**GUIDE TO USING THE MATCHING MATRIX**

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| **KEY TO SCORING** | **POINTS** | **Definition** |
| Unmet need | 0 | A particular need cannot be met. |
| Satisfactory matching indicator | 1 | Needs can be sufficiently met but will require a robust package of support |
| Good matching indicator | 2 | Needs can be evidentially met. |

When a young person has a move, planned or otherwise this form should be used to help identify if the family would be a good match in relation to the carers and other household member.

Before formally matching a discussion should be had with all social workers and key people to agree in principle if the match looks potentially viable and any obstacles that might prevent moving forward. This might be timings of significant events which impact, skills, housing etc. The discussion should allow for information sharing and knowledge of all parties to be shared to consider the impact upon the child and/or the fostering household.

**Column One:** This should be information about the child/young person and completed by the child's social worker. If a sibling group, they should either be given a separate column or identified within the column. Which you do will depend on how much their needs differ.

**Column Two:** This is to evidence how the proposed foster carer / kinship carer can meet the need of the child/young person. This should be completed by the Supervising Social worker.

**Scoring:** To achieve the most accurate scoring, social workers will consult with the foster carers throughout the matching process; where there are identified gaps within the information, the child’ social worker will be asked to provide more detail to inform further discussion of which could result the scores changing.

**Total score and analysis:** The baby and toddler placement matrix have 6 specific questions; it is not necessary to use the scoring matrix but if any challenges are identified, a support plan needs to be discussed and agreed with social care and fostering management. The generic placement of 2-18 years old will require the use of the matching matrix, there are additional questions at the bottom of this document to consider matching for step-down and complex placements. Please consider the following scoring indicators, if scores are within the 10-19 range, please complete the SMART action plan to see what support can be put in place for the match to be considered.

Poor score indicatory- 0-9 Satisfactory score indicator – 10 - 19 Good score indicator – 20 - 28

**COMPLETING THE MATCHING MATRIX**

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| --- | --- |
| **BABY AND TODDLER PLACEMENTS (0–2-year-old)** | Complete section one and two |
| **GENERIC PLACEMENTS (2-18 years old)** | Complete section one and three |
| **STEP-DOWN/COMPLEX CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE** | Complete section one, two and three |

**MATCHING MATRIX**

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| **Date of Matching Meeting:** |  |
| **Professionals Attended:** |  |

**SECTION ONE - GENERAL INFORMATION**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Child/young person’s Name:** |  | **Prospective foster carers:** |  |
| **Child’s DOB:** |  | **Household composition:** |  |
| **How does the child identify:** |  | **Category of approval:** |  |
| **Child’s legal status:** |  | **Skills level:** |  |
| **Type of placement needed:**  (Task, step-down, mother and baby, bridging etc.) |  | **In house or IFA:** |  |
| **Child’s Social Worker Details:** |  | **Supervising social worker details:** |  |

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| **Why is a foster placement required/when is it needed?** | **Foster carers placement history - experiences** |
|  |  |

**SECTION TWO – 0–2-year-old BABY AND TODDLER PLACEMENTS**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Column one:** Child’s needs | **Column two:** How can carers meet the child’s needs |
| **Hospital support required by the foster carer.**   1. What is the EDD, which hospital is baby in/what ward, does the child need to remain in hospital for a period, does the foster carer need to support at hospital before discharge. Has the court granted an order to place the child in foster care, if not, when is the case due in court? |  |  |
| **Health needs**   1. Does the child have any additional health needs, will the carer need specific training to meet these needs. |  |  |
| **Transport to family time**   1. What is the family time schedule, can the foster carer support with transporting to family time, where will family time take place etc. |  |  |
| **Sleeping arrangements/equipment**   1. Does the child need their own bedroom, has the foster carer got all the equipment they need (if not what do they need before the placement can commence) etc. |  |  |
| **Household members**   1. Are there other children in the fostering household (birth, LAC, SGO etc), can the child be placed alongside other children, are there any pets, is the child fearful of animals etc. |  |  |
| **Locations to avoid**   1. Which areas do we need to avoid, are there any concerns/risks regarding birth family |  |  |

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| **Support plan for baby/toddler placement –** if any challenges have been identified with this match, what is the plan to support? For example: if the carer does not drive etc. |  |

**SECTION THREE – GENERIC PLACEMENTS 2-18 years old**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Column one:*  **Child’s needs** | *Column two:*  **How can carers meet the child’s needs** | **Score**  **0 - 1 - 2** |
| 1. **My childhood experience**   History of abuse, trauma, neglect, DV, substance misuse etc. |  |  |  |
| 1. **Identity**   How do I want to be identified? My ethnicity, culture, religion, preferred Language, dietary requirements etc. |  |  |  |
| 1. **Health**   Do I have any health Needs, medication, learning or physical disabilities etc. |  |  |  |
| 1. **Education**   What School/educational provision do I attend? Do I attend before or after school provision? Do I need extra help at school? What is my behaviour like at school? Can the foster carer transport me to and from school? |  |  |  |
| 1. **Family time**   How often/ where and when do I see my family. Direct/ Indirect, with who? Can the foster carer transport? |  |  |  |
| 1. **My wishes and feelings**   Understanding of their situation, what they want in a foster family, what work is required to further prepare the child(ren) |  |  |  |
| 1. **What a difficult day looks like for me**   Attachment style, behaviour, Personality, triggers, what I am frightened off, what makes me anxious and worried etc. |  |  |  |
| 1. **What a good day looks like for me**   What makes me feel calm, safe and happy. How I feel valued, understood, and listened too etc. |  |  |  |
| 1. **Interests/Hobbies/ Talents**   What are these? Can the foster family ensure the child continues with current activities/encourage to try new? |  |  |  |
| 1. **Risks to other children**   Has the child/YP presented as aggressive or volatile towards other children? What is the preferred age ranges of other children in the household (if any)? |  |  |  |
| 1. **Carers own Children**   Ages of carers children, personality & interests, gender, any vulnerabilities. |  |  |  |
| 1. **Risk to animals**   Is the child/YP a risk to any animals? what does this look like, can it be managed, what work has taken place to support the child (or needs to take place) |  |  |  |
| 1. **Location to avoid**   Are there any high risks with the birth family? What areas to avoid? |  |  |  |
| 1. **Support needs**   Due to the age and presenting needs, are there any training needs to support the carers? |  |  |  |

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| **SCORING TOTALS** | **TOTAL** |
| **0 - unmet need** |  |
| **1 - satisfactory matching indicator** |  |
| **2 - good matching indicator** |  |
| **OVERALL SCORE** |  |

**ACTION PLANNING**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| IF SCORE IS 10 – 19 what is the plan to support this placement: using SMART goals | Specific |  |
| Measurable |  |
| Achievable |  |
| Relevant |  |
| Time-based |  |

**STEP-DOWN/COMPLEX CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **ANALYSIS** | **SCORE** |
| **1.What are the carer’s level of therapeutic knowledge, training or skill which is required to care for this child? Are there any deficits and if so, what is the plan to reduce these?** |  |  |
| **2. What are the plans for ongoing involvement from the therapeutic team and has it been agreed what their support will look like?** |  |  |
| **3. Are the carers willing to support a transition plan set out by the team around the child? Do we foresee any difficulties with the transition?** |  |  |
| **4. What is the agreed visiting pattern for social care and fostering post the child being placed?** |  |  |
| **5. Have TAC meetings been arranged to take place post placement?** |  |  |

**Signatures**

**SSW…………………………………………………………..**

Sara and Wayne are skills level 4 foster carers. They have engaged in extensive therapeutic training and support to assist them in their role as step-down carers historically. These skills will be transferrable to the care of Jaydon. Positively Jaydon would like to be placed alongside another foster child and the child in placement currently is excited about the prospect of Jaydon joining the household. There are no risks identified in respect of matching alongside at this stage, but their relationship will need to be monitored by the carers as it evolves over time. The carers are positive about promoting activities of interest to Jaydon. There are vulnerabilities in respect of the carers capacity to support with school runs and the likelihood is that taxis will need to be arranged (due to the current demands on the Fostering Service) but there may be opportunity to consider alternative secondary schools for Jaydon in the near future. The carers have a menagerie of exotic animals but they have firm rules in place relating to handling of these animals.

**Team Manager: ………………………………………………………**

**Date…………………………………………………………..**