

Fostering and Residential Child Care Consortia as at 6th September 2016

Region	Description	Members	Resource Contribution	Contract Description	Monitoring	Contact Details
North East	NE7 – Independent Foster Care Agencies Framework	7: Newcastle Durham Gateshead North Tyneside Northumberland South Tyneside Sunderland	No financial contribution, but time and officer hours. What is expected is detailed in the governance arrangements which give accountability.	Framework with 7 categories and no tiers. NE7 own terms & conditions apply. A 3 year framework contract with an option to extend for a year. 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2018(9)	Each authority is allocated 3 or 4 providers to monitor. Quarterly provider forum and annual monitoring visits are held. Lead local authority supports members with mediation between commissioner and provider where needed.	Becky Polito Commissioning and Procurement Lead Specialist, Social Care 0191 211 5877 becky.polito@newcastle.gov.uk
	NE6 – Residential Child Care Approved Providers List	7: Newcastle Durham (joined in 2016) Gateshead North Tyneside Northumberland South Tyneside Sunderland	Procured under Regional Collaborative protocols, NEPO lead on procurement and charge a fee for their services, split between the seven local authorities. Newcastle and Northumberland manage NEPO's performance on behalf of the seven local authorities.	This APL is for the individual placement of children into Ofsted registered children's residential homes for standard, solo/specialist and children with disabilities placements. Using an amended version of 2011 national contract. Operating 2013 – 2017, the APL opens approximately every 6 months for new provider applications.	Provider forums about 3 times a year. Annual monitoring visit and conversation with link local authority. Each authority has approximately 10 homes to visit, therefore, smaller local authorities are undertaking proportionately more monitoring.	Becky Polito Commissioning and Procurement Lead Specialist, Social Care 0191 211 5877 becky.polito@newcastle.gov.uk
	NE12+ - Framework for non-maintained and independent special school placements for SEN 0 – 25 years (Residential, boarder and day placements)	12: Newcastle Durham Gateshead North Tyneside Northumberland South Tyneside Sunderland Stockton Middlesbrough Darlington Redcar and Cleveland Hartlepool	Procured under Regional Collaborative protocols, Newcastle lead on procurement. No financial contribution, but time and officer hours. What is expected is detailed in the governance arrangements which give accountability.	Framework with 64 Lots and Bandings no tiers. NE12+ own terms & conditions apply. A 1 year framework contract with 2 x 6-months options to extend. 1st February 2016 – 31st January 2017(8)	Each local authority is allocated 3 or 4 providers to monitor. Quarterly provider forum and annual monitoring visits are held. Lead local authority supports members with mediation between commissioner and provider where needed.	Becky Polito Commissioning and Procurement Lead Specialist, Social Care 0191 211 5877 becky.polito@newcastle.gov.uk

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	Tees Valley - Independent Foster Care Agencies Framework	5: Hartlepool Darlington Middlesbrough Redcar and Cleveland Stockton on Tees	The work of contract monitoring and management is shared between the five members. There is no financial contribution, but the arrangements for managing and monitoring the contract are set out within the framework contract.	Framework contract from Jan 2014 – 2018 with no extension. For children aged 0 to 18 years, including mainstream services, 'staying put', mother and baby and remand placements. It has two tiers but no lots.		Katie Mitchelson katie.mitchelson@hartlepool.gov.uk
	Tees Valley – Residential Child Care	4: Darlington Hartlepool Middlesbrough Redcar and Cleveland	This is a relatively new consortium working under the umbrella of the Tees Valley Commissioning Group. Has a framework contract for residential child care including some which will offer with education.	The framework contract runs from April 2016 – 2018.	A shared approach across the participating authorities is anticipated, with common processes and recording systems. Darlington will lead the monitoring and contract management process and collate the information provided by the other participants.	Lynne Henderson Development and Commissioning Manager lynne.henderson@darlington.gov.uk
North West	Placements North West – overarching regional consortia for LAC	22: Tameside host PNW and all local authorities in the NW region are members.	Contributions are proportional to LAC numbers. Local authorities pay this regardless of whether or not they are part of a framework or not. Funded as a service more than for specific activities. There is wider support and intelligence that is provided. i.e. local authorities get benchmarking & monitoring info, expertise, input into national consultations etc.	Supports the development of the contracts that are used by the sub-regional consortia. The North West Strategic Leads for Safeguarding Vulnerable Children steer the work plan and agree priorities.	Each local authority is responsible for monitoring the providers it uses. PNW collates information and retains an overview of how each of the contracts operates.	Adrian Rocks Placements Northwest Manager 0789 117 1043 adrian.rocks@tameside.gov.uk

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	North West Fostering Framework	21: Manchester lead the consortium and all authorities in the region except Cumbria and Lancashire are members	Some funds received from PNW to undertake the procurement exercise and provide ongoing contract management for the duration of the contract.	Framework launched April 2014 on a 2 year plus 1 plus 1 basis. Standard and Enhanced lots. Divided into 3 age categories, each of which has 3 tiers.	As above	Lesley Hilton-Duncan , Head of Quality, Performance and Compliance lesley.hilton-duncan@manchester.gov.uk
	Greater Manchester Residential Child Care Framework	10: Trafford Bolton Bury Cheshire East Oldham Rochdale Salford Stockport Tameside Wigan	Some funds received from PNW to undertake the procurement exercise and provide ongoing contract management for the duration of the contract. Commissioning lead PNM Procurement lead is Stockport, Trafford and Rochdale (STaR) joint procurement hub	Framework launched April 2014 on a 2 year plus 1 plus 1 basis. Contract was awarded on a 60% quality and 40% cost basis. Four lots: standard residential - 3 tiers; therapeutic and specialist medical - 3 tiers; solo placements - 1 tier; and rural and complex - 1 tier.	As above	Adrian Rocks PNW Manager adrian.rocks@tameside.gov.uk Elizabeth McKenna STaR Procurement 0161 912 1616 / 07811983687 elizabeth.mckenna@star-procurement.gov.uk
	Merseyside Residential Child Care Framework	10: Wigan Cheshire East Cheshire West & Chester Halton Knowsley Liverpool Sefton St Helens Warrington Wirral	£4,000 received from PNW to undertake the procurement exercise and £1,000 per annum to provide ongoing contract management for the duration of the contract.	Framework launched April 2014 on a 2 year plus 1 plus 1 basis. Lots are based around varied cohorts of need: standard, complex, disabilities, short breaks. Each lot has different tiers which have been awarded on a 40% quality and 60% cost basis. Local authorities are expected to approach providers on one tier before moving on to the next.	There is a standard template for monitoring services and this is used by all participating local authorities. Although each local authority is responsible for monitoring the services it uses, there is recognition that this is resulting in some duplication of work.	

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Yorkshire and the Humber	White Rose Fostering Framework	11: Leeds Barnsley Bradford Calderdale Doncaster Kingston upon Hull Kirklees NE Lincolnshire Sheffield Wakefield York	Leeds City Council leads on procurement, but does not charge the other local authority members. Hence there is no central pot of money and resources are in kind – there is a commissioning group which allocates activities between members of the group e.g. developing the specification.	Framework contract with three lots: Standard; Solo Fostering; Parent and Child. Each Lot has three age bands 0 to 4, 5 to 10 and 11 to 18 years. There are three tiers with each lot. Covers all fostering services but add-ons can be purchased within the contract. Using an amended version of 2012 national contract. June 2016 – planning for a Retender in Summer 2016. Aim for new contract to start in Dec 2016.	Participating local authorities each monitor allocated providers using shared templates and share findings. Each local authority resources its own monitoring.	Rebecca Fenwick Commissioning Programme Manager Commissioning and Market Management Rebecca.Fenwick@leeds.gov.uk
	White Rose Residential Child Care Framework	10: Leeds Barnsley Bradford Calderdale Doncaster Kingston upon Hull Kirklees Rotherham Sheffield Wakefield	As above	Framework contract with four lots: Standard; Specialist; Specialist with education; and Parent and child. Using an amended version of 2012 national contract. Looking to extend until July 2017.	As above	Rebecca Fenwick Commissioning Programme Manager Commissioning and Market Management Rebecca.Fenwick@leeds.gov.uk

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East Midlands	East Midlands Regional Framework for Fostering, Residential Child Care and SEN	7: Northamptonshire Derby Derbyshire Nottingham City Nottinghamshire Rutland Leicestershire	Three monitoring staff based in Northants. They are paid for by a % split between the local authorities depending on their use of the framework. Plus development manager's post.	Framework contract covers residential care and fostering. Three lots for fostering with no divisions for age: Core; Enhanced; Complex. Two lots for residential care: Enhanced and Complex. Using an amended version of national fostering contract. Unsure about basis of residential contract. New framework started Feb 1st 2016 - 2020. Opens annually.	Participating local authorities centrally fund capacity for monitoring activity and share the findings. Posts are based in Northants.	Deborah Mahon Commissioning and Strategy Service Manager Children and Families - Quality and Performance 01604 367596 DMahon@northamptonshire.gov.uk
	Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Residential Child Care Partnership	2: Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire	Contributions of time from placement and commissioning team managers in each local authority. They shared the work, which is easier to manage with just two partners.	A joint procurement between Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City for two separate block contracts for children's residential care for 44 places. Three providers across the two contracts. All contracts started on 1st April 2015. Unsure of basis for terms and conditions.	The two local authorities monitor the contracts together unless the issue is a specific concern about one of the authority's children.	

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West Midlands	West Midlands Placements Database (WMPD) - overarching regional consortia for LAC	14: Improvement and Efficiency West Midlands (IEWM) host WMPD and all local authorities in the WM region are members of WMPD	IEWM funds a manager to co-ordinate and manage the commissioning process (from RIEP legacy funding). Each authority funded their own procurement activity but some funding provided by IEWM for additional costs incurred (for example financial checks).	IEWM provides a regional service i.e. supporting development of sub-regional contracts, information sharing, training, facilitating forums, consultations and events. Acts as channel for information to be passed between consortia and the ADCS. Under Review.	The WMPD manager co-ordinates, but different local authorities have different resource for monitoring. Commissioners meet up and will discuss provider performance. It is expected that each authority will be responsible for resolving any issues. However, if a provider has significant shortfalls, this is highlighted on the WMPD via an information sharing document.	
	West Midlands Fostering	14 Birmingham all local authorities in the WM region are members	Not clarified	A framework contract led by Birmingham City Council. The framework started on 4th April 2016 for a period of two years with an option to extend further for up to two years.		
	Solihull, Coventry & Warwickshire Fostering	3: Solihull Coventry Warwickshire		Framework contract covering a wide variety of fostering services. The new framework consists of lots and tiers and commenced on 1st May 2014. Have decided to extend for two years until 2018. Members - will go to this framework first and then refer to the West Midlands framework.	As above	

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	West Midlands Residential Child Care	14: Sandwell all local authorities in the WM region are members		Framework contract covering residential care and residential care with education. Based on size of home: solo, standard, complex, and specialist. Using an amended version of national contract for the framework and the national contract for spot purchases. Expires November 2017.	As above	Mandip S Chahal Procurement and Performance Manager Market Development and Commissioned Services 0121 569 2020 Mandip_SinghChahal@sandwell.gov.uk
Eastern Region	ER4 - Fostering	4: Suffolk Cambridgeshire Essex Thurrock	Suffolk is the lead and coordinates the Select Lists procurement process, however, each of the four participating councils has a role in the evaluation of the bids to share the work load. They jointly developed a common specification and requirements.	Foster Care Rolling Select List. Three levels of need: Limited support, standard and intensive. Also parent and child with assessment and parent and child without. Three tiers. The list is open once a year for new entrants to join. Using an amended version of national contract. Next review point in April 2017.	The procurement process establishes a select list for each of the participating councils, which is then contract managed by that council using a commonly agreed approach with shared responsibility regarding annual contract monitoring visits. Monitoring is done by each local authority monitoring their own providers using a common approach and sharing the findings.	
	Bedford and Luton & Central Bedfordshire Fostering	3: Luton Bedford Central Bedfordshire	Expected to tender this summer but as current framework will end in November, there may be a short period of spot purchasing.	The contract started on 1 November 2011 and was for three years plus two years extension - ending at the latest in Nov 2016. There are eighteen preferred providers on the framework, which has	Monitoring of the contract is shared by the three members with each leading for a number of providers and Luton providing overall coordination of the information from the	

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				no lots or tiers. The framework has standard and preferred providers with the same specification, but there are criteria for a placement to be classified as enhanced and these placements have different bands for pricing.	monitoring activity.	
London	London Care Services - overarching regional consortia for LAC	London Care Services (LCS) is hosted by London Councils and has 41 members - 33 London boroughs and 8 partner members other regions (Bucks, Essex, Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire, Milton Keynes, Peterborough, Slough, and Windsor and Maidenhead)	Each of the 41 local authorities pays an annual subscription of £5,800 (with exception of City of London that pays less). The development of sub-regional consortia has led to some local authorities questioning that they may be funding duplication of work.	Team evaluates applications and scrutinises fees before approving providers to join the LCS database which is accessed by participating local authorities. Providers have to agree to sign up to the London Model Contract developed by LCS. Five sub-regional consortia have developed and these lists / frameworks are utilised first before the wider LCS database is approached. Currently not accepting applications.	Undertake an annual fee review. Used to have a LCS Quality Monitoring role, but local authority subscriptions were reduced and this function was deleted. Plan for website to have a new function for providers to be able to upload location assessment, safeguarding, missing, quality of care review report and regulation 44s.	Cristina de Paiva Brooker Interim Team Manager, London Councils cristina.depaiva-brooker@londoncouncils.gov.uk
	North London Children's Efficiency Programme (NLCEP) - Fostering	5: Haringey Camden Enfield Hackney Islington	Local authorities pay £17,000 each to fund NLCEP. This funds both the SEN and LAC work. Includes facilitating shared training.	Have a select list for fostering with own contract. Will use LCS and London Model Contracts for foster care placements made off the select list and for residential placements.	Shared monitoring for select list. Each borough has about 5 each. All use same template. Recognises there is some duplication with LCS. Hosts provider forums and chairs joint meetings with providers.	Tim Parlow Senior LAC/SEN Category Manager 020 8489 1598 Tim.Parlow@haringey.gov.uk

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	East London Solutions - Fostering	6: Newham Barking and Dagenham Havering Redbridge Tower Hamlets Waltham Forest		Use NLCEP select list and the LCS database. Do not have own arrangement.	Each local authority monitors the provision is uses.	
	West London Alliance - Fostering	9: Hillingdon Barnet Brent Ealing (next lead) Hammersmith & Fulham Harrow Hounslow Kensington & Chelsea Westminster	Subscription from each local authority.	IFA framework based on the London Model contract but adapted for sub-regional use. West London Boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the City of Westminster are currently planning procurements for children's fostering, residential and independent and non-maintained special education services to take effect in 2017.	The consortium is working with local residential child care providers to share information on what is needed. As yet there is no plan to establish a framework and the Alliance continue to use the LCS database to make residential placements.	
	South East London consortia - Fostering	7: Lambeth Bexley Bromley Croydon Greenwich Merton Southwark	Group of local authorities work together, but no funding has been agreed for lead role.	Haven't tendered for any framework contracts. Are working together quite informally. Lambeth have a fostering framework but no other local authorities in group, which use LCS database.	No formal arrangements as yet.	

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	South West London consortia - Fostering	5: Richmond Kingston upon Thames Merton Sutton Wandsworth		An APL is used in addition to LCS database.		
South East	South Central - Fostering	11: Hampshire Bracknell Forest Oxfordshire Portsmouth Reading Slough Southampton Surrey West Berkshire Windsor & Maidenhead Wokingham	Local authorities pay on bed night usage for the infrastructure of the framework and coordination of monitoring. From April 2017 Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset will join the Framework and Hampshire will leave. Bournemouth will be the next lead.	Foster care placements including parent and child and disabled children but not short breaks for disabled children. Three lots: C & YP 0 to 4, 5 to 10 and 11+ years; parent and child; and disabled children. There are three tiers in each lot. The framework did not use the national contract. Contract extension agreed by all local authorities until March 2017.	Monitoring is co-ordinated by Hampshire. Each local authority conducts annual review of providers allocated to them and Hampshire collates KPIs.	Lin Clark IFA Project Manager 023 8083 208 Lin.Clark@southampton.gov.uk
	Cross Regional Project - Residential Child Care	6: Buckinghamshire Bracknell Forest Milton Keynes Oxfordshire Reading Hertfordshire	Costs shared across the 6 – with Bucks providing the service. Charge to each member based on bed allocation. Cash transfer involved of, roughly, £28K a year divided by 21 places. The partnership has enabled a better analysis of needs and market management. Long relationships within the partnership have enabled trust to develop.	20 residential child care places and a special EBD school with 24 places, 20 of which are directly linked to the residential child care places. School has 4 day student places. For KS3 and above children and YP. 11 to 18 yrs. Block contract for 5 years plus 3 years starting January 1st 2010 and now extended by two years to December 2017. Used predecessor of 2011 national contract.	Contract monitoring (by Bucks) monthly by tele conference and monthly for commissioners with quarterly meeting together with provider to look at activity and quality. Each local authority has a home to monitor twice a year and uses CCRAG forms B & C for assessment. Annual review of therapeutic provision by ICHA.	Simon Brown Head of Service, Children Care Services and Children in Care Commissioning 01296 387588 sibrown@buckscc.gov.uk

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	Mid Southern – SEN and Residential	11: Hampshire Bracknell Forest Buckinghamshire Isle of Wight Portsmouth Reading Slough Southampton Surrey Swindon Wiltshire	Allocation of costs to members is done proportionately as some local authorities are only in the consortium for some elements. If a local authority is in both elements then for a large council the cost is £8 to £9K a year and for a small council as low as £900 a year. The total cost of the contract management and monitoring is £38K, which is provided by Hants.	This framework has no lots or tiers and it is opened regularly to encourage new providers to develop services. The contract is for 2 years with an extension for 1 + and 1 + years from 1 October 2014. It is a looser, pilot arrangement and if it works the consortium will move to a tender which is more formal and for longer.		
	West Sussex, Brighton and Hove Partnership - Fostering, Residential Child Care and SEN	2: West Sussex and Brighton and Hove		This is a framework contract with annual opening to apply to join. IFA are procured at both tier 1 and tier 2, as well as residential children's services. There are no lots and no distance criteria and no age bands for IFA and no lots or tiers for residential services. The contract started on 1 November 2012 and is for 4 years with extensions 1+ 1+ and 1+. Part of South East Together and are reviewing the National Contracts	Each authority does their own monitoring and shares the results with the other. The local authorities focus their monitoring on where their children are placed rather than allocating providers to each. They meet regularly and allocate work on a short term basis. West Sussex holds the coordinated records of monitoring. Also quarterly forums which are open to all providers on the framework. All providers are engaged and encouraged to work together.	Amanda Brewis Contracts & Commissioning Manager 0330 222 3724/07872 420283 amanda.brewis@westsussex.gov.uk

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	Kent & Medway – Fostering	2: Kent and Medway	<p>There is a partnership agreement between the two local authorities and there are no money transfers between them.</p> <p>The partnership is currently undertaking a “diagnostics” in relation to future service options with a view to deciding what the Commissioning and Procurement Strategy will be post June 2017 when the current Framework is due to end.</p>	<p>This is a Framework contract, which is closed for a defined period of time and includes lots and tiers. There are three lots: standard; specialist; and complex. Each has age bands or categories. Tiers are allocated on price. However, the consortium has reviewed the framework, which began in 2013, after two years and is looking to remove the tiers.</p>	<p>Six monthly forums with all providers. Each authority monitors and contract monitors the providers they use although they do sometimes monitor for the other authority and sometimes jointly where this is agreed. The current resource is judged as just adequate for this task. They risk assess where to focus their monitoring effort.</p>	<p>Trevor Williams Commissioning Officer (Children), Strategic Commissioning 07919212036 trevor.williams@kent.gov.uk</p>
	West Sussex and Kent – DPS residential and specialist fostering for children with disabilities	2: West Sussex and Kent	<p>West Sussex established and procured the DPS, which started on 1 March 2012 and Kent joined as a partner on 1 May 2014.</p>	<p>It is a DPS with no lots or tiers and it is continuously open. The process for using the DPS is prescribed and both authorities adhere to it.</p>	<p>There is limited capacity to monitor the DPS. Monitoring is done on an as-needs basis and relies on Ofsted to monitor and make judgments, but they log concerns raised e.g. by parents, SWs etc. There is an annual contract compliance process and, based on this, the consortium monitors by exception. The lead for each provider is with Kent or West Sussex and each authority has their own system.</p>	<p>Amanda Brewis Contracts & Commissioning Manager 0330 222 3724/07872 420283 amanda.brewis@wessex.gov.uk</p>

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	South East Together	7: West Sussex Kent Brighton & Hove East Sussex Surrey Essex Medway	Phase 1 funded by DfE Innovation Programme. Partners to contribute an agreed fee each year to fund cost of procurement, legal and ongoing contract management and monitoring team.	Phase 2 - to procure a regional Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) in relation to placements for children in independent and non-maintained special schools, independently owned children's homes and foster care.	Proposed centralised contract management and monitoring team	Amanda Brewis Contracts & Commissioning Manager 0330 222 3724 amanda.brewis@wes tsussex.gov.uk
South West	Peninsula Fostering, Residential Child Care and SEN	5: Plymouth Devon Cornwall Somerset Torbay	Contributions to the consortium are proportional to LAC numbers (average £20k per annum), which funds procurement activity, coordination of monitoring and a regional manager who co-ordinates and manages the consortia.	2013 – 2017 No tiers, 4 lots. The consortia are currently in consultation with the sector regarding future arrangements.		Emma Crowther Commissioning Officer 01752304009 emma.crowther@plymouth.gov.uk Becky Meaton becky.meaton@plymouth.gov.uk
	Peninsula Fostering Cost and Volume	3: Plymouth Devon Torbay	No contributions made from Torbay or Devon Expires 2017.	Cost and volume contract with 7 providers who offer a discount based on overall spend rather than number of beds. Referrals are sent to these 7 providers first before being sent to other providers on the peninsula framework.		Emma Crowther Commissioning Officer 01752304009 emma.crowther@plymouth.gov.uk
	North Region South West – Fostering	10: Bristol Bath & NE Somerset Dorset Gloucestershire North Somerset South Gloucestershire Swindon Wiltshire	The lead local authority (currently Bristol) leads on commissioning and tender evaluation, but each local authority signs up to their own framework. There is no resource for ongoing management.	Framework contract closed for a period of time with tiers but no lots. Contract expires 2017 - Bath & NES will be the lead local authority on future consortia arrangements (2017 onwards) and are exploring the possibility of a DPS.	Monitoring is by each local authority of the providers they use with information shared within the consortia informally.	Harriet Andrew harriet.andrew@bristol.gov.uk

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	South West Residential Children’s Homes DPS	8: Bath & NE Somerset Bristol Dorset Gloucestershire North Somerset South Gloucestershire Swindon Wiltshire	Bath and North East Somerset led the commissioning and tender evaluation, but each local authority signs up to their own framework. Cost per local authority: £4,000	The DPS will be open at 6 monthly intervals to allow new entrants to the market place. 2014 – 2018. With an opportunity to extend.	Each local authority will sign its own framework agreement contract with each provider and then individually manage and monitor each provider they use. Information from monitoring is shared within the consortium.	Ian Tomlinson Commissioning Manager Children’s Health and Placements 01225 477878 Ian_Tomlinson@BAT HNES.GOV.UK
	South West Independent and Non Maintained Special Schools – Accredited Flexible Framework	2: Gloucestershire Bath and NE Somerset	Gloucestershire led		Each local authority will sign its own framework agreement contract with each provider and then individually manage and monitor each provider they use. Information from monitoring is shared within the consortium.	

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Cross Regional	CCRAG Partnership - Fostering and Residential Child Care	16: Hertfordshire Bath & NE Somerset Bedford Bristol Buckinghamshire Cambridgeshire Essex Gloucestershire Luton Milton Keynes North Somerset Peterborough South Gloucestershire Southend Thurrock Wiltshire	Members commit to working together to develop and implement effective and consistent working practices throughout the CCRAG partnership. Subscriptions for CCRAG for 2016/17 are £2,000 plus VAT. It is hosted by the Children and Young People's Commissioning Service in Hertfordshire County Council. Local Authorities on the steering group include Thurrock, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes, Essex, South Gloucestershire and Bristol.	The partnership maintains the CCRAG Providers' Database, which supports the sourcing, contracting, monitoring and annual fee negotiations for children's placements. It provides a set of managed information to support local authorities in making placement decisions and is a means for providers to offer themselves to the local authorities. Providers evidence Ofsted registration and grade, insurance and such like. The database holds quality assurance information from participating local authorities and there are expectations of what information providers will supply. Local authorities use the data base to undertake a search for a placement and then purchase directly from a provider; the purchase will be a spot purchase.	Monitoring is done by each local authority undertaking this for allocated providers. This is coordinated by Hertfordshire. CCRAG is not involved in facilitating or developing communication with providers, but there are quarterly forums with delegated decision making for CCRAG. In addition the steering group facilitates annual workshops for CCRAG members on recent initiatives, changes in policy and opportunities to share good practice.	Jacqueline Gear Senior Commissioning Manager 01438 843897 Jacqueline.Gear@herfordshire.gov.uk