**Job Title:** Area Manager

**Location:** Regionally Based

**Reports to:** Regional Director

**Accountable for**: All staff employed within the Registered Agencies including qualified Social Workers and Managers, and non-social work support staff including Support Workers, Carer Recruitment, Placements Team and Administration staff.

**Line Management Responsibility for:** Registered Manager (RM), Carer Recruitment Officers (CROs) and Referral Hub Manager.

**Job Purpose:**

The purpose of the Area Manager role is:

* To be accountable for the stability and growth of the agency by delivering on the three key metrics in fostering: carer recruitment, carer retention and placements.
* To be the ‘Responsible Individual’ (RI) as defined by the agency regulator (OFTSED/CIW/CIS). Responsible for ensuring the agency meets all conditions of registration through compliance with relevant regulations and national minimum standards, maintaining/improving regulatory ratings, and delivering best outcomes for children and young people in our care.
* To positively promote the agency and increase awareness and utilisation of the National Fostering Group (NFG) whilst keeping safeguarding and outcomes for children and young people at the heart.
* To shape and embed a company culture that supports and strengthens operational efficiency, promotes growth, and engages staff and carers in delivering agency and sector excellence.

**KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES**

**Operational Governance & Excellence**

* Represents the National Fostering Group (NFG) in all professional matters in the region and promotes the reputation of NFG to placing local authorities, relevant external organisations and individuals; ensuring the agency is recognised as a provider of excellence in fostering services.
* Maintains continuous lines of communication with the Regional Director (RD) and Registered Manager (RM), providing strategic oversight and guidance on all operational matters.
* Keeps all relevant staff and stakeholders, both internal and external, informed in accordance with statute and procedure, and undertakes to abide by the statute and procedures that applies to the role of the Responsible Individual.
* Develops, implements and maintains effective systems within the agency, including training resources to include IT systems, assessment, approval, support, supervision and review of carers, fostering panel and out of hours services.
* Ensures the agency has the proper operational controls in place and administrative and reporting procedures are consistently embedded and adhered to.
* Ensures the agency provides 24 hour professional support for foster carers and that an effective out of hours placement service is available for LAs.
* Ensures any matters concerning safeguarding and child protection are dealt with in accordance with government guidelines and company policy.
* Ensures complaints from any stakeholder or regulatory body are responded to in line with the timelines set out in the agency Complaints Procedure, or regulatory body correspondence.
* Has overall lead responsibility for the production of statutory reports and documentation to regulatory bodies e.g. Reg 35 Quality of Care Reports (Ofsted), Statement of Purpose, Childrens Guides.
* Works in liaison with the Quality Team and RM to audit, monitor and maintain full compliance with regulations and standards, addressing audit findings and implementing audit action plans.
* Responsible for regularly reviewing the training and development needs of foster carers and ensuring the training plan is effectively implemented.
* Has overall lead responsibility for ensuring the agency achieves good and aspires for outstanding outcomes for children and young people and takes full responsibility for the service delivery to children, young people, their carers and families, in line with legislation, guidance, group and local policy and procedures.
* Ensures premises and tasks are carried out in full compliance with Health and Safety regulations and wellbeing initiatives to ensure the wellbeing of employees.
* Observes, at all times, strict rules of confidentiality appropriate to the post.

**Financial & Commercial Management**

* To work collaboratively with the RD, RM and Finance to set the goals and targets for agency growth, performance and profitability, contributing to NFG’s 12 month and 3 year business plan.
* To be the strategic lead with overall responsibility to lead and manage the registered agency ensuring agreed targets and goals are achieved in relation to new carer growth, carer retention and placement growth.
* Promote evidence-based data driven decisions and recommend strategies for growth and development.
* Accountable for managing the budgets and expenditure within the agency, following agreed approvals procedures and expenditure levels, ensuring all expenditure is evidenced, accurate and justified.
* In collaboration with the Commercial Team, lead on fee uplifts and negotiations with LAs to optimise revenue and ensure correct and consistent pricing is being applied for the service delivered, and every child has an agreed Individual Placement Agreement (IPA) in place.

**Strategy & Change Management:** 

* Work with the Regional Director (RD) and Registered Manager (RM) on the development of transformational initiatives and service enhancements for young people and foster carers.

* Develop, shape and deliver agency plans with the Registered Manager for the attainment of consistently high OFSTED/CIW/CIS ratings (Good or Outstanding).
* Leads on business planning and performance reporting:
* monitoring and analysing foster carer recruitment and retention rates to ensure stability and growth of the foster carer base in the agency.
* monitoring and analysing referral and placement data to ensure optimum carer utilisation, placement stability and growth and a responsiveness to changing sector trends.
* Research and seek opportunities for new initiatives and business growth, formulating and presenting recommendations to the RD and Senior Management Team (SMT).
* Promotes the agency and NFG’s position as a key player in a competitive market. Proactive in approaching Commissioner and LA contacts to ensure the NFG is able to compete effectively with particular reference to pricing, new service initiatives, and service quality and outcomes.
* In conjunction with the Commercial Team, takes lead responsibility for the submission of new tenders and contract renewals.
* Completes all required LA Framework QPA data returns (Quality Performance and Audit).

**Staff Management & Leadership**

* Communicates regularly with the team to raise awareness and understanding of the NFG vision, mission and values and the agency business plan to achieve collective ownership of the agency performance and outputs.
* Undertakes the line management of the assigned staff below providing day-to-day leadership and management guidance and undertaking monthly professional supervision of all direct reports to keep the agency aligned to group mission, vision and values and business plans.
* Registered Manager – To ensure the RM fulfils all statutory requirements, helps develop and shape fostering service excellence and drives aspirational and outstanding outcomes for children and young people.
* Carer Recruitment Officers – To generate new carer growth and maintain/improve carer retention.
* Provide day-to-day leadership and management guidance to Referral Hub Managers with referral department oversight, delivering child and young person agency growth in a commercial and ethical way in line with standards and practice.
* Responsible for the recruitment, induction and retention of staff in own business area ensuring adherence to Safer Recruitment guidelines and recruiting a diverse workforce.
* Manages and leads professional and support staff in accordance with group policies, having responsibility for their: Supervision – allocation of tasks and workload monitoring; Performance management, appraisal and discipline.

Learning and Development plans.

* Delegates effectively to staff based on competence of the individual employee.

**Standard responsibilities:**

There are a number of standard duties and responsibilities that all employees, irrespective of their role and level of seniority within NFG are expected to be familiar with and adhere to:

* Participates in an annual performance review programme.
* Works at all times, in accordance with the policies and procedures of the NFG and statutory regulations applicable to the Group.
* NFG is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expect all employees to work in accordance with this.
* Undertakes other duties as assigned.

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| **Job Holder** |  |  |
| Name: | Signed: | Date: |
| **Signed on behalf of the NFG** |  |  |
| Name: | Signed: | Date: |