

To Consultees

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SQ

Date: 3 June 2025

CONSULTATION ON DRAFT NORTHERN IRELAND FOSTERING SERVICES MINIMUM STANDARDS

I am writing to inform you that a consultation exercise has been launched by the Minister for Health in respect of draft Northern Ireland Fostering Services Minimum Standards.

The consultation invites views on the proposed new Minimum Standards applicable to the provision of fostering services in Northern Ireland and will apply to all fostering service providers, in both the statutory, and voluntary and community sectors. The Minimum Standards, together with The Foster Placement and Fostering Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025 (when made), will form the basis of the new assessment framework for fostering services. The Minimum Standards have been developed to align with the requirements of the new 2025 regulations and are the minimum provisions below which no provider is expected to deliver.

Extensive consultation has already taken place in the development of the new Minimum Standards. A working group was created to work collaboratively in the development of the new Minimum Standards and the Department also undertook engagement with wider groups of foster parents and foster children.

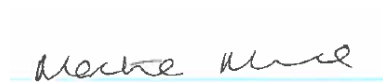
The consultation package, including the response questionnaire, can be accessed at the following link when the consultation goes live on **9th June 2025**:

<https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/doh-1/consultation-on-fostering-services-min-standards>

If you require any assistance, please email lookedafterchildren@health-ni.gov.uk or telephone 02890 520521. Responses should be completed and submitted on-line using the above link by **7th September 2025**.

Thank you in anticipation for taking the time to consider these important draft Northern Ireland Fostering Services Minimum Standards.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martina Moore', is positioned above a light blue horizontal line.

Martina Moore

Director of Family and Children's Policy