



Department
for Education

Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care: Getting started Factsheet

Getting started with the TSD Standards

This factsheet provides you with suggestions on how to get started with the Standards, together with examples of what other agencies have done.

Refreshed: November 2012

There is a need to have a clear plan for implementation of the TSD standards. Experience indicates very clearly that initial planning and preparation of managers and supervising social workers is crucial.

The first task of the supervising social worker is to plan with the foster carer how they will achieve the TSD Standards, and to identify relevant learning from any previous experience, qualification or training. Together, you will need to discuss how the carer will collect evidence that demonstrates their learning, and identify any areas of knowledge that the carer needs to develop. This information should be readily available from the Skills to Foster assessment or other forms of fostering assessment. This will form the basis of the Personal Development Plan.

Evidence will then need to be provided by the agreed date, and signed off by the supervising social worker or a manager as meeting the required standard. A manager/team leader may wish to sample the quality of the work before signing off the workbook.

It is recommended that fostering service providers, wherever possible, use the TSD Standards to complement any approval or agency specific processes already in place. Introducing the TSD Standards pre-approval helps new foster carers understand what is expected of them early in the process.

Some carers will need more input than others to gather evidence, some will be familiar with evidencing in this way, and others will already have most of the evidence from previous qualifications (see attached flowchart).

Essentially there are two different approaches you can take to evidencing the TSD Standards:

- Encourage carers to work their way through the workbook, finding evidence for each standard.
- Encourage carers to gather all their evidence and map the evidence to the standards and then identify gaps where evidence is still required.

Often carers find the first approach more straightforward, though in the long run it may be more time consuming. Carers using the second approach are likely to need support in mapping the evidence to the standards, but this approach is likely to require less pieces of evidence overall.

Below are some ideas about how to get started from providers.

‘Develop a toolkit’

Develop a resource to support foster carers completing the TSD Standards, which could include:

- An introduction to the TSD Standards.
- A breakdown of each standard.
- Hints and tips.

- Signposting to useful resources on internet and elsewhere, such as local policies and procedures.
- FAQs.
- Examples of the types of evidence that would be acceptable.

Cross referencing the TSD Standards to existing practice

Linking the TSD Standards to existing tools, structures and practices can enable foster carers to evidence the standards with a minimum of additional work.

Aligning or cross-referencing the TSD Standards with existing training pathways, systems and procedures, such as pre-approval training, assessment, reviews and continuing professional development (CPD) can be an effective way of integrating the TSD Standards into existing practice.

The British Association of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) has cross-referenced the Form F against the TSD Standards. The Fostering Network's Skills to Foster assessment format requires prospective foster carers to be assessed against a list of skills which are directly linked to the TSD Standards and to begin assembling a portfolio of evidence. The two processes enable applicants to evidence a large proportion of the standards pre-approval. In addition all the Fostering Network's post approval training is also mapped to the TSD Standards.

Foster carers can cross reference daily diary sheets/records or logs against the standards, inserting a column to record which standards have been met. Supervision recording sheets can be adapted in a similar way. Personal Development Plans can be used to evidence the standards, as well as providing a way of identifying gaps in meeting the standards.

Gathering evidence before you get started

Asking carers to collect all the evidence they may already have which relates to their fostering role can be a good starting point. This could include:

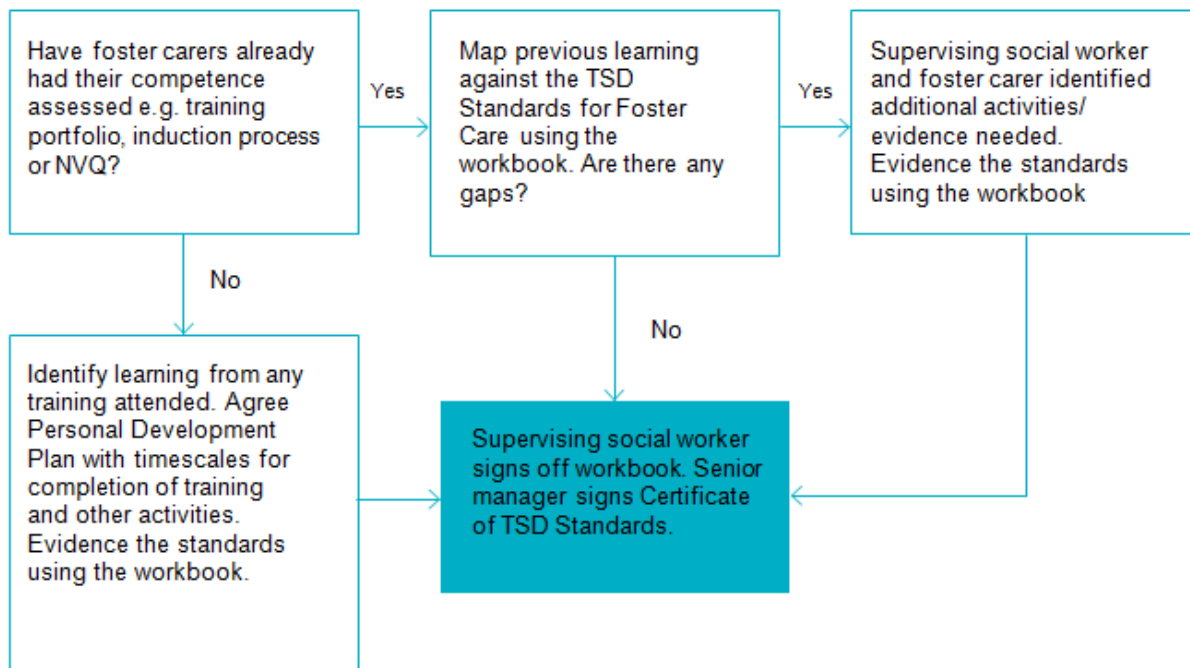
- Diaries or reflective logs.
- Certificates from previous training.
- Fostering services policies and procedures.
- Foster care handbook.
- Safer caring plan.
- Health and safety checklist.
- Statement of purpose.
- Fire safety plan.
- Supervision and review records.

This process can generate a lot of evidence which can be used to meet the standards. Starting by cross referencing this evidence to the standards can give carers a confidence boost and help them see that the standards are achievable.

As most of the outcomes expect carers to evidence their understanding or knowledge, carers should indicate that they have read and understood documents, such as the handbook, policies and plans.

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Foster carers transferring to a different foster care provider will take their Certificate of Successful Completion with them as evidence that they have met the Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care. They may need to undertake induction specific to the new foster care provider.





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