

## Fostering Market Position Statement for Greater Manchester

Summer 2019

### Key Messages

- There are not enough foster carers in Greater Manchester to meet the needs of our children.
- While local authorities intend, over the long term, to increase significantly the number of children in their internal fostering services, more IFA foster carers are needed.
- There is a need particularly for foster carers for teenagers, sibling groups and those with more complex needs
- Greater Manchester will shortly be running a purchasing exercise to identify a small number of strategic partners to undertake long term planning and matching for children who need enhanced fostering packages
- Greater Manchester LAs would like IFAs to send information on local families who are going through assessment, and carers who are working notice and will soon become available. This is to increase the time available to match properly and increase local placements.

### Working differently with IFAs

Greater Manchester wants to place more children locally and would welcome dialogue with providers who have ideas on how to achieve this.

This is to try and build additional time in the placement process. Providers are asked to supply local authorities with weekly updates on:

- Foster Carers in assessment
- Foster Carers who have serving notice and will soon have a vacancy
- Foster cares who have a child in placement but with a vacancy for the right match.

We are working in partnership with IFAs to deliver training to social workers on writing better referrals

In addition to the bespoke purchasing activity described in the key messages above, LAs are piloting a regular enhanced fostering placement meeting where IFAs with carers can meet local authorities to build bespoke packages of support.

### How Greater Manchester buys services

Greater Manchester buys services from the North West Flexible Purchasing System (FPS). If a placement cannot be found on the FPS, authorities will search more widely.

### Key facts and figures

Number of fostering placements made by each local authority

Fostering	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Bolton	373	395	390	416	437
Bury	223	201	200	225	218
Manchester	1028	977	905	885	934
Oldham	268	271	300	333	376
Rochdale	393	383	355	325	367

<b>Salford</b>	410	412	375	352	389
<b>Stockport</b>	197	200	210	216	236
<b>Tameside</b>	304	287	295	362	421
<b>Trafford</b>	236	241	250	266	246
<b>Wigan</b>	384	374	355	323	358
<b>Greater Manchester</b>	3,816	3,741	3,635	3,703	3,982

Change in IFA household capacity in Greater Manchester

Change in IFA households to previous year	2017*	2018*
<b>Trafford</b>	-12%	12%
<b>Bolton</b>	-11%	10%
<b>Manchester</b>	-7%	8%
<b>Oldham</b>	-11%	1%
<b>Tameside</b>	-21%	1%
<b>Rochdale</b>	-5%	1%
<b>Wigan</b>	-14%	-8%
<b>Salford</b>	-13%	-14%
<b>Bury</b>	-14%	-19%
<b>Stockport</b>	-12%	-22%

\* For comparable providers on the FPS contract.

## 5. What is needed now

The decline in the number of fostering households has meant there are now children in residential whose needs could have been met in fostering placements

There is a need for Independent Fostering Agencies to increase the number of households in Greater Manchester. Foster Carers are needed particularly for:

- Teenagers, as younger children are more likely to be placed with inhouse carers
- Young people with more complex needs
- Carers to support young people who have previously been in residential
- Parent and child foster carers
- Foster carers for sibling groups
- Foster Carers who can meet the cultural needs of children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups
- Foster Carers for risk taking teenagers with complex and challenging needs inclusive of self-harm and mental health issues
- Young People who have offending behaviour, particularly for young people coming out of custody, who often, end up in residential settings even when fostering is the desired outcome.

Greater Manchester does not want capacity at the expense of quality. Only agencies that can offer high quality support and identify, train and support good quality carers are wanted. In identifying future partners, we want to work with providers who deliver enabling models, which develop independence skills and links the young person to local and sustainable networks of support.

Staying Put is an important opportunity for young people and Ofsted has identified that its use is declining nationally and remains lower in IFA settings than in internal services. Authorities want to work in partnership with providers to address this.

## **6. Opportunities to work differently with a devolved health service in Greater Manchester**

Devolution has given Greater Manchester much greater control of how it delivers health services to young people and has implemented Greater Manchester Children & Young People Health & Wellbeing Framework 2018-2022. This includes 10 priorities, of which investing in mental health and resilience for children and young people has been incorporated into the first delivery wave. You can find out more here: <https://www.gmhsc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Childrens-Health-and-Wellbeing-Framework-6a-11.05.18.pdf>

This focus and the identified demand for more resilient fostering services to support more young people, more effectively in Greater Manchester creates an important opportunity for the local authorities, providers, schools and the health economy to work in new partnerships to deliver better services for young people

## **7. What is asked of providers**

- To set targets for net growth of capacity in Greater Manchester to meet the needs set out above
- To share this target and progress against this target through the year with Greater Manchester authorities
- To prioritise Greater Manchester carers for local children
- To invest in the training and support you offer to take more complex young people
- Consider innovative methods of delivery which will allow complex young people to experience a family environment.
- To support work with Greater Manchester to improve the number of young people who can 'Stay Put'

## **8. Getting in touch**

If you wish to talk about the content of the MPS, the Greater Manchester strategy for returning fostering to growth or ideas for working differently in Greater Manchester please contact [Adrian.Rocks@bolton.gov.uk](mailto:Adrian.Rocks@bolton.gov.uk) in the first instance.

To speak to an individual local authority:

Bolton: [childrenscommissioning@bolton.gov.uk](mailto:childrenscommissioning@bolton.gov.uk)

Bury: [PPC.Team@bury.gov.uk](mailto:PPC.Team@bury.gov.uk)

Oldham: [helen.kostyk@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:helen.kostyk@oldham.gov.uk)

Manchester: [centralisedplacementsteam@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:centralisedplacementsteam@manchester.gov.uk)

Rochdale: [commissioning@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:commissioning@rochdale.gov.uk)

Salford: [PlacementFinding@salford.gov.uk](mailto:PlacementFinding@salford.gov.uk)

Stockport: [Placements@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:Placements@stockport.gov.uk)

Tameside: [childrens.placements@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.placements@tameside.gov.uk)

Trafford: [childrens.commissioning@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.commissioning@trafford.gov.uk).

Wigan: [J.Williams3@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:J.Williams3@wigan.gov.uk) and [Kathryn.Levens@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:Kathryn.Levens@wigan.gov.uk)