



A Young Person's Guide

11-14

Hey,

Starting a new chapter in your life can feel overwhelming, especially when you are moving to a new home. It is important to know that you are not alone and this guide is here to help answer some of the big questions you may have around fostering and how we can help you with the next steps in your life. It is okay to feel nervous or even unsure about the changes happening and we want to make sure you understand who is around to help you through it.





Who is there for you

What is a foster family?

Family Fostering has foster families across Kent who help to look after young people who are not able to live with their birth families for many reasons.

We make sure that all our foster families are kind, caring, will listen to you and keep you safe. If you have any questions you can speak to anyone in our team below. This booklet is here to help answer some of your questions and we are all here for you.



Why am I moving to a Foster Family?

Sometimes, families go through difficult situations. Your birth family may need help, or maybe things just aren't safe enough for you to be with them right now. Moving to a foster family means that you will have extra people in your life to love and look after you and make sure you feel safe.

We know our foster families very well and soon you will too. They are trusted adults who want to be there to support young people just like you with all their needs. Living with a foster family does not mean you have done anything wrong, but we understand these changes come with questions, and we are here to listen and help answer them for you.

Your social worker will come to your new foster home with you and will support you to ask and answer any questions you or your foster family may have.

Your social worker will then speak with your foster parent/s supervising social worker, through family fostering who is there to support your foster parent/s and you through the changes happening and what might happen next.



My Family
Fostering
Social Worker

People involved in your care

Independent reviewing officer:

Also known as your IRO, will work with your social worker to make sure you are happy with how you are being cared for.

Local Authority Social Worker:

They make decisions in your best interests to help you be happy.

Supervising Family Social Worker (Family Fostering)

They all work together to support you

Share what you enjoy with us

We want to make sure you still enjoy doing things that make you happy. Can you tell us what it is you like to do/places you like to visit. (Cinema, Swimming Pool, etc)

[illegible]

Your Rights Are

- To know why you are looked after
- To be kept safe
- To stay in touch with your family
- To access education
- To receive pocket money and savings
- To have your voice heard
- To read your files at 18
- To have a healthy lifestyle



Home Agreements

Every family has different house rules, and your foster family will explain to you the rules they have to help keep everyone safe.

Your foster family will talk to you about bedtimes, meal times and routines in the home.

Your bedroom is your safe space and you can speak to your foster parents, family fostering, your social worker or your IRO about what you would like in your bedroom and if there are any agreements you would like to make.

Bedroom Safety and Checks

Your foster parents may need to enter your bedroom to check you and everything in your bedroom is safe and working as it should be.

If your foster family feels that you or things in your bedroom are not safe they will speak to you and work out how to make you feel safe again.

If you want to talk to anyone about any bedroom checks that are made you can speak to anyone in Family Fostering, your social worker, IRO or a trusted adult.



Technology

Your foster parent/s will be able to help you use technology and we ask them to check your phones, iPads or computer consoles you use regularly to make sure they are working well and you are happy with the devices and the games you play.

We know your devices are a big deal, it may feel like sometimes there are lots of rules around the devices you use and games you play, this is to make sure you are safe and so we can understand how to help you fix any problems that might come up.

Your foster family's role is to make you feel safe, sometimes they may have to say no to things you were allowed to do or say in your last home, they can explain to you why this might be.

If the agreements your foster family have are different to the ones in your home before it can take time to get used to, so please speak to anyone if you are struggling with any of the changes that are happening as we understand it can feel confusing.



Routines and Structure

Morning: Your foster family can help you get ready for your day ahead and will make sure you have had breakfast. Your day might be spent at school, home tutoring or activities.

School/activities: You will go to school or your educational support for the day, your foster family will make sure you have all you need, like lunch and equipment and plan to get you there and pick you up safely and on time.

After school: Depending on your foster family's plans or your after school activities you can have a snack and unwind from your day.

Evening: You will have an evening meal with your foster family and they can help you with your bedtime routine and preparing for the next day.

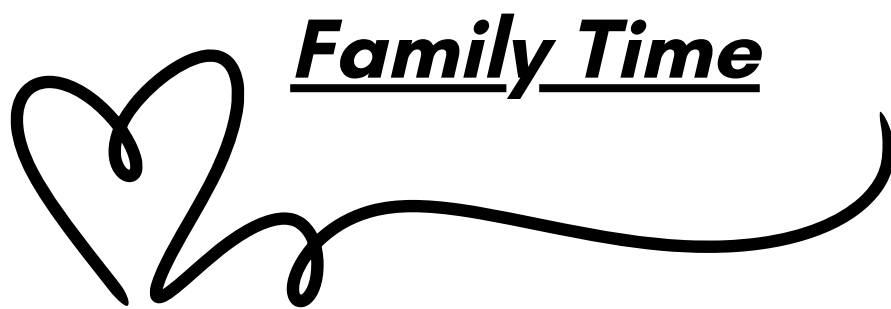
Your Religion and Beliefs

We understand that you may follow a religion or share different beliefs to your foster family. We will try our best to match you well with your new foster family even if you share different views they will be happy to support you to follow your beliefs. They can help you find places of worship, support your dietary needs and work with you to explore your new community.



Who's important to me





If you want to stay in touch with your family, your social worker and foster family will help you make this happen or explain to you the reasons it might be difficult. You might be able to visit, write letters or make phone calls. Your foster family are there to support you and understand that you may want to do this, they will support the choices you make.

Let's talk names and titles

When you meet your foster family you can talk to them about what you would like to call them and the home they are now sharing with you. We understand this can feel tricky and can bring up lots of different feelings and emotions. Some of our young people call their foster parents by their names and some call them 'mum' or 'dad'. This is completely up to you and you can talk to them about this, to make sure you feel comfortable. You might even change your mind over time and that is also okay.

Your voice is important

We want you to share your ideas, thoughts and feelings with us so we can understand who you are, what you like and what you don't like. You will be encouraged to speak in your care review meetings and at home to make sure you are happy with the decisions that are made about you and your life. We will also invite you to the young person's group we run at family fostering with other young people who live with our foster families, this is so you can share your experiences and ideas that will not just help you, but will also help other young people like you.

Meetings

You will notice that your foster parent/s will have lots of meetings, sometimes you will be involved in the meetings and sometimes you do not need to. There is lots of paperwork to fill in and forms to be completed, this is all done to make sure you are looked after properly and happy in your foster home. Some of the meetings will have names or nicknames, for example (CIC) Child in care review, or (LAC) Looked after child review. If you ever have any questions about the meetings or paper work speak to your social worker, foster parent/s or family fostering and we can help you to have a better understanding.

The meetings and paperwork will be about:

- Your foster home
- Your schooling
- Your health needs
- Your wellbeing
- Your family time
- All things relating to you and your life.

Who can attend your meetings?

- You
- Your Independent
Reviewing Officer (IRO)
- Your Social Worker
- Your Birth Family
- Your Foster Parent/s
- Your Family Fostering
Social Worker
- Your School



It is okay to not feel okay .

Alongside your move to your foster family, you may have had to move schools and make new friends. This can be exciting, but also feel scary and leave you with many questions that feel big and heavy in your mind.

Your foster family will understand. Try and speak to them about your wobbly moments and what it looks and feels like for you. You can use things to help explain how you are feeling if the words are tricky and maybe even have a 'safe' word that you can use with them if you feel overwhelmed or need help.

You are not alone

You may feel alone, but you're not.

We are here to help you meet other young people who live with foster families. We plan fun activities and come together as a big family to have fun.

We even have our young people's group 'The Loud and Proud Voices' that you are welcome to join. This is where some of our young people meet to socialise and share ideas to help us support everyone.



Fun with your Foster Family!

Plan a trip: Sit down with your foster family and talk about fun things you like to do, pick a date and enjoy!

Try a new hobby: Talk about things you like to do, or new things you like to try with your foster family.

Start a Journal: Writing things down can be a great way of helping you express yourself. Speak to your foster family about buying a journal and maybe even decorate it together.

Play games: Playing games together can be a great way to learn more about each other and have fun!

Money and Savings



Age of Child	Clothing Allowance (Weekly)	Pocket Money (Weekly)	Mobile top up Allowance Weekly	Birthday Allowance (Annually)	Festival Allowance (Annually)	Long term Savings (weekly)
0-4	£15.00	0	0	£120	£120	£5.00
5-10	£15.00	£5	0	£140	£140	£5.00
11-15	£20.00	£10.00	£2.50	£200	£200	£5.00
16 +	£20.00	£15.00	£2.50	£200	£200	£5.00

Together with your social worker and foster parent/s you can talk about your pocket money, savings and personal allowances for things like activities and clothes. Our family fostering team can also speak to you about budgeting and managing your own money as you get older. This is an important life skill and we are happy to help explore this with you.



My Foster Parent/s

Name:_____

Number:_____

Email:_____

My Independent Reviewing Officer

Name:_____

Number:_____

Email:_____

My Social Worker

Name:_____

Number:_____

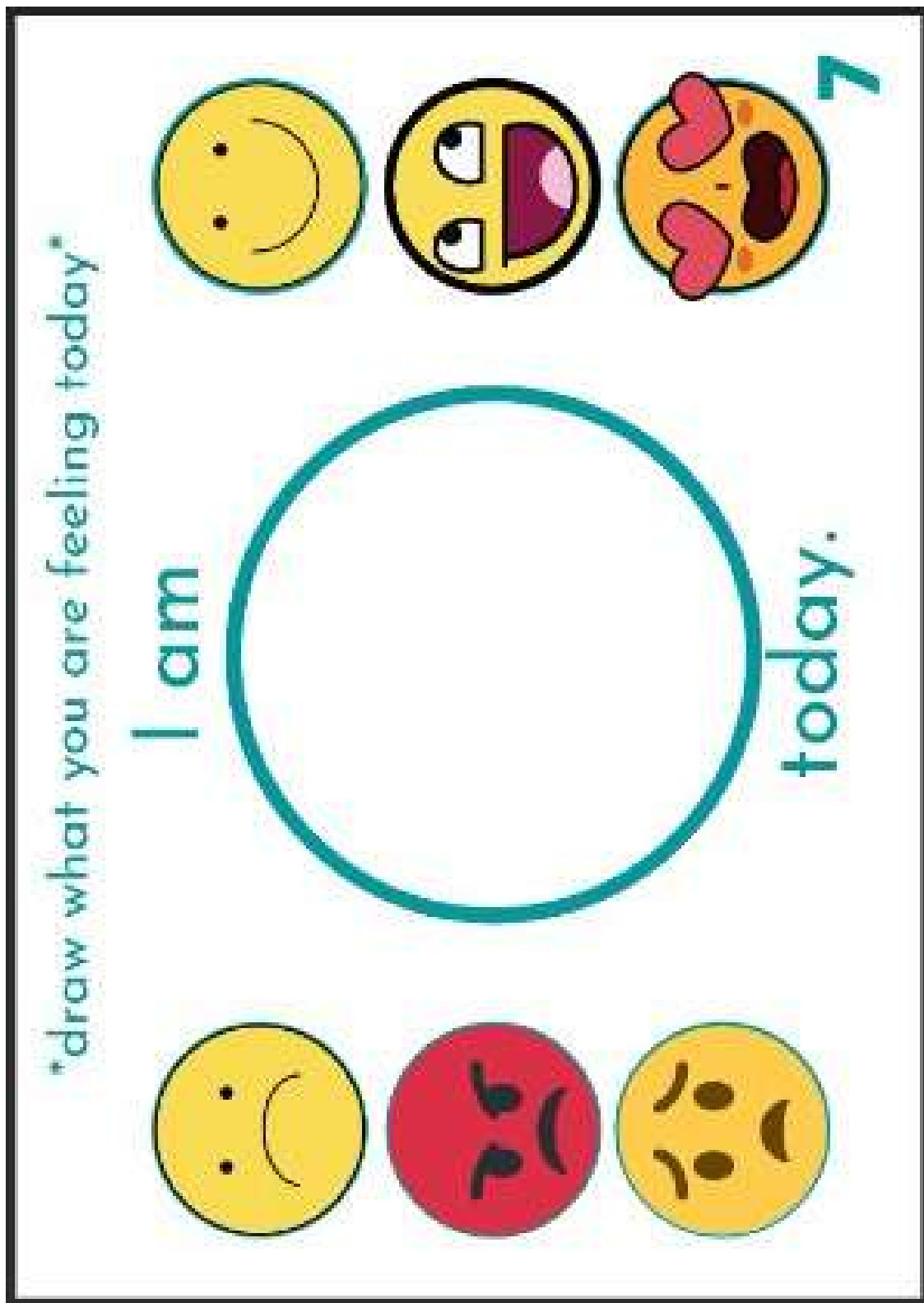
Email:_____

Family Fostering

Name:_____

Number:_____

Email:_____



You can cut this out and use it to help explain how you are feeling.

Just remember



You got this!



Take one step at a time



***You are important and your feelings
matter!***



***Your Foster Family, Family Fostering your
social worker and your IRO are here for
you!***



***We are great listeners and can help your
worries feel less heavy***



***Your voice is so important to us, please
share it.***



Complaints

Even though we care, we recognise that we may not always get it right.

If you feel like things may not be fair or you do not like how you have been treated you can speak to the trusted adults in your supporting network such as:

- Family Fostering
- Your Local Authority Social Worker
- Your IRO
- Your Teachers
- A trusted adult

What if I have a problem or I am unhappy?

We know that it's not easy moving in with a new family and we will do all we can to help make sure you feel safe, happy and well cared for. If you are worried about anything please let us know. We will always listen and try to help you.

Nikki Goldfinch – Registered Manager

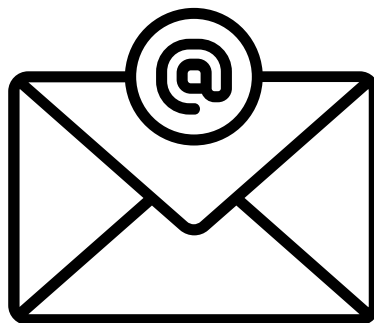
Tel : **07432 401 106**

Email: ***nikki.goldfinch@familyfostering.org***

Contact us at:

The Forge
Spratling Court Office Suites
Spratling Court Farm
Ramsgate
Kent
CT12 5AN

01843 598647



You can also talk to Ofsted who are in charge of all Fostering Services and follow up all complaints

Ofsted

Office for Standards in Education,

Children's Services & Skills

Piccadilly Gate,

Store Street, Manchester

M1 2WD

0300 123 1231 enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

www.ofsted.gov.uk

You can also contact –

Childline

0800 1111

NSPCC

0808 800 5000

help@NSPCC.org.uk

You can speak to Help at Hand as they offer advice and representation for children in care.

If you need assistance from Help at Hand visit
<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand/>

email:

help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

or freephone **0800 528 0731**



The Forge
Spratling Court Office Suites
Spratling Court Farm
Ramsgate
Kent
CT12 5AN
01843 598647

