



## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

FRIDAY, 25 JANUARY 2019

10.00 AM CC1, COUNTY HALL, LEWES

MEMBERSHIP - Councillors Charles Clark, Chris Dowling, Kathryn Field, Jim Sheppard, Colin Swansborough, Sylvia Tidy (Chair) and Francis Whetstone

### A G E N D A

- 1 Minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2018 (*Pages 3 - 6*)
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Disclosure of Interests  
Disclosure by all members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.
- 4 Urgent items  
Notification of items which the Chair considers to be urgent and proposes to take at the end of the appropriate part of the agenda. Any members who wish to raise urgent items are asked, wherever possible, to notify the Chair before the start of the meeting. In so doing, they must state the special circumstances which they consider justify the matter being considered urgently.
- 5 Looked After Children (LAC) Statistics (*Pages 7 - 10*)  
Report by Director of Children's Services.
- 6 East Sussex Foster Care Association Annual report (*Pages 11 - 42*)
- 7 Children in Care Council Update
- 8 Any other non-exempt items considered urgent by the Chair.
- 9 Exclusion of Press and Public  
To consider excluding the public and press from the meeting for the next two agenda items on the grounds that if the public and press were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as specified in Category 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to any individual.
- 10 Ofsted Inspection reports for the following: Lansdowne and The Bungalow (*Pages 43 - 62*)
- 11 Children's Home Regulations 2015, Regulation 44: Inspection reports for period October 2018 - December 2018
  - 11a Acorns at Dorset Road (*Pages 63 - 134*)
  - 11b Brodrick House (*Pages 135 - 240*)
  - 11c Hazel Lodge (*Pages 241 - 324*)

- 11d Homefield Cottage (*Pages 325 - 428*)
- 11e Lansdowne Secure Unit (*Pages 429 - 532*)
- 11f The Bungalow, Sorrel Drive (*Pages 533 - 632*)
- 12 Any other exempt items considered urgent by the Chair

PHILIP BAKER  
Assistant Chief Executive  
County Hall, St Anne's Crescent  
LEWES BN7 1UE

17 January 2019

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## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held in the Committee Room - County Hall, Lewes on 26 October 2018.

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PRESENT                                      Councillors Charles Clark, Chris Dowling, Kathryn Field, Jim Sheppard, Colin Swansborough, Sylvia Tidy(Chair) and Francis Whetstone

ALSO PRESENT                              Liz Rugg - Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care  
Ian Williams – RHM Hazel Lodge  
Scott Lipa – RHM Brodrick House  
Helen Simmons - RHM Lansdowne Secure Unit  
Charlotte De Retuerto – RHM The Bungalow  
Beverly Moores – Strategic Lead for Children with Disabilities  
Chelsea Walsh – Senior Social Worker  
Peter Richards – Operations Manager LAC  
Chris Luke (observer) – Head of Social Work for Families, Kensington and Chelsea London Borough Council

### 51      MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JULY 2018

51.1    RESOLVED to agree as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2018.

### 52      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

52.1    Apologies were received from Sally Carnie, Mandy Lewis, Janet Fairless, Nicola Scott and Shirin White.

### 53      DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

53.1    There were none.

### 54      URGENT ITEMS

54.1    There were none.

### 55      EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

55.1    The Panel agreed to exclude the press and public for the next two agenda items on the basis that if they were present there would be disclosure to them of information considered to be exempt by virtue of Category 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to any individual.

56 OFSTED INSPECTION REPORTS FOR THE FOLLOWING: ACORNS, BRODRICK HOUSE, HAZEL LODGE AND HOMEFIELD COTTAGE

56.1 The Panel considered reports received from Ofsted on the following services:

- a) Acorns at Dorset Road
- b) Brodrick House
- c) Hazel Lodge; and
- d) Homefield Cottage

56.2 The Panel discussed the importance of prompt responses from Property Services to ensure that any physical damage to buildings is dealt with quickly.

56.3 The Panel welcomed the positive outcomes of the Ofsted reports and praised the hard work of staff.

56.4 RESOLVED: to note the reports.

57 CHILDREN'S HOME REGULATIONS 2015, REGULATION 44: INSPECTION REPORTS FOR THE PERIOD JUNE 2018 - SEPTEMBER 2018

57.1 The Panel considered Regulation 44 Reports for the period June 2018 to September 2018 for the following Children's Homes:

- a) Acorns at Dorset Road
- b) Brodrick House
- c) Hazel Lodge
- d) Homefield Cottage
- e) Lansdowne Secure Unit
- f) The Bungalow, Sorrell Drive

57.2 Each Registered Home Manager (RHM) gave a verbal update on activity at the home covering the period since the last Panel meeting.

57.3 The Panel discussed the challenges faced due to the diversity and range of young people's needs and the implications this can have on staff as well as the other young people at the homes. The Panel were advised that emergency admissions can often exacerbate disruption at the homes; but that staff are trained to minimise any disruption as much as possible.

57.4 The Panel discussed the reward systems in place for the young people in Children's Homes. This includes, for example, a reward for having a tidy bedroom. The Panel were informed of the positive effect such rewards can have and how it helps create a routine.

57.5 The Panel praised the hard work of the staff and RHMs within each of the homes.

57.6 RESOLVED: to note the reports.

58 ANY OTHER EXEMPT ITEMS CONSIDERED URGENT BY THE CHAIR.

58.1 There were none.

59 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S SERVICES - 1  
APRIL 2017 - 31 MARCH 2018

59.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on the annual performance of the Looked After Children's Service for 2017-18.

59.2 The Panel were informed that, in line with a national trend, the numbers of LAC in East Sussex are increasing. This increase is being caused by a range of factors, including more children coming into the service and fewer leaving. A change in policy of no longer using bed and breakfasts for 16/17 year olds which is also having an impact as these young people are now being treated as LAC. The Panel were also informed of the improved practice on both neglect and responses to exploitation.

59.3 The Panel discussed the issue of missing children. They were advised that in the last year 54 LAC went missing with 32 missing more than once. The Panel were advised that there is joint working with the police who can assist with locating the missing children and that the majority of young people are missing for short periods of time.

59.4 RESOLVED: to note the report.

60 UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN UPDATE

60.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on the current situation in East Sussex with regards to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC).

60.2 Liz Rugg, Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care, informed the Panel that a specialist UASC service has been formed within the Through Care Service (TCS) so as to focus on this area. The Panel were informed that that this new service will be fully up and running by the end of November 2018.

60.3 The Panel discussed the challenges of finding suitable accommodation for the UASC. The Panel were informed that all UASC under the age of 16 were placed in Foster placements and those over 16 were placed in supported lodgings or supported accommodation.

60.4 RESOLVED: to note the report.

61 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) STATISTICS

61.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on Looked After Children (LAC) statistics.

61.2 The Panel were informed that although there has been a rise over the last quarter East Sussex is still just below the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) expected rate.

61.3 RESOLVED: to note the report.

62 ANY OTHER NON-EXEMPT ITEMS CONSIDERED URGENT BY THE CHAIR.

62.1 There were none.

The meeting ended at 11.40 am.



Committee:	<b>Corporate Parenting Panel</b>
Date:	<b>25 January 2019</b>
Title of Report:	<b>Looked After Children (LAC) Statistics</b>
By:	<b>Director of Children's Services</b>
Purpose of Report:	<b>To update the Panel on changes in the last quarter</b>

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to comment on and note the report.**

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### **1. Background and supporting information**

1.1 Services for LAC are predominantly funded from the Children's Services base budget with some additional smaller funding streams supporting specific activity e.g. Virtual School activity from the Pupil Premium Grant.

1.2 The past quarter has continued to see sustained pressure on the system and at the end of December ESCC had 615 children in care, a reduction of 2 over the quarter. December can be an anomalous month however because essentially the Christmas period limits activity in the teams and in Court.

1.3 A total of 425 children were in foster care at the end of December, with 86 of those children in agency placements, a rise of 1 over the quarter. In addition we have 47 young people in supported housing options, homes or hostels. 15 children were placed for adoption. 3 children were placed with foster carers who are also approved adopters under the Fostering for Adoption pathway.

1.4 The number of children with kinship carers now stands at 59, some of whom have been placed with family members at the direction of a judge or have remained at home during proceedings, again at the direction of a judge.

1.5 The number of children placed at home with their parents whilst subject to a final legal order has stayed stable at 21. Planning for placements of this sort is always monitored rigorously in order to mitigate any risk factors and agreement to begin or end a placement with parents is given at a senior level.

1.6 At the end of the quarter 35 children were placed in residential placements, a rise of 1 over the period. Staff continue to make every effort to place children in house and to negotiate costs with the agency provider where this is not possible.

1.7 At the end of the quarter 2 ESCC children were secured at Lansdowne; both in the context of sexual exploitation. Exit planning is underway for both.

1.8 We have had no new remands to custody during this quarter and, at the end of December there were no young people still on remand and awaiting sentencing.

1.9 Overall the numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people has seen an increase of 12 to 38 over this quarter due to a combination of transfers of young people via the dispersal scheme and spontaneous arrivals in the County.

1.10 The numbers of children subject to Child Arrangement/Residence Orders has stayed stable at 335 and 446 children were subject to Special Guardianship Orders, a rise of 3 over the quarter.

1.11 During Q3 1 complaint was received from a 12 year old child in one of the ESCC residential homes. The complaints form was found in her bedroom after she had moved to foster care. On the form she wrote that she did not want to move and that she didn't like the proposed foster carers. Although her worries about moving were discussed with her, the complaint itself was not because staff were unaware that she had completed the form. There was regular outreach from the home to this child initially to help her settle and there will be regular visits from her social worker going forward. She has settled well in her new placement and it would not be helpful to her to explore this now.

## **2. Conclusion**

2.1 Pressure on the system continues, driven by the numbers of and costs for children. Continued close oversight will be maintained.

2.2 There was one complaint from one of our LAC about moving from her residential placement to a foster carer. The complaint has not been explored with her but appears to be more about being fearful of the move rather than critical of staff in the home. The child has settled well in her new placement and it seems proportionate to consider the matter to be resolved.

### **STUART GALLIMORE** **Director of Children's Services**

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Local Members: All

#### **APPENDICES:**

Appendix 1 - Children's Services LAC Summary between 01/01/2018 and 31/12/2018

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None



# Children's Services LAC Summary between 01/01/2018 and 31/12/2018

Placement Type	Jan 18	Feb 18	Mar 18	Apr 18	May 18	Jun 18	Jul 18	Aug 18	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18
A3 - Placed for adoption with consent (under section 19 of the 2002 Act) with current foster carer	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1				
A4 - Placed for adoption with consent (under section 19 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer	8	7	7	5	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
A5 - Placed for adoption with placement order (under section 21 of the 2002 Act) with current foster carer	1	1	3	3	3	1	3	4	4	4	4	4
A6 - Placed for adoption with placement order (under section 21 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer	11	14	14	15	14	14	13	12	13	12	10	8
H5 - Residential accommodation	16	24	25	28	26	31	30	37	34	32	33	35
K1 - Secure unit	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1		2	2
K2 - Homes and Hostels	49	50	50	49	49	48	49	48	46	45	47	47
P1 - Placed with own parents	19	19	21	21	21	18	20	20	21	24	22	21
P2 - Independent living	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	3	2	1	2	2
P2 - NHS/Health Trust	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
R5 - Young Offender Institution or prison	3	5	4	2	2							
S1 - All Residential schools	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	5
U1 - Foster placement with relative or friend- long term fostering	11	11	11	11	10	9	9	9	9	9	10	9
U3 - Foster placement with relative or friend- not long term or FFA	38	35	34	35	34	39	43	53	50	54	52	50
U4 - Placement with other foster carer- long term fostering	116	114	114	113	113	113	112	109	106	103	100	98
U5 - Placement with other foster carer who is also an approved adopter- FFA	3	4	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
U6 - Placement with other foster carer - not long term or FFA	285	289	304	304	313	308	307	313	318	321	327	327
Total	574	587	602	600	603	597	601	622	617	617	620	615

Immigration Status	Jan 18	Feb 18	Mar 18	Apr 18	May 18	Jun 18	Jul 18	Aug 18	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18
British Citizen	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1
Discretionary Leave to Remain in the UK to 18 (DLR)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2
DLR to 18th Birthday, extension applied for	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Exceptional Leave to Remain in the UK (ELR)	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1			
Humanitarian Protection applied for under ECHR	1	1	1	1	1							
Refugee Status	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	5
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child	11	11	11	12	14	11	12	18	17	17	29	29

Legal Status	Jan 18	Feb 18	Mar 18	Apr 18	May 18	Jun 18	Jul 18	Aug 18	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18
Child Arrangements Order/ResidenceOrder S8(1)CA'89	331	331	333	333	333	334	333	334	335	335	335	335
Special Guardianship Order S14A CA 89	433	436	437	438	438	439	441	442	443	445	446	446

**Report to:** Corporate Parenting Panel

**Date of meeting:** 25 January 2019

**By:** East Sussex Foster Care Association

**Title:** Annual Report of the East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA)

**Purpose:** To inform the panel of the Annual Report of the ESFCA

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**RECOMMENDATION:** The Panel is recommended to comment on and note the Annual Report

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## **1 Background**

1.1 East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA) is an independent charity. It was launched in March 1993 in a direct response to the needs of the children/young people in public care across the county and the demands this place on their foster families.

Since its introduction, carers have designed a range of support, advice, advocacy, activities and training services for their fellow carers, families and the children in foster care throughout East Sussex.

## **2 Supporting information**

2.1 The Annual Report of the East Sussex Foster Care Association 2017/18 is attached at Appendix 1.

2.2 The East Sussex Foster Care Association November 2018 newsletter is attached at Appendix 2.

## **3 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

3.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to note the contents of the report.

**Susanne Beesley**  
**Chair of the East Sussex Foster Care Association**

Local Members: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: The Annual Report of the East Sussex Foster Care Association 2017/18

Appendix 2: The East Sussex Foster Care Association November 2018 newsletter

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## East Sussex Foster Care Association



## ANNUAL REPORT 17/18

Registered Charity No. 1092668

Company No. 04216137

Company Offices: 4th Floor, St Marks House,

14 Upperton Road, Eastbourne,

East Sussex BN21 1EP

Phone: 01323 747045



East Sussex Foster Care Association

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# Letter from the Chair

Dear Carers and friends of East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA)

Can you believe our charitable organisation, ESFCA, reaches 25 years of Supporting the fostering community of East Sussex County Council this year? It has to be time to celebrate!

The shape of ESFCA has constantly changed over the years, and last year the pace of change was on a whole new level with the numerous events, fundraising activities and community partnership opportunities we pursued. In the current economic climate and with increasing pressure placed upon fostering families, the committee is working hard at meeting these challenges to do our best for our children and families. Whilst our relationship with ESCC is important, East Sussex Foster Care Association is often confused with the Council. In fact we are an independent charitable entity which was started 25 years ago by foster carers to support their peers in every way possible from extending the arm of friendship, offering advice and advocacy and many other meaningful activities. Again, although the council supports us our activities are all undertaken from the funds we raise and carried out by volunteers.



What hasn't changed over the years is our commitment to the fostering community in East Sussex. It amazes me that so much can be achieved by our relatively small core group of committed volunteers; myself, 8 trustees (all foster carers), and a handful of fostering friends of the Committee together with 2 members of staff; Hannah, our Fundraising and Development Coordinator and Mandie our Administrator.

One area of development that should be mentioned is how we continue to reach out within East Sussex to add to our establish list of engaged partners. This includes our wonderful patron Jayne Torvill, and other supporters of our charity including many social workers and staff at the Council. Perhaps most excitingly of all are our partnerships with Sainsbury's Arndale Centre, as their chosen supported charity from May 2016- May 2018, as well as the Soroptimist's International, who you may have met at our Christmas Party and who donate the wonderful gifts for children to choose, wrap and offer to their foster carers.

Looking forward, it is essential that we acknowledge that our success is all about the people and networks that support us, sharing knowledge, networking and information to raise our charity status and profile.

If you are reading this can we assume that you are either a foster carer or someone with a connection to fostering? May I ask you if you could spare some time, be willing to share your Professional know-how, help at an event; hold an event (raffle, fundraising, sponsorship etc).

We welcome visitors and or new committee members to our monthly open meetings, held at 7:30pm on the second Monday of each month at Dunbar Drive, Hailsham. You can call our office anytime and speak to Hannah, Mandie or one of the trustees.

Do you have any ideas we could help you develop or contacts we could partnership work within East Sussex or ideas about other activities we might pursue or do you just want to find out more about what you could do in a voluntary capacity to support the work we do? Please let me know by dropping an email to [esfca.admin@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:esfca.admin@eastsussex.gov.uk) ESFCA always welcomes new interest and values all contributions. Please come and help us to make a positive difference for our members and young people.

**Susanne Beesley**

**ESFCA CHAIR**



## Structure

Chair Person: Susanne Beesley  
Vice Chair: Mark Thornborough  
Treasurer: Lysette Grosvenor

Trustees: Susanne Beesley, Mark Thornborough, Ann Holder MBE,  
Ru Petraitis-Williams, Tina Henderson, Lysette Grosvenor,  
Jane Hollobone, Anja Leeves, Sandra Maylam

Patron: Jayne Torvill, OBE

Trustees who stepped down prior to the end of the financial year: Chris Thornton

## Aims and objectives of the charity

The objectives of East Sussex Foster Care Association as set out in the Memorandum of Association are to promote all or any charitable purposes for the benefit of the community mainly but not exclusively within the County of East Sussex and in particular the advancement of the education of the public in matters relating to substitute care. In particular the education, training and support of foster carers and their families, the relief of Looked After Children, their Carers and their Carers' families by providing facilities and services in the interests of social welfare with a view to improving their conditions of life.

The Association is to support East Sussex Foster Carers and their families in their efforts to achieve the best possible outcomes for the children in their care by working in partnership with all appropriate statutory and voluntary agencies. It undertakes this task by offering a range of events, advocacy, training and support for the both the families and the children they care for. Its membership is comprised of East Sussex Local Authority registered Foster Carers and elected Trustees/Directors' from within that membership forms the managing group is formed by elected Trustees/Directors' from within that membership.



## Sunday Skate World and Cake Sale

Skate world in Eastbourne was the coolest place to be on Sunday 23rd July 2017. We had a closed event solely for Foster Families and we had the whole rink to ourselves for two hours. So we could really 'wear out' our young people with music and games.

The entertainment was non-stop with limbo poles, speed skating, jumping tricks, tag games and so on, all handled expertly by the Marshalls who were extremely young!

There seemed to be lots of novices holding on to each other and if one slipped over the whole group went down also! Some fabulous experts were also there for us all to admire, these grown-ups are just big kids showing off I think.



Many of our lovely Foster Carers made or bought cakes for the event and these we sold to raise funds for the association and we had a fantastic selection. We even sold the cakes left over at the end Of the event to the in-house café, who loved the cup cakes and the sponges.

We had face painting also which is always popular, a raffle and a lucky dip with lovely gifts, also we sold baby items to help round the event off. A small entrance contribution from all attendees plus the aforementioned activities made the whole event possible and all costs were covered making the whole event self-funded.

All had a great time.





## Organised and supported by Eastbourne Lions, 17th June

The Sun was shining and the forecast for the day was 85 degrees.

Our 81-seater coach arrived on time and we all climbed aboard with some very excited children and their foster carers. We were also joined by 3 members of Eastbourne Lions (Richard, David and Julie), who had kindly funded this event and helped us organise the day.

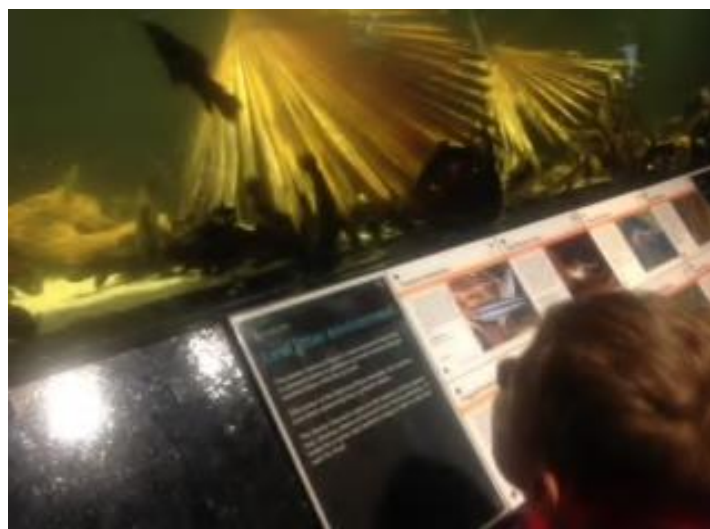
Sainsbury's in The Arndale Centre in Eastbourne had kindly agreed to provide a packed lunch for everybody. Their wonderful baker, Nigel turned up to meet the coach with lots of sandwiches, water, fruit, crisps, and much more. The highlight of the food was watching all the children munching their way through the delicious doughnuts Sainsbury's also kindly gave some sweets to all the children as well as boxes of the Lego stickers. As I travelled down the coach giving out the packets of stickers, the children could be heard trading and swapping with other foster children whom they had never met before. This was a marvelous way to start the day as it broke the ice and helped the children get to know each other and realise that there are other children in care, who have similar difficult early childhood experiences to them.

The coach driver was really lovely and very helpful. It took about two and a half hours each way travelling. There was such a lovely atmosphere on the coach and children could be heard giggling and laughing with each other. One lovely experience was as we entered near to the center of London; our coach was stopped on a roundabout for about 15 minutes. However, we were all in ore as we watched the soldiers on horseback and the bands as they progressed to trooping of the colour, to celebrate the queen's birthday. The bright colours were spectacular.



We arrived at the Zoo and our group was quickly ushered in and we went through security. The majority of the children had never been to a Zoo before and were busy planning their route around the Zoo trying to ensure they had enough time to do everything they could before the end of the day.

The zoo was really interesting with the children having a fun new experience. Tigers, Lions, Butterflies, Penguins, Camels and the Bug house were very memorable. One child spent hours in the large aquarium watching with amazement the many variety of fish and sea creatures. We also witnessed children overcoming their fear of spiders as they attended a talk by the Zoo staff and they learnt more fascinating information about life of a spider. The Butterfly house was like a giant, long bouncy castle, with the most beautiful butterflies appearing before your eyes. The Gorillas were huge and many of the children had until today, no concept of their size. They watched as the families of gorillas played and took care of their young.



Everybody arrived back at the coach and was greeted by another bottle of water and more doughnuts. The children were tired but very happy and contented. The foster carers reported what a very special day the children had experienced.

When we arrived back in Eastbourne, the Lions left the coach first and each child got off the coach and thanked them for the lovely day and shared their favorite experience with them. The foster children were so grateful to have had such a special day and these will be positive memories that these children will carry and remember forever.



Thank you Eastbourne Lions for helping make our children's dreams come true. As one of my own foster children said as we tucked her up in bed the night before, 'if you were me, would tomorrow be the best day of your life'?

We can answer that for her, yes, she had a very special, happy day.



## Bluebell Walk 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> April 2017

ESFCA was invited to attend and run the cafe at  
The Arlington Bluebell Walk.



This event is a fantastic opportunity to see Bluebells at their best; you can choose to have a short, medium or long walk, meet other carers and general public or just have a nice snack! The ESFCA funds the food to go for sale in the cafe and carers give their delicious home baked cakes/ biscuits/ muffins to be sold. Many carers volunteered to help at the café, from preparing sandwiches, cooking, and washing-up to cleaning the venue at the end.

The venue also has a few "baby" animals so children can enjoy being close to them. The Blue Bell Farm allows us to have 2 days there and all profits from the café go to our children in care..

**THIS SHOULD  
NEVER BE  
A CHILD'S  
SUITCASE.**



No child (especially foster children) should have to face the distressing sight of having their belongings packed into black plastic bags, when being moved either from birth family or to new foster placements. Black plastic bags are designed for rubbish and not for children personal belongings.

We have a stock of luggage available to social workers and assessment teams and have already distributed over 200 suitcases to children that have had to be moved as an emergency or travelling to respite.

# CHRISTMAS PARTY 2017

Firstly, thank you so much to John Jackson Trust for donating £820 towards our annual East Sussex Foster Care Association Christmas party. It was a huge success and the feedback from adults and children who attended was extremely positive. We had both foster children and children who foster attend with a total of 128 children aged 2 months to 21 years of age!

It was held at the Kings Centre from 3-6pm on Sunday 10th December. We had a fantastic DJ who got all the children up dancing with various competitions and Santa popped along to give out presents to each of the children. Eastbourne Lions Club had kindly lent us the sleigh to put all the presents on and we had the Lewes and Eastbourne Soroptomist ladies attend and donate presents for the children to wrap up and give to their foster carers. This is such an important experience for the children who not only receive gifts themselves but experience the joy of giving. The children loved being able to have the opportunity to give something back to their carers. They were delighted at the recognition of their role as carers from outside of the world of fostering.

We held a raffle and cake sale as well as helium balloons for each of the children. There was face painting, cold buffet and Christmas decorations everywhere!

Watching the children's faces was a treat to behold. These Christmas parties, which have been running for nearly 25 years, provide some of the best lasting memories for our young people.

Christmas is an emotionally difficult time of year for our children who may be missing birth families or reminded of previous traumas and deprivation. The Christmas party offers fun and escapism for a few hours and enables the children to see that their own situation is not in isolation; lots of other children will be spending time away from birth families. The children that foster also appreciate the camaraderie the party offers since they will be sharing their parents, toys and home with vulnerable others. It benefits so many foster children's lives and they can take away fantastic fun and positive memories, thanks to you you have helped make this happen!!

There are some photos below, unfortunately due to the nature of our charity we are not allowed to share photographs of looked after children and hopefully these are enough to show you how much we appreciate your kind donation and how the money was used.



## PANTOMIME

On 6<sup>th</sup> January 2018, excited foster carers and looked after children, from East Sussex County Council (ESCC), met representatives from the East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA) outside the Devonshire Park Theatre Eastbourne to collect their tickets for the Pantomime. How wonderful it was for ESFCA to have the privilege to hand out 200 tickets to our fostering community greatly subsidised from the Greggs Foundation.

For some children this was their first experience of live theatre, many were about to see their first ever pantomime and some who had previous experience were anticipating the fun and gaiety that such entertainment brings. For all, it provided almost three hours of escapism. For looked-after- children, the festive season can be a challenging time. Being away from birth families, and often siblings, is emotive enough, but coupled with their previous life trauma experiences and the uncertainty of their futures, this type of treat is hugely beneficial. Pantomime lends itself to whole family entertainment. The looked- after-children can attend with their foster families and the birth, or adoptive children, of those families. It enables quality time together; as well as family bonding time. The looked-after-children get a sense they are not alone in their situation, since they see their peers also attending, however all the children have their looked-after status anonymised in the hub-bub of the environment and through the discretion of carers.

As the curtain rose the children, and adults, cheered. The story of Dick Whittington and his Cat unfolded



through verse, song, dance and humour. A brilliantly cast show with lots of colour and interaction to keep everyone engaged. It is such a great experience for a carer to introduce children to Pantomime banter, to heckling, sing-a-long and other Panto routines; oh yes it is!

During the performance there is a sector where some children are chosen to go on the stage. Lazy Jack (Tucker) asks the children their name, how old they are and who they are with. One young lady said proudly she was with her foster carer. It was notable that Tucker paused, reflected briefly and said 'that's wonderful'. How true this is with so many East Sussex families giving their love, time and attention to caring for some of the most vulnerable children in society.

As the families left the theatre there was a definitive buzz in the air and a skip in the step of the children. Building and reinforcing positive experiences and memories for looked after- children is one of the key motivations of ESFCA. With the funding from the Greggs Foundation, our aim became a reality and many children have an experience of fun and enlightenment that can never be taken from them.



## Urban Jump



The Hastings Round Table funded a party evening for over 20 of our older children. The evening started off with hot dogs, chips and a soft drink. A safety briefing followed then a 2 hour jump session ensued. The Activities included a jungle rope swing area, ball pits with trampolines and an array of and crash mats. The trampolines were a source of great fun added with music and a crazy light show the result was a great party vibe.





## Legoland with Merlin's Magic Wand

On Saturday 14th October 2017, 52 foster children and their carers made their way to Legoland in Windsor. This had been made possible by Merlin's magic Wand, who donated 50 tickets plus £200 towards the cost of the coach.

The aim of this trip was to offer foster Children, 10 years and under, the opportunity to have a fun day out and create positive childhood memories. We were also supported by Sainsburys at the Arndale Centre, Eastbourne who kindly provided packed lunches and drinks for everybody.

The coach left Eastbourne at 8am and there was great excitement on board. As we got closer to Windsor the noise and excitement of the children got louder and louder, The children had an amazing day and everybody was raving about their experience.

The sun shone and the ques were about 45 minutes per ride. So many of the children returned to the coach wearing their Legoland Driving License which they took great pride in obtaining. All had a fantastic time.





During 2017, ESFCA provided 3 PGL residential trips.

We took 57 LAC to either Windmill Hill or Little Canada on the Isle of Wight. Many social workers and managers joined us and this allowed the social workers and senior managers the opportunity to spend quality time with their LAC. Some of the highlights were the water fights where LAC and staff were able to soak their social workers and Peter Richards and Ade Sewell, also come in for some great shots with the water cannons and balloons. (Well done kids).

Then in October 17, ESFCA re-introduced our PGL for Children who Foster. We took 25 children and young people to Windmill Hill and foster carers and the fostering team supported this. The aim was to say THANK YOU and to acknowledge the support that our own birth, adopted and SGO children offer to the fostering service.

ESFCA is pleased to announce that we have already booked 3 residential for 2018. This has been made possible with the funding from Children In Need. The dates are:-

13 – 15th April for LAC aged 11 upwards at Windmill Hill

31st Aug – 2nd Sept for LAC aged 7 – 11 at Little Canada on Isle of Wight

26th – 28th Oct – Children and young people who foster, aged 7 – 18 at Windmill Hill



## Mallydams Wood

We had 4 families attend the Mallydams/RSPCA center for a one night residential. We had outdoor activities on Saturday afternoon and evening and also on Sunday up to 2pm (Nature Trails, Badger Watching, Sensory Trail) . It was a fantastic success. All families got stuck into it all and all carers contributed to food and mealtimes etc. It was truly a massive joint effort. A special mention goes to Carer Chris Burt who yet again went above and beyond with this activity. The only down side was the weather which was very wet but the children handled it well and it didn't stop them at all. Sophie our Mallydams leader was also fantastic. We are looking forward to doing this again hopefully in better weather.





## Family First Nights – July & August 2017

Summer 2018 marked the third season of our charity, East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA), working with Mousetrap Theatre projects to participate in their Family First Nights (FFN) programme.

Family First Nights is a unique opportunity for families with limited resources to enjoy a great London theatre production for just £6.00 a ticket. FFN works for disadvantaged families, young people with special needs and notably for us children in care.

From late July to late August, ESFCA families are able to access the best seats for a selection of top musicals, plays and other productions. A family is the close unit that supports the child and can consist of guardians and carers but **MUST** include young people between the ages of 3 and 17. Young people **MUST** make up half, if not more of the family group and fall within one of the eligible categories mentioned above.

The FFN project serves new families only. Since Mousetrap has limited resources they must ensure they serve as many new families each summer as possible. Therefore this opportunity may be taken one time only. Mousetrap keeps a data base of families who have benefited from the experience. Families who have/will take part in the programme will continue to be updated on other exciting theatre offers and special events throughout the year. Introducing our children to the Arts and giving them the opportunity to attend pre-show workshops, behind the stage tours, experience live theatre in the audience or even attend an autistic friendly performance.



## GOLF DAY—Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017

ESFCA had their first ever charity golf day on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017. It was a huge success with 80 people playing (20 teams of 4 people).

The day started at 7am with bacon butties and hot drinks, followed by a round of 9 holes. For lunch it was ham, egg and chips then golfers were back out in the afternoon playing another 9 holes. There was a presentation, prizes and a trophy for the winning team followed with a raffle early evening.

Our patron, Jayne Torvill came along to support the event and had photos and chatted with everyone. Even though the weather was wet and windy all golfers remained cheerful and we made a whopping £4451.28. Twelve local businesses supported the day and sponsored holes to represent their Businesses and the golf course was kindly donated by Ray Cruttenden (Owner of Lottbridge Golf Park).

Mike Jackson (Owner of Dizzy Piggy Catering) donated all the food and It was such a huge success ESFCA are going to make this an annual event. So dust off those clubs and we will see you on the fairway.





## INSPIRE 31st July—4th August 2017



During the summer break 2017 18 children aged 6-12 attend a 4 day workshop at St Mary's Magdalene in Bexhill. They learnt different dance routines, sung songs, played musical instruments, role play and performed at the end of the 4 days to family and friends.

The workshop was run by 2 trained and professional dance and drama teachers from St Richards Catholic College. It was a fun, inclusive and interactive opportunity for the children and all the feedback was positive, including "I had a fabulous time and have enjoyed every moment of it. I hope I can come back next year!" and "I made lots of new friends, thank you for being fabulous leaders and making the club fun!"

It was so encouraging to watch the children learn new skills and gain confidence. One young man didn't want to get up on stage and sing and dance on the first day, by the end performance he was at the front signing and dancing. All the children got on really well and some exchanged address and telephone numbers to stay in contact. Certificates were handed out at the end of the last day with their own unique recognition quote. We will definitely be having another Inspire in the near future as it was such a success!



## COOKERY COURSE

The cookery course was offered to foster and birth children which I thought made a lovely opportunity for children not to be segregated. I gained spaces and took my birth son and a friend's foster girl, both are 13 years old Oli our College instructor gave everyone 2 choices at each of the 3 sessions. This was great as it engaged cooks and helped him or her take ownership of their own recipe. I thought I would be sitting back and observing - Oh no, I was cooking too.

We made our own pasta and turned it into ravioli; we also made apple pie and choux pastry. Our team of cooks learned about putting different flavours together and weighing, measuring and cooking times using industrial ovens. Oli was very patient and calm which was really good, as teenagers can get a bit emotional when things are not going, as they want. The young cooks all took great pride in their recipes and were very complimentary of their fellow cooks' efforts.

I would highly recommend involving your children if the opportunity arises again.



## Intuitive Horse (Emma Johnson)



Intuitive horse provides Equine Assisted Personal Development through experiential learning

Children and their carers took part in this exciting project which help develop more meaningful relationships and help children and carers gain a deeper insight and understanding of themselves and horses, learn how to work with emotional awareness and a particular emphasis on learning how to quieten down the mind and 'be' in a present moment state.

## ESFCA Fundraising Dinner

On Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2017 ESFCA hosted a charity dinner night at Kings Restaurant, Sussex Downs College. There were 8 tables, 50 guests in total. The theme was “French Feast” as students of the college had recently been to France for work experience. The evening included canapes and a welcome drink on arrival, 3 course set meal, coffee and a raffle.

Kris Singh, professional close up magician attended and performed magic to each table, wowing his audience! The evening was a great success and after deductions we raised over £1809.





## Our Patron



We would like to thank Jayne Torvill OBE for her continued patronage and support for our Charity.

Once again Jayne has joined us on events throughout the year and has remained an advocate for our association. Jayne feels passionate about making a more positive difference to the lives of children and by attending our activities and fundraisers she has certainly helped raise the profile of the ESFCA.



## Support we provide to foster carers:-

- Monthly Surgeries:-

We offer a very successfully monthly surgery sessions for carers to discuss concerns or issues directly with the relevant senior manager of fostering and children's services. This fast track and direct face to face meetings helps solve problems quickly. Issues can be around a Child's school placement, contact, support and decision making. Foster Carers can book into the surgery and if they need additional support, a member of ESFCA will attend to support the foster carer. Foster carers have highly praised this service as giving them a voice and a direct opportunity to have open discussions with senior managers.

- Allegations and Standard of care support:-

Statistically, it is likely that a foster carer will have to face an allegation or standard of care issue during their fostering career. This can be a very lonely and isolating experience for carers. ESFCA recognises the need for fast and professional support during this time. ESFCA has produced an allegations pack which is given to foster carers at the time of an allegation. The pack provides step by step support and useful information that carers can digest when the time is right for them. ESFCA also holds a pot of money which can buy in independent support for a foster carer during a situation which is likely to affect their registration. Carers value the fact that this support is bought in via foster talk so all information is kept confidential and carers can feel supported by an outside agency.

- Lobbying for Foster Cares and Looked After Children:-

ESFCA works with both local and national government to support and raise awareness of fostering and all the associated issues. East Sussex County Council has built a positive and respectful relationship with ESFCA and we have been able to speak directly with County Councilors and local MPs to highlight issues associated with fostering and our foster children. ESFCA will continue to strive to get the very best support and services for the fostering community within ESFCA.

## SOCIAL WORKER

The ESFCA recognises the hard work of all social workers invest in the children's lives and foster carers lives and as a way of rewarding those who went above and beyond duties we presented Landy Mainwood-Smith as LAC SW and Ju Miroto as SSW with a trophy. The event took place at the Boship farm hotel and was also attended by Liz Rug the Assistant Director for Children's services



## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

- ☐ Now you know what we achieved, why not help us achieve more....
- ☐ Have you thought about becoming a volunteer, trustee or committee member?
- ☐ Support us to continue to support the looked after children and foster families registered with the ESCC.
- ☐ If you are a funder or grant giver why not support us to continue the work we do and enable us to reach more of the children and young people in looked after care within East Sussex.

*Please contact us if you are able to support us*

14 Upperton Road, Eastbourne,  
East Sussex BN21 1EP  
Phone: 01323 747045

## **Financial review**

Restricted funds comprise of monies donated and raised for a specific Project and the charity cannot expend these funds on activities other than those for which the money was specifically received.

East Sussex Foster Care Association has ongoing Designated funding from East Sussex County Council of £20,000 per annum, whilst it cannot be absolutely guaranteed year on year currently ensures staffing and associated costs in running the charity.

If the unfortunate situation arose due to budget restraints that the charity lost this funding, the Trustees have endeavored to keep contingency reserves which would allow the charity to continue to operate for one year, including running long standing events for the families we support such as a Christmas party and a Pantomime.

The charity has been in existence for 25 years and the Trustees are determined not to let changes in Local Authority funding effect the longevity of the charity. This time frame would allow the association time to apply for alternative funding, if the need ever arose. We can also access our reserves should the trustees wish to utilise any of the reserve fund.

The association also has restricted funding from ESCC of £10,000 per annum to support any Foster Carer facing an allegation whilst looking after foster children. This fund enables independent support for the Carers to see them through the process, which can sometimes involve a lengthy and complex investigation.

Many grants applied for are also restricted funding, to be used for the sole purpose of the original grant application. If there is a small balance left over from the project, we obtain permission from the organisation that gave the grant to move the remainder into a general fund.

We have also for a second year running been voted as Sainsbury's Arndale Centre Eastbourne, charity of the year and they have graciously supported us with a number of fundraising opportunities including quiz nights and raffles, bag packing and bucket collections, and a large donation from their plastic bag charge. Furthermore they have donated their time, gifts, vouchers, packed lunches and food and drink to many of our activities and projects.

We continue to hold stocks of new suitcases, donated from Tripp luggage and other providers, we aim to hold around 50 cases at any one time which are immediately available to specialist teams of Social Workers who can request these suitcases to assist any child that needs to move in an emergency from any location to another, enabling their personal belongings to be carefully packed and moved with them and never for their possessions to be put into bin bags or similar.

## Statement of financial activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2018

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2018 Total £	2017 Total £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>					
Donations		11,357		11,357	3,505
Core funding		20,000	-	20,000	20,000
Advocacy support		-	4,243	4,243	-
Subscriptions		1,380	-	1,380	-
Fundraising–Golf Meal Bluebell		9,778	-	9,778	4,699
Grants		200	17,500	17,700	21,112
Contributions towards events		456	6,681	7,137	-
Interest		20	-	20	8
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		43,192	28,423	71,616	49,324
<b>Resources expended</b>					
Conference Nov 18		1,184	-	1,184	-
Insurance		563	-	563	509
General running expenses		1,449	-	1,449	700
Inspire		959	-	959	632
Pantomime		-	1,768	1,768	1,863
Holiday project & PGL		-	17,814	17,814	6,326
Disability holiday		-	-	-	880
Day trips & Sibling Sunshine		1,029	-	1,029	5,116
Fundraising–Golf Meal Bluebell		2,157	-	2,157	-
Intuitive Horse		-	5,660	5,660	2,550
Advocacy support		-	2,396	2,396	4,293
Salaries & pensions		15,490	-	15,490	9,159
Christmas party		-	948	948	815
IT costs		-	-	-	252
Training		-	-	-	30
Accountants fees		1,573	-	1,573	1,688
<b>Total outgoing resources</b>		24,404	28,586	52,991	34,813
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year/</b>					
<b>Net income/(expenditure) for the year</b>		18,788	(163)	18,625	14,511
Transfers		-	-	-	-
Total funds brought forward		49,347	21,414	70,761	56,250
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		68,135	21,251	89,386	70,761



## Funders 2017-2018

The trustees and committee would like to thank the following funders for there support during this year:

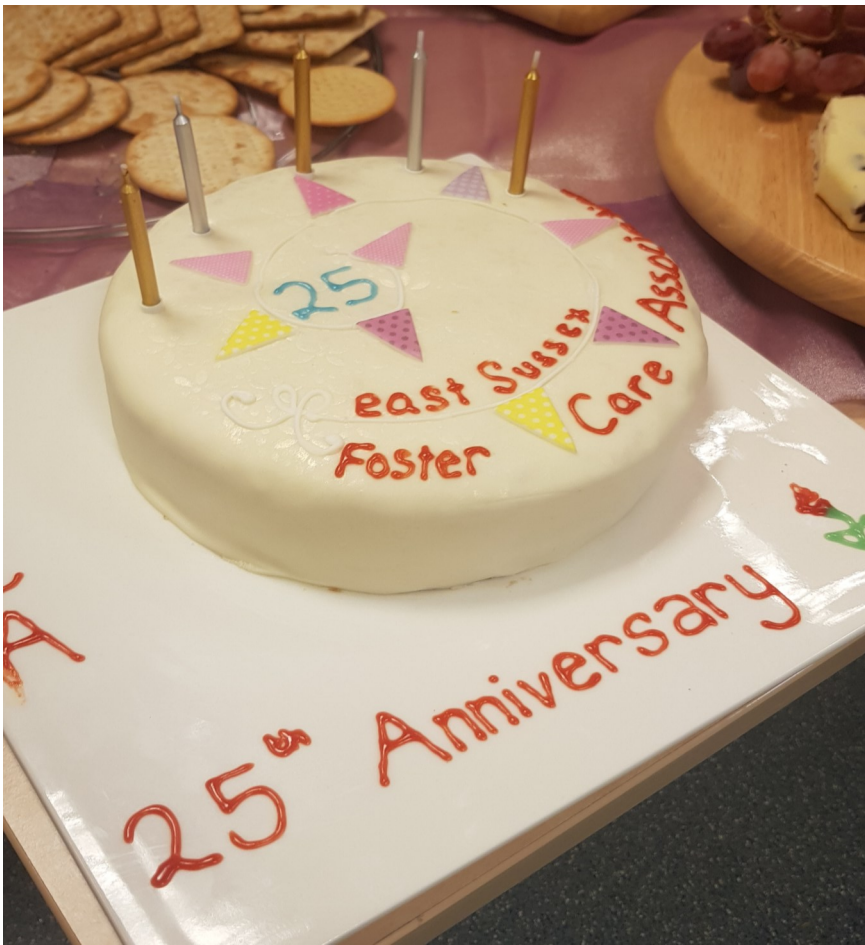
- ❖ East Sussex foster carers who make monthly donations to our charity
- ❖ East Sussex County Council
- ❖ Cllr Sylvia Tidy
- ❖ Children in Need
- ❖ Sussex Community Foundation
- ❖ Hooe Motor Club
- ❖ John Jackson Trust
- ❖ Happy Days Charity
- ❖ Hastings Round Table
- ❖ Merlins Magic Wand
- ❖ Sainsburys (Eastbourne Arndale Centre)
- ❖ Eastbourne Lions
- ❖ The Park Lane Group
- ❖ The Kings Centre
- ❖ The Lady Soroptimist International
- ❖ Brighton and Sussex University
- ❖ The Bloom Factory Eastbourne
- ❖ Tripp Luggage
- ❖ RSPCA Mallydams
- ❖ Ray Cruttenden at Lotterbridge golf club
- ❖ Mike Jackson at Dizzy Pig catering
- ❖ Kings restaurant
- ❖ Eastbourne Theatres
- ❖ Emma Ross from Intuitive horse
- ❖ Arlington Bluebell Walk and Farm Trail (John mCcutchan)
- ❖ Awards for all (National Lottery)
- ❖ Powdermills
- ❖ Skate world
- ❖ Family First Nights
- ❖ More Radio

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East Sussex Foster Care Association

NEWSLETTER



ESFCA

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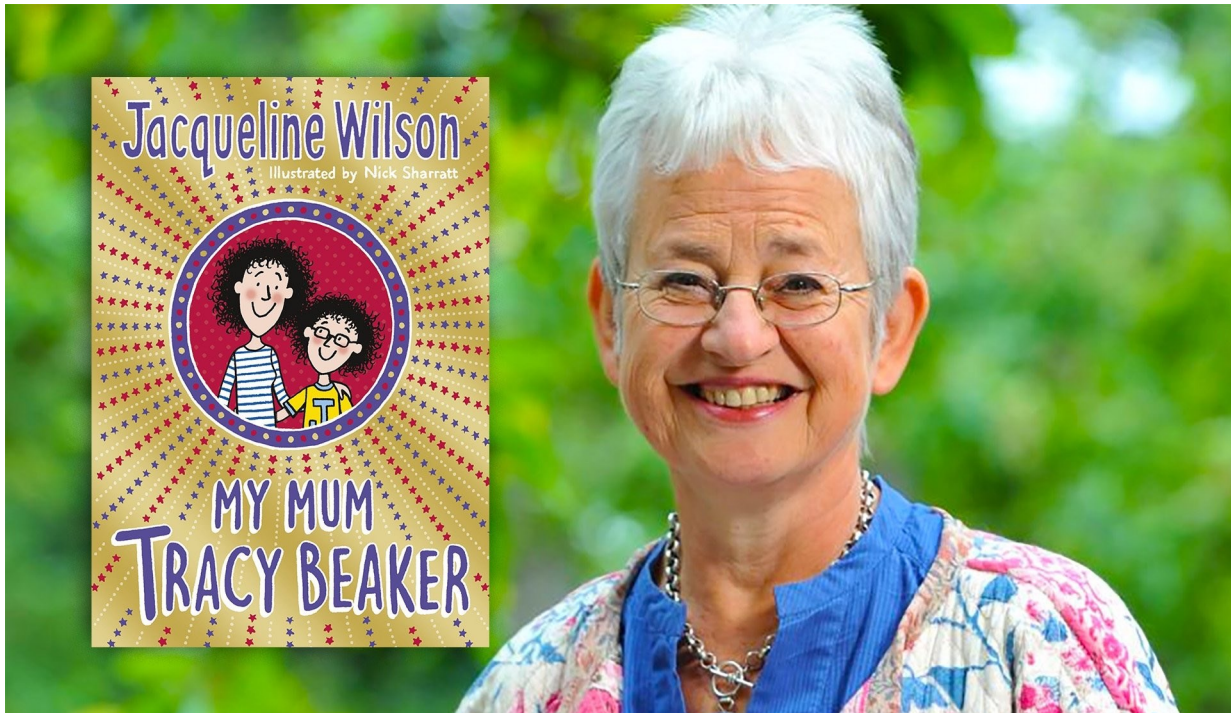
The East Sussex Foster Care Association reached 25 years of supporting the fostering community of East Sussex this year.

The shape of the ESFCA has constantly changed over the years and this year has been no exception with a whole new level of events, fund-raising activities and engagement with our community partnerships.

The ESFCA is often confused with the ESCC. In fact, we are an independent charitable entity which was started 25 years ago by foster carers to support their peers in every way possible. From extending the arm of friendship, offering advice and advocacy to many meaningful activities. Again, although we are supported by the council our activities are all undertaken from the funds we raise and carried out by volunteers.

The ESFCA committee meet at 7.30pm on the second Monday of each month at Dunbar Drive Children's Centre. You are welcome to attend and we are always looking out for new committee members to support and assist with the work that we do.

Please let us know if you would like to attend: [ESFCA.Admin@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:ESFCA.Admin@eastsussex.gov.uk)



We are extremely happy to welcome Dame Jacqueline Wilson to our Charity as a patron, where she joins Jayne Torvill OBE, who has been with us since 2012. They have both been supporting the ESFCA by helping raise our profile throughout East Sussex by attending various events throughout the year.

Dame Jacqueline Wilson (DBE,FRSL) has written more than 80 books over the course of her career. Four of her books appear in the BBC's "The Big Read" poll and she was the Poet Laureate between 2005 and 2007.

Dame Jacqueline says

"I'm so pleased and proud to be involved with the East Sussex Foster Care Association. I met up with Susanne and her colleagues by chance on a bluebell walk and we got on tremendously well. I've been involved with foster care associations ever since I wrote my book *The Story of Tracy Beaker* and I'm always impressed by the care and dedication of foster carers, but I think everyone at ESFCA are the absolute best. I love the sound of the residential breaks, the thoughtful provision of new luggage, the arts project, the library and the day trips - and what a brilliant idea to take the children to the X Factor Live Tour. I met a lot of the children at the Barn Dance - and what a delightful well-behaved bunch they are too. I've also met my fellow Patron Jayne Torvill - and can even boast I've danced with her (though not on ice!)."

"All power to ESFCA"



ESFCA are so very grateful to our esteemed patron Dame Jacqueline Wilson, the proprietors of **Much Ado Books** in Alfriston, Cate and Nash for their generosity. We were informed that proceeds from the book signing "My Mum Tracy Beaker" will come to the ESFCA to support the work that our children and families continue to benefit from.

Do pay a visit to this wonderful book treasury, you won't be disappointed.



During the summer children, of all abilities and disabilities had the chance to experience the physical and emotional benefits of horse riding . They gained confidence, learned new skills and made friends.

This opportunity was made available through Plumpton College, where the children were introduced to their fellow equine camp mates, took a tour of the yard, then met and greeted the horses. A tutor demonstrated the correct procedure for catching and tying up a horse and grooming it. Following this, they were allocated their own horse and supervised as made friends with and groomed their horse. After a mid- session break they were assisted with tacking up their horse for a half -hour riding lesson. As the finale of session they all had a picnic and talked about their adventure.



On the 6th of July the ESFCA celebrated 25 years in style by holding a Barn Dance at Blackstock Farm. The theme was the wild west and everybody dressed appropriately for dancing and a fantastic evening of merriment, and good 'ole fashioned fun!

Both of our patrons attended and joined in with the activities and the entertainment was provided by the fabulous Spinning Jenny Band, a local nine-piece ceilidh band and dance caller.

Our charity was delighted to have been approved by Mousetrap Theatre Projects to participate in their Family First Nights (FFN) programme during the summer.



Family First Nights is a unique opportunity for families, with limited resources to enjoy a great London theatre production for just £6.00 per ticket. Family First Nights aims to introduce the theatre to groups who may not otherwise have the opportunity to engage with it. Notably for us, that includes looked after children (LAC).



Once again as part of the Sibling Sunshine Project we took a group of families to Chessington Zoo courtesy of the Merlin Magic Wand foundation. Trips like this, (we also visit Thorpe Park and LEGOLAND on different trips) allow siblings that have been separated to join up again for the day and enjoy the park attractions as a family.

The Sibling Sunshine Project is one of the key activities for the ESFCA and truly projects the values the association holds close to its heart. For some children these trips are the only contact they will have with their siblings, and if you have ever been on one of these trips you will have already witnessed the magic they work on giving all the children some fantastic memories.

Another part of the Sibling Sunshine Project is the three-day day residential stay at Butlin's. This is funded by the National Lottery program Awards for All who also helps fund the theme park trips .



The aim of this project is to bring together siblings who have been separated in the care system and to give them the opportunity to spend quality time with their siblings to create positive childhood memories that they can carry and share into their adult life. We welcome this project being supported by social workers and foster carers who can attend the events with the LAC to support them.

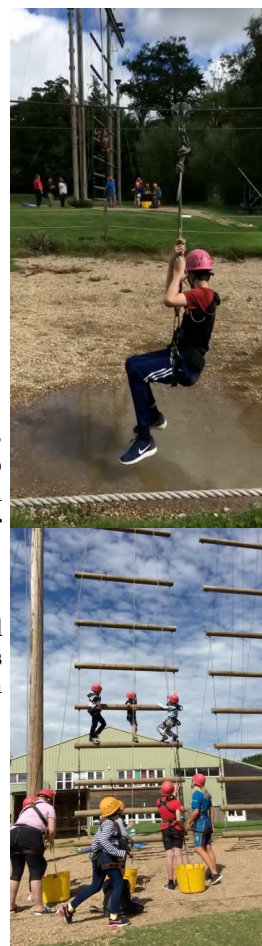


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Then in October, ESFCA re-introduced our PGL for Children who Foster. We took 25 children and young people to Windmill Hill, and foster carers and the fostering team supported this. The aim was to say THANK YOU and to acknowledge the support that our own birth, adopted and SGO children offer to the fostering service.

This has been made possible with the funding from Children In Need.



ESFCA had their 2nd charity golf day on Friday 12th October 2018. It was a huge success with over 60 people playing. This year the weather was sunny, which just added to the fantastic atmosphere created by Hannah, Ray and Mike along with all the competitors.

The day started at 8am with bacon butties and hot drinks, followed by a round of 9 holes. For lunch it was ham, egg and chips, then golfers were back out in the afternoon playing another 9 holes. There was a presentation, prizes and a trophy for the winning team followed with a raffle in the early evening.

The Golf Course was generously donated for the day by the owner of Lottbridge Golf Club, Ray Cruttenden, and the food was very kindly donated, prepared and served by Mike Jackson, owner of Dizzy Pig Catering. The association would like to say thank you for the co-operation and support to all of the staff at the Lottbridge Golf Club.







After a fantastic two years working with the Arndale Centre Sainsbury's, the ESFCA was thrilled to find out it had been voted the Hampden Park Sainsbury's and the Seaside Local Sainsbury's Charity of the year. This means the partnership with Sainsbury's will continue for another year.

The Hampden Park Sainsbury's has already generously donated welcome packs to all of the families going on the Butlin's trip this October (supplying tea, coffee and biscuits) as well as a very large supply of Lego trading cards and collector albums to be distributed to the children on activities throughout the year. They also held an awareness weekend where members of the ESFCA manned an information desk and raised money by holding a tombola where the general public could win signed copies of Dame Jacqueline Wilson's book "My Mum Tracy Beaker".

The Seaside Local also held an awareness weekend and again the ESFCA manned an information desk and joined in the fund raising by dressing up with a Halloween theme.



On the 27th of October the East Sussex Foster Care Association were privileged to be marshalling the 10K Beachy Head run alongside the marathon runners. Although so cold up on the Downs, the atmosphere was electric with the community spirit of the runners and spectators.

Many thanks to the ESFCA volunteers. Maybe next year we should run.....(maybe not).



# Stable connections through Intuitive Horses

ESFCA was delighted to receive National Lottery funding for our new “Stable Connections” Project. This project was intended for young people in care. The experience of building relationships with horses may help them with friendships and other social skills as well as potentially helping them in areas such as impulse control, empathy, calming skills and recognizing and working with feeling states. Carers were involved in the project and attended each session with the young person to help reinforce the work in-between sessions as well develop their bond together.



Like every child, looked-after children need and deserve to feel loved, cared for, and supported, and children entering the care system are no exception. At the very least these children and young people will be feeling the effects of emotional trauma. Many will have experienced some kind of neglect or abuse in its many guises and are very likely to be dealing with the aftermath of witnessing domestic violence. Unsurprisingly, these children often also feel a sense of abandonment and carry the burden of low self-esteem, which makes fitting in with their more fortunate peer group a struggle.



Alongside the importance of stability and building consistent and trusted relationships comes the important question of how best to reach these children. The East Sussex Foster Care Association want Looked-after Children to know that they can recover from past trauma and develop every talent, attitude, quality and characteristic needed to reach their potential, succeed in life and build an incredible future.

By working with the Intuitive Horse program young people and their carers have been astounded at just how effective it can be for a young person (watched by their carer) to develop an emotional connection to one of these beautiful animals. To others it may come naturally, but when young people have been hurt they can become fearful of making relationships and can struggle to be around others. Many foster carers reported that it was as if the horse understood the vulnerability of the young person and was drawn to them quite ‘intuitively’ as the name of this marvellous project suggests. Creating a bond over time with the horse has enabled many young people involved in this project to get in touch with their own feelings and start to rebuild their own self-worth as they begin to see the horse as a friend who accepts them unconditionally.



Susanne Beesley

Chair to East Sussex Foster Care Association



# ALLEGATIONS AND ADVOCACY SUPPORT

If you are a foster carer who is registered to ESCC and is subject to an allegation or a standard of care issue, this is just a reminder that ESFCA is here to help.

We have put together an information pack which should be given to you by your SSW at the point you are told about an allegation or a standard of care issue. If you don't receive this, please ask the fostering team to get a pack to you. It contains lots of information about the process and can point you toward support.

In addition, ESFCA has funds that can be used to provide foster carers with independent support whilst they are going through this difficult process. The support is free and completely confidential.

If you are subject to an allegation or a standard of care complaint, please contact ESFCA anytime on 01323 747045. If we don't answer the phone, please leave a message and we will get back to you asap. We will put you in touch with an organisation that can provide you with free, independent support. This service is completely confidential.

	<b>'independent support'</b>	
	<b>free independent legal advice</b>	

**THIS SHOULD  
NEVER BE  
A CHILD'S  
SUITCASE.**



No child (especially a foster child) should have to face the distressing sight of having their belongings packed into black plastic bags when being moved either from their birth family or to new foster placements. Black plastic bags are designed for rubbish and not for children's personal belongings.

We have a stock of luggage available to social workers and assessment teams and have already distributed over 200 suitcases to children that have had to be moved on an emergency or respite basis.

## Committee Meetings

All members are welcome to our committee meetings on the second Monday of each month at Dunbar Drive, Hailsham. We offer a warm welcome to everyone. It's a great way to become involved and meet your fellow foster carers. Please let us know if you would like to attend.

If you'd like to hold a sponsored event, make a donation in lieu of presents, or if you are involved with a group who'd like to support a small local charity, please do let us know.

East Sussex Foster Care Association is grateful for all the funds we receive and every amount – no matter how small – helps us continue our work. As a registered charity we rely on fundraising to put on all the events we run.



8 of the Trustees (left –right) Lysette (Treasurer), Jane, Anja, Tina, Susanne (Chair), Mark (vice Chair), Ann (MBE) and Ru



ESFCA  
4th Floor  
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14 Upperton Road

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Charity No: 1092668

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