



Foster Carers' Charter



What foster carers can expect from Family Fostering

Family Fostering's role

We provide our fostering families with a secure base within which they are equipped and enabled to provide safe, nurturing and loving homes to children and young people where they are valued, fully supported through their psychological recovery, enabled to build their resilience and realise their unique potential. To achieve this, we recruit, train and approve foster carers and deliver ongoing, bespoke support to them.

Family Fostering's commitment

You can expect from us:

1. Working in partnership
2. Information
3. Clarity about decisions
4. Support
5. Learning and development
6. Fair treatment
7. Communication and consultation

How this commitment will work in practice:

1 - Working in partnership

We recognise that foster carers have skills and expertise and make the biggest difference to the everyday lives of the children/young people in their care.

We will:

- Value your skills and expertise equally to those of other professionals;
- Recognise that you are the people who live with your foster children/young people every day and know them best;
- Include you in all meetings that affect you and the children/young people you care for;

- Ensure that our Service meets the standards set out in fostering regulations and guidance;
- Treat you without discrimination and respect you as a colleague;
- Respect confidentiality.

2 - Information

We know that information is vital in order for foster carers to provide care that meets their foster children/young peoples' needs.

We will:

- Give you all the information you need in order to care safely for your foster children/young people;
- Provide this information in writing prior to placement (except when there are emergency placements and it is not feasible to do so, when we will provide this information as soon as possible);
- Ensure that there is a placement plan drawn up in discussion with you and agreed with you in advance of placements (except in emergencies where this will be done as soon as possible);
- Provide you with information on all financial matters including tax, allowances and additional entitlements provide you with full details of all our policies and procedures.

3 - Clarity about decisions

We recognise that in order for foster children/young people to live a full family life foster carers must be able to make everyday decisions regarding them.

We will:

- Ensure that, wherever possible, you are able to make everyday decisions that mean that your fostered children/young people are not treated differently to their peers and can feel part of your family;
- Provide clarity about any decision you cannot take at the outset so that everyone understands who is responsible for what.

4 - Support

We recognise that fostering is an isolating and challenging task and appropriate and timely support makes all the difference to fostering families and the children/young people they care for.

We will:

- Respond positively to requests for additional support;
- Provide you with monthly supervision and weekly phone contact;
- Give you honest and open feedback;
- Provide you with access to 24-hour support from people with fostering expertise;
- Pay you allowances, expenses and fees in a timely manner;
- Pay fees that reflect the task;
- Provide you with access to support groups, where you and your family can find support and share experiences with other fostering families.

5 - Learning and development

We believe that foster carers must be enabled to access learning and development opportunities throughout their fostering career. This will ensure they have the skills and knowledge they need, and allow them to develop their practice in order that they can help transform the lives of the children/young people they foster.

We will:

- Provide you and your family with appropriate and relevant training by trainers who understand the fostering task;
- Provide you with other development opportunities which make the best use of your skills and expertise, such as mentoring or providing training or support.

6 - Fair treatment

We recognise that foster carers have a right to be treated fairly, no matter what the circumstances.

We will:

- Consult with you before changing terms and conditions;
- Ensure openness in all of our discussions and communications with you;
- Ensure that you are treated with respect, kept informed and provided with emotional support should you be subject to an allegation;
- Provide a framework for dealing with allegations and adhere to our agreed timescales;
- Ensure that you know the arrangements for the payment of fees and allowances in the event that you are not able to foster while the subject of an allegation.

7 - Communication and consultation

We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship.

We will:

- Facilitate regular communication between everyone within the Family Fostering Team.
- Ensure that we consult with you in a meaningful way on matters that affect you give you timely feedback from consultations.

What Family Fostering can expect from our Foster Carers

Foster carer's role

Foster carers are at the heart of Family Fostering. We are assessed, trained and supported to look after children and young people in a family environment, providing them with stability, care and an opportunity to grow and develop and to reach their potential.

Foster carers' commitment

You can expect from us:

1. Working in partnership
2. Respect for the child
3. Information
4. Learning, development and support
5. Communication and consultation.

How this commitment will work in practice:

1 - Working in partnership

We will demonstrate a high standard of care and conduct.

We will:

- Demonstrate our expertise and make use of our skills to the best of our ability
- Provide children/young people in our care with a positive experience of family life
- Attend meetings about the children and young people we care for
- Work with the agencies involved with each child/young person such as school, health and religious establishments
- Show a willingness to work with birth parents, wider family and people significant in each child/young person's life
- Meet the standards set out in fostering regulations and guidance and follow Family Fostering's policies and procedures
- Respect confidentiality.

2 - Respect for the child

Every child and young person should be respected as an individual and be supported in meeting their needs and achieving their aspirations and potential.

We will:

- Respect and promote each child/young person's religious, linguistic and cultural heritage
- Afford the same level of protection and care to each foster child/young person as we would our own child/young person in accordance with the national minimum standards
- Ensure that each child/young person has the right to make decisions regarding their own lives, as appropriate to their age and understanding.

3 - Information

We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship.

We will:

- Inform our Supervising Social Worker about changes in our household
- Inform our Supervising Social Worker about any difficulties that arise for us.

4 - Learning, development and support

We appreciate the importance of having access to learning and development opportunities throughout our fostering career. This will ensure we have the skills and knowledge we need, and allow us to develop our practice in order that we can help transform the lives of the children/young people we foster.

We will:

- Be prepared to develop our skills throughout our fostering career
- Attend relevant training

- Take up opportunities offered to us
- Let you know if we are unable to attend and contribute to support groups.

5 - Communication and consultation

We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship.

We will:

- Respond positively to consultations and discussion in order to inform the development of the Service
- Attend formal and informal events where an open forum takes place with directors, senior staff and other professionals employed or involved with the Service in order to promote dialogue and good working relationships

Signed

Date

Signed

Date
