YP’s social worker and your supervising social worker. If you have any further queries, please speak to your supervising social worker.

Be inventive in your recording – each child/YP is an individual as is each recording. It may be more appropriate for you to record on alternate days or even weekly. However, if not recording on a day to day basis, ensure that events during the week are dated accurately. Carers have used many successful ways of recording such as writing the ‘Our Life Together’ in letter format to the young person which can be an appropriate way of recording for an older child/YP. Think outside the box but do check with your supervising social worker that your recording is appropriate and accurate.

Please see Activity 4 (Workbook Activity Sheets)

Do you have any questions to ask your Supervising Worker? If so, please note them down here.

## Section 5 - The Legal and Policy Framework for

## Recording

* The Data Protection Act allows a person to access information they have written at a later stage if needed.
* The information you keep on, and the records you make about children/YP in your care are considered ‘personal data’ under the Data Protection Act 1998. Norfolk Children’s Services is a registered data controller under the Act, but our carers are entitled to hold records about children only on behalf of Norfolk Children’s’ Services and at the end of the placement any records held by the Foster Carer must either be returned to Children’s’ Services or passed on to the new carer for the child/YP.
* If you have more than one child/YP in placement you must keep separate records for each child/YP, even if they are siblings.
* Recording will be secure via Children’s Services Online. The Family Placement Medicine Administration Record will still need to be completed manually and stored securely in your home. Do not leave confidential information lying around where others might see it and ensure it is handed to your supervising social worker when required or at the end of the placement.
* All recording must also be kept secure from family/household members as only the registered foster carer(s) should have access to this.
* Children/YP deemed to be ‘of sufficient understanding’ (usually over the age of 12) have a right to see their records. However, you should consult with the child/YP’s social worker before showing them records given to you by anyone. There may be queries around disclosures, particularly around information supplied by others or about others such as the child/YP’s family. Norfolk Children’s Services have procedures on access to records that need to be followed to meet these legal requirements. If you have any concerns about these matters, please speak to your supervising social worker who will consult with the compliance team for guidance and clarification.
* When making your own records, keep in mind the child/YP may well wish to see them or be involved in producing them. It is good practice to record together with the child/YP and to put in their comments wherever possible.
* In some circumstances your records may be required in court – bear this in mind when you are recording, particularly any sensitive issues and record accurate, factual, information.

### Use of Foster Carer’s Records in Court proceedings – as specified by Norfolk County Council Legal department.

Whenever you are informed that a child/YP placed with you is, or may be, involved in legal proceedings, you should include in your recording full details of all potentially relevant information that may be of use in the court arena. Please include any detailed descriptions or quoted remarks you think may be helpful.

The purpose of this section is to let you know the types of issues that should be fully described in your recording. If you think any other matters may be important, please also note them down when they occur.

* Physical Condition: Illnesses or injuries. Other problems (e.g. incontinence, self-harming).
* Emotional Well-being: Crying, nightmares, periods or withdrawal.
* Mental Ability: Level of speech and understanding. Can they read, tell the time, count?
* Behaviour: Is it unusual for the child/YP’s age? Any sexualised behaviour?
* Attitude towards: Previous experiences. Living with any previous carers or other relatives.
* Family Time: Dates family time has taken place with each relative. Have there been any missed meetings? Behaviours before and after each meeting. Any dates when you were present. Details of any family times you attended.

If necessary, you will be contacted by the Legal Officer from County Hall dealing with the case to complete a statement. All information needed to prepare such a statement should be available in your recording. Copies of the completed Statement will be given to the Court and the other lawyers in the case.

You may also have to attend the Court as a witness. Should that be required, you will be fully briefed, in good time, on what might happen and on how best you can play your part.

### Recording and Legal proceedings

**(advice from Sarah Whitworth, Solicitor, Team Manager, Child Protection Team)**

### Dos and Don’ts for foster carer recording

* Keep the recording simple and clear.
* Notes do not have to be lengthy, just the main points; bullet point format is fine as long as the meaning is not obscured. You should use language with which you are comfortable; these are your notes so choose your way of describing things.
* Do not worry about spelling or grammar; these do not need correction. If the meaning is not clear you can be asked to clarify.
* Keep to factual information and do not be judgemental; it is key that you record what you observed and not your interpretation of the incident. If it is what was said, try to record exactly the phrase used and put in speech marks to indicate it is a direct quote.
* Try to be accurate when referring to specific incidents. This may be a key bit of evidence, so it is important that you try to be as accurate as possible.
* If other people are involved/present – who are they and what is their role if they are a professional.
* Carers who have difficulty writing should discuss alternatives such as the use of a tape recorder.

### What part of your recordings may be used in court?

* If asked to supervise family time – please ask for direct guidance about this.
* Details of any other form of contact the child/YP may receive from any source – telephone calls, letters, birthday cards, social media.
* Date, type and length of any illnesses.
* Details of any accidents or injuries, however slight. Describe what, when, where and how it occurred. Name any witnesses and any action taken. Record the time, date and name of the social worker to whom the incident was reported.
* Any comments the child/YP makes that give you cause for concern. Always record using the child/YP’s own words.
* Details of the child/YP’s behaviour if it is causing concern. Note their actual behaviour, what happened before it started and how it was dealt with.
* Any positive improvements, achievements and happy events for the child/YP.
* Details of any specific incidents or events impacting on the child/YP – good or not so good.
* Occasionally any significant milestones in the child/YP’s development such as their first words or first steps.

The social worker should encourage and collate the foster carers observation notes. These should not be changed or altered in any way even to correct grammar by workers. They are equivalent of family time observation notes and are primary evidence for the Court. These can then be produced directly and included in the bundle and be subject to cross reference and comment in the social workers statement which is the expert evidence before the Court and it is for that reason they should not be mixed with analysis and interpretation.

If directed to file a statement, the foster carers will need clear guidance as to what is expected of them. In observation notes they need to be clear that the recordings set out what they observe and if the children/YP make allegations these are recorded word for word with no interpretation. If they seek to share an opinion, that should be recorded or shared separately. As witnesses of fact they should not be sought to be persuaded to record only negative or positive observations or filter what they see.

## Section 6 - Local Guidance

On approval as a Norfolk Foster Carer you should be provided with:

* A copy of 'Recording guidance for carers: Quick reference'
* Supplies of The Family Placement Medicine Administration Record.
* Electronic copies of all relevant documents and forms.

### Recordings about children/YP placed

When children/YP are placed with you, you will be sent a “request for access” form to the Child’s account on Children’s Services Online, to be able to send messages regarding ‘Our Life Together’. At the end of a placement you will have a maximum of 7 days to ensure all the recording has been done before access to the Child’s account is de-activated.

At the end of the placement, any copies of the Family Placement Medicine Administration Record should be handed to your supervising social worker.

### Other records

You will be expected to submit a report via Children’s Services Online at each looked after children’s review for every placement – there is a simple form to fill in detailing the child/YP’s progress and development since the last review, any accidents or illnesses and additional health and education details.

Every carer has an annual review which will enable you to look back on the previous year’s work and submit comments via your Children’s Services Online account which will be added to your review. Your birth children, supervising social worker and the Team Around the Child/YP are also asked to participate in this process and provide their comments.

Your supervising social worker will give you a record of supervision sessions which you will want to keep along with certificates for training undertaken, notices of approval, your annual reviews and other records, such as comings and goings or significant events in your household.

Where there are difficulties, problems and concerns, record what the child/YP wants to say about it, what plans or approaches, have been agreed with the child/YP to tackle this, and then help the child/YP to monitor how they are dealing with the problem.

## Section 7 - Good practice in Life recording

### Fact or Opinion?

This section will give you the opportunity to explore good practice in recording. One of the most important skills you will need when completing records and any summaries you might write is the ability to clearly differentiate between facts and your personal opinions/judgements

Please see Activity 5 (Workbook Activity Sheets)

### Positive Record Keeping

Positive recording does NOT mean recording only 'good' things which happen and ignoring difficulties or challenging behaviour.

Positive recording means looking for what has been achieved, however small. Where there are difficulties, a carer should record exactly what the issue is in a factual manner. This will be followed up by a record of how the difficulty has been tackled, and what plans have been made with the child/YP to manage the behaviour.

It is equally important to record the follow-up to those plans - have they been met? Has the behaviour become more controlled or less controlled? What decisions and plans have been made next to tackle the behaviour and what praise has been given for when the behaviour has been managed?

Please see Activity 6 (Workbook Activity Sheets)

### Life recording

Recording does not just refer to day to day records, it also extends to letters, reviews, etc. - and Social Workers can also record badly!

There will always be a wide variety of ways in which people record. It is unlikely that two carers would record a similar incident/activity in the same way, and this is perfectly acceptable as long as the record is factual and written in a positive way.

Some records can be seen as a mass of text but by breaking it into paragraphs or bullet points this will help the reader and make it less daunting to read.

This can also help the person writing it as well as it can help with the structure of the record. Headings could also be used as a way of identifying key themes/issues and to focus the recording.

It is also important when writing records to be clear about the why you are writing in the records and who it is being written for as this will help you to decide what should be included and what can safely be left out.

Many young people who have been looked after by Children's Services in the past have gaps in their memories of events. Some ask to see their files to understand what happened and why. They also may want to know the answer to questions such as: 'Who did I live with when I was a toddler?' 'What was I like at primary school?' 'How did I spend my time?' 'What did I do on my 10th birthday?'

Remember that the records you keep are not only important now. In the future **your** recording may be the one most valued by a young person seeking to fill the gaps in their memory of the past.

Please see Activity 7 (Workbook Activity Sheets)

## Section 8 - Summary - Some Key Tips for Effective

## Recording

|  |
| --- |
| * **Before you start be clear about why you are recording, what you are going to record, and how you are going to record it.** * **Think about how you are going to include the child/YP in the recording. Are you going to discuss it? Are you going to encourage them to write something in the record? How about a drawing, a poem, or just record what they want to say?** * **Record as soon as possible after an event or observation** * **Avoid jargon** * **Wherever possible stick to facts** * **When you give an opinion separate it from the facts and explain why you have come to that particular opinion** * **Record in a way that you would be happy for the child or young person to read what you have written** * **Complete regular summaries on younger children and young people. This can be a good way of monitoring their progress** |

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Who owns the records?

Norfolk County Council owns the records made by carers and we have the right to ask for them back at any time.

### Can carers retain any copies of records for their own reference?

For as long as a child is in placement carers will be able to see the records on the Children’s Services Online account. Where a child/YP is moving placement, the foster carer will have a maximum of 7 days to complete any recording they need to make before the account is deactivated and they will no longer be able to see the records.

### Can carers access records in the future if needed?

Any records that you have made which you may need access to in the future, you will need to request these through the Information Compliance Team as it would be on a case by case basis.

### Should the fostering service retain copies of records and if so for how long?

They will be kept for the lifetime of the child/YP’s case file.

### Parent and child placements - what recording can be kept if the parent is NOT looked after but the child is?

With Parent and child placements – carer recording on Children’s Services Online will be linked to the looked after child’s record

### Legal status - Does it make a difference in respect of record keeping if the child is CO or Section 20. If section 20 should the parents have copies of the recording?

It makes no difference to recording of information regardless of legal status in terms of Data Protection Act, however other legislation under the Children Act may insist you record differently or record different information. The parent should request access to any recording through their child/YP’s social worker.

## Section 9 - Appendices:

P 30 Recording Guidance for Carers: Quick Reference

### Recording Guidance for Carers: Quick Reference

#### Why Record?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| For the child/ young person | * To preserve their memories * To give a picture of the child/YP’s life at present * To record their achievements, activities, interests |
| For care planning | * To inform understanding of the child/YP’s needs * To inform decision making * To help identify patterns of behaviour * To mark progress |
| For you: | * To help you review your practice * To provide you with information for reports/ meetings * For accurate information in the event of an allegation |

#### What & Where?

| * **What?** | * **Where?** |
| --- | --- |
| Photos, memorabilia, certificates, drawings | Store separately for the relevant child in locked box if necessary |
| Child/YP's achievements, activities, comments, | On ‘Our Life Together’ recording  on Children’s Services Online account (also referred to as the Portal) |
| All accidents to *I* illnesses of/ the child/YP, however minor. Record action taken. | On ‘Our Life Together’ recording  on Children’s Services Online |
| Visits to GP/Dentist/ Health Visitor/ Consultant & treatment received | On ‘Our Life Together’ recording  on Children’s Services Online |
| Records of meetings/ phone calls with child/YP's social worker or other professionals concerned with the child/YP, including contact with school | On ‘Our Life Together’ recording  on Children’s Services Online. Include who was involved and decisions made |
| Records of family time (visits, calls, letters etc.) between the child and their family and the child/YP's reactions | On ‘Our Life Together’ recording  on Children’s Services Online |
| Details of behaviours that cause you concern, and plans agreed with the child/YP to deal with the behaviour. | On ‘Our Life Together’ recording  on Children’s Services Online |
| Details of any worrying comments made by the child/YP or allegations | On ‘Our Life Together’ recording  on Children’s Services Online. Use the child’s exact words, and record your response & what action you took |
| Events or incidents within your family | On ‘Our Life Together’ recording  on Children’s Services Online |
| Details of times when child/YP was left in the care of others | On ‘Our Life Together’ recording  on Children’s Services Online |

## Section 10 - Workbook Activity Sheets

* Activity 1 – Why do we keep records? Page 36
* Activity 2 – Main principles of care Page 37
* Activity 3 – Confidentiality Page 39
* Activity 4 – What should be in the record? Page 40
* Activity 5 – Fact or opinion? Page 41
* Activity 6 – Positive recording Page 43
* Activity 7 - Life recording Page 48

## Activity 1

### Why do we keep records?

Think about the following questions and answer them:

|  |
| --- |
| Would you like to know what your first word was?  Would you like to know when you lost your first tooth?  When you took your first steps?  Who your best friend was?  What was your favourite toy?  Did you have a cuddly/blanket?  Do you have photographs from your childhood to help remind you of important times, people, and what you looked like?  What would it feel like not to know, or not to have any of this information? |

## Activity 2

### The Main Principles of Care

Identify 3 ways in which the **dignity** of the people you work with is protected and promoted?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Think of 2 people. List some of their differences which give them their **individuality:**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

The UK is a multi-cultural society. How would you ensure that a child/YP's

**Cultural needs** are met?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Can you think of some reasons why people may be **prejudiced** against a child/YP who is Looked After?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Can you think of some reasons why individuals or organisations **discriminate** against other people?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Can you think of any ways in which you can help a child/YP who you are looking after to deal with prejudice or discrimination against them?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Activity 3

### Confidentiality

|  |
| --- |
| If you were, at any time, unclear about something in the confidentiality policy - who would be the best person(s) to explain it to you?  **……………………………………………………………..**  If you were at any time, unclear about what to do with some information you have gathered - who would be the best person(s) to discuss it with?  **………………………………………………………………**  **Remember: everyone in Children's Services is working with, and bound**  **by the same policy, so if you have any concerns about sharing information, ask!**  If you had, by mistake, passed on information that was confidential, what would you do and who would you talk to?  **………………………………………………………………**  **………………………………………………………………**  **………………………………………………………………** |

## Activity 4

### What should be in the Record?

**What written information should you be provided with when a child/young person is placed with you?**

**Why are these records important to the young person and the care they receive?**

**What records would you make and keep for a child/young person placed with you**

**Why are these records important to that child/young person and the care they receive?**

## Activity 5

### Fact or Opinion?

Look at the following statements and decide whether you think they are factual or someone's opinion. Circle fact/opinion to indicate your answer and then use the space below each statement to comment on your decision:

1. The separation from her partner is depressing Fiona (Fact/Opinion)
2. Rose said that her classroom assistant shouted at her and dragged her to the Head Teacher's office by her arm (Fact/Opinion)
3. On the last family time visit the house was not safe for the children to remain there (Fact/Opinion)
4. When the children come back from a weekend stay with their birth mother, they are not dressed appropriately, and they are dirty (Fact/Opinion)
5. Callum is such an easy child to spend time with (Fact/Opinion)

### Comment

Although we have given you some suggestions for possible rewrites below, it is important to note that these are not the only ways in which the difference between fact and opinion could be recorded for these statements. The writer's personal style and the subject matter will influence how records are made.

1. The separation from her partner is depressing Fiona

**This is an opinion. A possible rewrite could be:**

Fiona appears depressed. She is..... (Her symptoms should be listed here i.e. tearful, tired etc.). Fiona has been like this since she separated from her partner and I think this may be the main reason for why she feels the way she does.

1. Rose said that her classroom assistant shouted at her and dragged her to the Head Teacher's office by her arm

**This is written as a factual statement.**

If this was reported to a foster carer you would expect to see a lot more detail than this, including what Rose said in her own words and what action the foster carer took.

1. On the last family time visit the house was not safe for the children to remain there

**This is an opinion. It could be rewritten in the following way:**

When I took the children on their last family time visit, I did not think it was safe to leave them there. There were used syringes and other sharp objects plainly visible as well as a number of adults who were unknown to me. I decided to take the children home and rang their social worker.

1. When the children come back from a weekend stay with their birth mother, they are not dressed appropriately, and they are dirty

**This is an opinion and could be written in the following way:**

I did not think that the clothing Mrs. Brown had dressed the children in was appropriate because it was a cold February day and all of the children were wearing thin summer clothes and sandals. Their faces were covered with what looked like the remains of their lunch and their hands and fingernails were covered in what appeared to be dirt from the garden.

1. Callum is such an easy child to spend time with

**This statement is written as if it is fact, but it is clearly an opinion.**

The issue here is whether everyone would understand the statement in the same way. In this case it would be helpful to give a description of Callum's behaviour and why the writer finds him easy to spend time with

## Activity 6

### Positive Recording

**Highlight the things in this example which you feel contribute to making it a poor example of a record.**

#### Example - (Foster carer's record)

Tuesday

Mr. Smith arrived to collect Keiran for a visit to his grandparents. I can never remember whether they are his parents or hers. I think they are his and they seemed really nice when I met them. I had put Keiran's new jeans and trainers on as I wanted him to look smart. Mr. Smith arrived at 3.45, which was a little earlier than had been agreed but OK as Keiran was ready. Kieran was pleased to see his dad and gave him a big hug and kiss. I offered Steven a cup of tea. Keiran said he wanted a coke, but I gave him an orange juice instead as I think coke makes him hyperactive. While we had our tea Mr. Smith told me that he was hoping to hear about a job he had just had an interview for. If he gets it, it should make a huge difference as he will be able to get the flat sorted out, it really needs a lick of paint and maybe Keiran will be able to return home earlier as well. Steven also said that he really felt that things were beginning to come together now and he was looking forward to Keiran coming home as planned next month. Mr. Smith stayed and chatted for about 20 minutes during that time he played with Keiran and when Keiran went and got his homework to show his dad, Steven made a point of saying how good his writing was getting. When they had gone, I used the time to catch up with some chores around the house and watch one of my soaps. They returned on time and Steven didn't stay too long. It's good to see that he has taken our advice, as we know Keiran finds goodbyes with his dad a bit tough. Steven told Keiran that he would see him on Saturday and would ring as usual on Thursday. After Mr. Smith had gone Keiran told me that he had had a really good time with his dad and at his grandparents. They had stopped in the park on the way back and played some football. They had had a roast dinner, which is Kieran's favourite. Keiran said that he liked seeing his dad and would like to go home. I went over the plan for his return home with him, which seemed to reassure him. After that Keiran played with his magnets, spent some time doing his air guitar and silent singing thing and then got ready for bed without any fuss. Read a story to him before going upstairs. When l looked in on him a little later and he was fast asleep. Bless

This part of the activity involves rewriting the example above (foster carer's record). You will need to remove the things you felt contributed to it being a poor record and change it into an example of a good record.

|  |
| --- |
| Your version of Foster Carer’s record: |

#### Example – Foster Carer’s Record - analysis

Tuesday

Mr. Smith arrived to collect Keiran for a visit to his grandparents. I can never remember whether they are his parents or hers. (It is more helpful to the child if you are familiar with their family tree so that if they talk about family members or ask questions you can help them to understand and make sense of what is happening)**.**I think they are his and they seemed really nice when I met them (This is unnecessary)*.* I had put Kieran's new jeans and trainers on as I wanted him to look smart. (This is unnecessary, unless clothes are an issue of some sort - and if so, put in your opinions/reasons)Mr. Smith arrived at 3.45, which was a little earlier than had been agreed. (This may be important if the father is normally late and it might be useful to know Kieran's response to this. For example is he unaffected because he knows his father will arrive even if he is late, or does he become anxious. When preparing a summary of contact visits it would be important to include things such as how many times a parent is late and the child's reaction to this)but OK as Keiran was ready. Keiran was pleased to see his dad and he gave him a big hug and a kiss. (Kieran's reaction to his dad's arrival is important)I offered Steven (this record jumps from Mr. Smith to Steven and back which could be confusing)a cup of tea. Keiran said he wanted a coke, but I gave him an orange juice instead as I think coke makes him hyperactive. (This is a record of the contact visit between Keiran and his dad so no need to include this here and in any case assuming that Keiran has been placed with this carer for some time this should already have been recorded elsewhere)While we had our tea Mr. Smith told me that he was hoping to hear about a job he had just had an interview for. If he gets it, it should make a huge difference as he will be able to get the flat sorted out, it really needs a lick of paint and maybe Keiran will be able to return home earlier as well. (Unnecessary detail and inappropriate to speculate on what Kieran's father may or may not do once in work, or indeed to speculate if he may be able to care properly for the child then)Steven also said that he really felt that things were beginning to come together now and he was looking forward to Keiran coming home as planned next month. (This, his father's hopes in his father's words, is significant information and should be recorded)Mr. Smith stayed and chatted for about 20 minutes and during that time he played with Keiran and when Keiran went and got his homework to show his dad, Steven made a point of saying how good his writing was getting. (It is important to note that the father stayed at the carers request and it was not a delaying tactic on his part. Also, the positive nature of his response is worthy of noting)*.* When they had gone I used the time to catch up with some chores around the house and watch one of my soaps. (Completely irrelevant)They returned on time (This may be significant if the father has been late in the past, less so if he is normally on time. It is more helpful and less time consuming to record the exceptions to normal patterns)*,* and Steven didn't stay too long. It's good to see that he has taken our advice, as we know Keiran finds goodbyes with his dad a bit tough. (It's important to note that the father has been able to act on advice, which makes things easier for Keiran)Steven told Keiran that he would see him on Saturday and would ring as usual on Thursday. (If this is the normal pattern it may be unnecessary to record this but it's important to note that the father reassures Keiran that he will contact him)After Mr. Smith had gone Keiran told me that he had had a really good time with his dad and at his grandparents. They had stopped in the park on the way back and had played some football. They had had a roast tea, which is Kieran's favourite. Keiran said that he liked seeing his dad and would like to go home. (This is important)I went over the plan for his return home with him, which seemed to reassure him. (It is important to note that Keiran needed and received some reassurance)After that Keiran played with his magnets, spent some time doing his air guitar and silent singing thing (This gives a description of the child, and the way he 'winds down' - they may be habits which are with him for life and the adult may like to know that he was doing it as a child! It gives a good picture of this child)and then got ready for bed without any fuss. Read a story to him before going upstairs. When I looked in on him a little later and he was fast asleep. (May be important to record this but will depend on individual children as it could indicate that a child is not anxious or it might just be how they normally behave) Bless. (Would you leave this in? If so, why? If not, why not? Might it show him how much he was cared for? Would that be good for him to know in later life?)

Example - one way to record this event (yours will be different and equally valid)

Mr. Smith arrived at 3.45 to collect Keiran for a visit to his paternal grandparents.

He was 15 minutes early, however Keiran was ready. Keiran seemed pleased to see his dad and gave him a big hug and kiss. Mr. Smith had a cup of tea and stayed for 20 minutes. He told me he felt ' things were beginning to come together now' and he was 'really looking forward to Keiran coming home as planned next month'.

He played with Keiran and praised Keiran's writing when Keiran brought his homework to show him.

They returned on time at 7pm. Mr. Smith did not stay long; he appears to have heeded our advice not to prolong goodbyes as this is difficult for Keiran. Mr. Smith told Keiran he would see him on Saturday, and ring on Thursday.

After Mr. Smith had gone Keiran told me he had had a good time with his dad and grandparents. They had stopped at the park and played football and had a roast tea ­ Keiran's favourite. He said he liked seeing his dad and would like to return home.

I went over the plan for his return home with him. This seemed to reassure him. He played until bedtime with his magnets, spent some time doing his air guitar and silent singing thing, got ready for bed without fuss, and fell asleep quickly. (Bless!)

## Activity 7

### Life Recording

Please look at the following examples of ‘Our Life Together’ records for the original case studies of Tomas (10 months) Serena (6 years) and Nick (14 years) as seen earlier in the body of the recording document. For each of the cases you will see an example 1 and an example 2 of a Foster Carer Recording (Our Life Together):

#### Tomas - Example 1

| **Date** | **Who was involved?** | **Event** | **Recorded by** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 25/05/16 | Freda Bloggs  Fred Bloggs  Tomas | Another bad day!  Tomas woke at 9am after a terrible night - he screamed almost nonstop, or so it seemed which nearly drove me crazy. It was a good job Mr. B was off work today - I don't know how I would have coped on my own knowing the mood he was in and after such a bad night.  At least he was a bit better this morning. I didn't think he had any teeth until he bit me on the arm just before we went out to the clinic. Don't know when that came through, but it's taken its time coming. He should have had his first tooth months ago.  He hardly put on any weight again - he should be doing better than this. They'll think I'm not feeding him properly soon.  The social worker rang with a date for the review - I told her what a miserable baby he is and how bad contact with his dad is, so I hope they sort something out at the review.  Taxi collected him for contact this afternoon, but it was late again - I am going to complain about this because it really messes up my time off.  He was really naughty when he got home - wouldn't eat his tea and cried & whined for the rest of the afternoon & evening. He's always like this after contact - don't know what his dad does to him to upset him so much.  I was glad when bath & bedtime came - he'd made himself so hot & bothered I gave him some paracetamol – hope that makes him sleep better. | Freda Bloggs |

#### Tomas - Example 2

| **Date** | **Who was involved?** | **Event** | **Recorded by** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 25/05/16 | Freda Bloggs  Fred Bloggs  Tomas | Tomas had an unsettled night - he woke 4 times between 1am and 5 am dozing fitfully in between. He was soothed by being held and rocked and finally settled and slept deeply until 9am.  The unsettled night was worth it as I soon discovered he had cut his first tooth. I have recorded this in his Red Book and also in his contact book as I'm sure dad will be thrilled at this latest milestone.  Social worker telephoned - date of review to be held on 2nd August.  Clinic appointment 10.30am - weight gain of 0.5kgs which is excellent as he is a poor eater and was failing to thrive 6 weeks ago.  Contact with Steven (dad) 1.30 - 3.30pm. Taxi was 20 minutes late - I will pass this on to the social worker, as this is the third time this has happened this week - waiting for the taxi is very unsettling for Tomas.  On return he was very unsettled, crying and clinging to me - he seemed to need reassurance. Fred and I took turns to try to console and comfort him. He had missed his afternoon sleep and seemed very tired. He ate a small amount of tea but showed little interest in it.  He seemed soothed by his bath and gave us some of his beautiful smiles, which is so rewarding.  Temperature before bed was 39 degrees. As he was running a slight temperature I gave him 2.5mls paracetamol as advised by the health visitor.  He settled quickly and was asleep by 6pm. | Freda Bloggs |

#### Serena - Example 1

| **Date** | **Who was**  **involved?** | **Event** | **Recorded by** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 25/05/16 | Serena | Serena's mother came for contact today. She hardly made any effort with Serena. Afterwards Serena was climbing the walls and getting on everyone's nerves. She wouldn't eat her tea either and was very difficult to settle for bed. | RA |
| 26/05/16 | Serena | Took Serena to ballet class after school  Later I spent an hour going through Serena's hair picking out the nits. She's picked them up from school again. Her hair is so long and thick and she made such a fuss when I suggested we get it cut. Thank goodness the rest of my lot are boys. | RA |
| 27/05/16 | Serena | Serena's been asked by Mrs. Finch, her teacher to enter the Blue Peter competition about Nelson. She wondered if Serena could make her picture this weekend. I wish she'd asked me first, as we are very busy at the moment. | RA |
| 28/05/16 | Serena | Serena's social worker visited her today to tell her that she wasn't going home again to live with her mum and she would be staying with me for the time being. Serena did not say anything. She didn't seem bothered.  We went to Asda tonight to choose a birthday present for one of Serena's classmates whose party it is this weekend. Serena picked the present and I picked the card. | RA |
| 29/05/16 | Serena | Serena tried it on this morning with her tummy ache routine trying to get out of school. She soon got ready when I wondered if she would be well enough for the party tomorrow. | RA |

#### Serena - Example 2

| **Date** | **Who was involved?** | **Event** | **Recorded by** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 25/05/16 | Serena | Serena's mother came for contact today. It was quite a tough one for Serena as her mother seemed very low today and was not able to play much with her. Understandably Serena was itching to get out in the garden afterwards, but she couldn't as it was chucking it down. We all had cabin fever. I wonder if Serena can sense that something's up because she was off her food even though it was rice pudding - her favourite. She needed lots of reassurance at bedtime, though couldn't tell me what was up. She chose 'Miffy' for her story which she usually says is a baby book, so I read it and give her lots of cuddles. | RA |
| 26/05/16 | Serena | Took Serena to ballet class after school. I stayed to watch, and her balance is coming on nicely. I'm looking forward to the show next month. She looked so lovely all in her pink. I put her hair in a bun - oh dear! The critters are back. Checked everybody's hair tonight. All done now. Serena has such long, shiny thick hair and she loves it when I dress it for her. I enjoy doing it and it makes her feel special so that's great. | RA |
| 27/05/16 | Serena | We are so proud. I'm telling everyone. Serena's been asked by Mrs. Finch, her teacher to enter the Blue Peter competition about Nelson on behalf of the whole class. We haven't got much time as the closing date is two weeks away, so Serena and me, had a chat about her idea on the way home from school so then we can get the materials together. I've always said she was talented at art. We bumped into Mrs. Mack, who works at the florist, on the way home and I said in a very grand way, "have you met our budding artist?" She was very impressed. Serena beamed. | RA |
| 28/05/16 | Serena | Serena's social worker visited her today to tell her that she wasn't going home again to live with her mum and she would be staying with me for the time being. Serena did not say anything afterwards. I let her know that the social worker had told me what she'd learnt today, and I asked her how she felt. Serena wondered when we were getting Sally's (school friend) present (Serena has been invited to her party at the weekend) so I took Serena to Asda to choose it. Serena picked the present but found it hard to choose a card, so I did. | RA |
| 29/05/16 | Serena | Serena woke up saying she had a tummy ache, which has happened before. I wasn't sure if it was to do with the news yesterday. I reminded her about the plans for the weekend and she said she felt better.  Let the school know that she maybe a little fragile today but as it happened she was OK. | RA |

#### Nick - Example 1

| **Date** | **Who was involved?** | **Event** | **Recorded by** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 25/05/16 | Nick | Nick came home on the bus today - at last! It has taken us weeks to get him to do this, but at least he has done it now. I am sure it will be good for him with all his anxieties about strangers and other people. As soon as he can get control of his fears he will be a lot easier to live with.  He started another argument before bed again this evening; it took me ages to talk him down. It was probably the maths homework again; he hates it and knows he's no good at it. | Alison |
| 26/05/16 | Nick | Nick went off to school OK today and I gave him the bus fare and hope he won't ring me for a lift instead.  He managed to get home on his own. Seems to be going well at the moment. |  |
| 27/05/16 | Nick | Nick had a setback - the bus driver smiled at him and said 'hello'. Nick said he smiled but couldn't do any more than that. Although we talked about it, I think this is going to take him a long time to get the confidence he needs at his age. |  |
| 28/05/16 | Nick | Nick got a D for Maths, which is good for him. The bus seems to be going OK now; he is managing it every day.  He is beginning to be able to talk about his anxiety more, but he has a long way to go and if he's pushed, he gets angry and then we all suffer! |  |
| 29/05/16 | Nick | Nick wet the bed again last night. Although it is getting more erratic now than regular as before, it is still awful for him, and for us, and I find it difficult to get the smell out. There is still a long road ahead for him.  Nick is very argumentative, particularly late at night and refuses to go to bed. He argues with everyone and it does make life very difficult. |  |

#### Nick - Example 2

| **Date** | **Who was involved?** | **Event** | **Recorded by** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 25/05/16 | Nick | Today Nick came home on the bus himself for the very first time! Congratulations! Nick has told me how worried he had been about getting on the bus on his own, but also saying he has wanted to manage it for weeks now. He tells me that he 'knows it's to do with me being frightened of people' and that he 'wants to conquer it' - and today he has done. We are all pleased with him and have told him so.  I think it was a big effort for him, because later tonight he was quite argumentative with everyone, and needed calming before bedtime and help with his homework - it was Maths again tonight, the pattern of anxiety over Maths seems to continue.  We talked over the bus trip again, and he was able to say at all the good points which he can take from it. It should be a real boost to his confidence | Alison |
| 26/05/16 | Nick | When I dropped Nick off to school today he was smiling and had the return bus fare in his pocket. He said he felt 'proper' today.  He managed the way home fine - he knows he can really do it now. I think it is still important that I am here for him when he gets off that bus, as if there was any problem he would need to talk about it so that it doesn't set his confidence back. | Alison |
| 27/05/16 | Nick | Nick told me that the bus driver smiled at him and said 'hello' and Nick said that he smiled back! This is very good news. Well done Nick. We talked about how it felt 'in his tummy' again, and he said 'OK, not so bad!' We practiced saying 'Hello' back for tomorrow (and hope it is the same bus driver!). | Alison |
| 28/05/16 | Nick | Nick got a D for his last Maths homework - this is a good improvement.  Nick didn't manage the 'Hello' in the end, but says he is feeling more comfortable, and knows in himself, he says, that he can do it. I do think he is learning to deal with this high level of anxiety around other people; it does still seem to be something he really wants to do, and he is able to talk about how it is feeling. I think it will come as he gains confidence, he does not need pushing - that seems to make him fearful/vulnerable or angry | Alison |
| 29/05/16 | Nick | Nick wet the bed again last night, but it has been 4 nights since he last did, which is a good improvement. Well done! He will get there in the end. I think that it helped him take control more when he agreed that if he did wet, then he would change his own sheets and he's learned to use the washing machine!  He can still be argumentative in my view, particularly at night when he is tired and just wants to stay up that extra half-hour longer!  This has not changed since he was first with us - but he is making such a lot of effort on several fronts, at school, with his confidence, with talking to us, that altogether he should be very encouraged by what he is achieving. | Alison |

### Now, thinking about all the information you have been given about recording throughout this document, fill in the following table with reference to the examples above:

|  |
| --- |
| * What general differences you see between examples 1 and 2? |
|  |
| * What impact on the reader do you think the differences have? |
|  |
| * If you were an adult looking back on their life as a child Looked After by Children’s Services, which record would you prefer to be reading, and why? |
|  |