

Transferring Handbook

When, why & how to switch foster agencies



fosteringpeople
let's change lives together

Consistently
Outstanding
since 2013



Thinking about switching to another fostering agency?

We know it's not an easy decision, but we're here to help. At Fostering People, we always make sure our foster parents feel valued, supported and part of the team.

The work you do as foster parents is incredible, so it's important you feel confident you're getting the very best from your fostering provider. If you're feeling unsupported, undervalued or aren't getting suitable, regular placements, it's probably time you thought about moving on.



When, why & how to transfer foster agencies

Choosing to transfer foster care provider isn't a decision you'll make overnight. There are many things to consider, and it can feel like a daunting change. Don't worry though. We're here to make everything as straightforward and simple as possible, arming you with the facts so you know what to expect and can make an informed choice. At the end of the day, you want to give vulnerable young people the happy childhoods they deserve, and you can only do this when you're fostering with an agency that's right for you.

**Here's everything you need to know
about switching foster care provider.**





Quick fact sheet – to transfer foster agencies

There are some common myths about switching foster agencies, so it's important you know the fact from fiction. Here are some quick truths about transferring to Fostering People.



You can transfer with a child in your care

Every case is reviewed individually, but if you're unsatisfied with your current provider, you shouldn't feel pressured to stay because you already have a child in your care. As long as all parties agree that transferring is the best thing to do for the child, you can continue fostering them when you transfer.

You can talk to different agencies without telling your current provider

You can enquire and speak to as many different fostering providers as you like without telling your current service. It's actually really important you do thorough research to ensure you find the right fit. It's only when you decide to apply that you need to send your notice of intent.

Transferring is simpler than you think

As an experienced foster parent, you'll be fast-tracked through the system. From start to finish, the process takes around 3 months, and your Form F is all done for you. Hopefully, this makes for a straightforward and stress-free process.

You won't lose out on money if you transfer

Your experience as a foster parent is very valuable, which is why we'll always aim to surpass or at the very least match your current fostering allowance.





When to consider switching agencies

Sometimes, foster parents have a gut instinct that their current provider isn't right for them, whereas other times, a specific incident or chain of events can cause people to consider leaving. Deciding to transfer is a personal choice, but if you're still a little unsure about when is the right time to leave, here are some key warning signs to watch out for:

When you're not getting enough support

This is the most common reason we see people transfer to us here at Fostering People. Children in the care system have suffered a lot of trauma, loss and confusion in their short lives, which as you know, can lead to emotional, behavioural or attachment difficulties. Due to the nature of your work and how important it is that these kids can overcome their personal challenges, your fostering agency should provide access to professional support whenever you need it. Day or night, rain or shine, they should help with any problem, concern or question you have. If you're not currently getting a high level of support, you should speak to other agencies about their support packages so you can draw some quick comparisons.

When the referrals are unsuitable or infrequent

The reason you became a foster parent in the first place is likely due to your passion for helping children in need. Unfortunately, not all fostering providers have a rigid matching process or strong relationships with local authorities to offer regular, suitable placements. If you're being referred young people that you aren't able to care for, or you're having to wait long periods in-between placements (which means you're also not getting paid), then it's time to consider switching.

When you don't feel part of the team

Like with all jobs and careers, you want to feel a sense of belonging. Having relationships with staff, social workers and fellow foster parents is incredibly important in creating a strong, collaborative culture. When this doesn't happen, it can be disheartening and you might feel somewhat distant from the fostering community. If you feel your current provider didn't take the time to get to know you when you first joined, you don't get much face-time with other foster families or you just get a sense you're a number on their system, you're probably not with the right foster care agency.



When you don't feel financially supported

Finances do play a big role in your decision to be a foster parent. After all, it's a rewarding but challenging career, so you deserve to be paid accordingly. While fostering allowances differ from agency to agency, and other services might mean more to you than getting the biggest income, you should definitely feel as though your financial rewards reflect all the hard work you do. Does your current fostering provider offer any other perks or benefits, such as days out and activities? Also, as an experienced foster parent, you could be earning more than you are now, so it's always worth enquiring.

When staff turnover is high

In every company, you will see people come and go, however when staff turnover is high, it could be a sign of deeper-rooted problems within your current agency. Perhaps your foster child's social worker keeps changing, or you're always speaking to someone new on the phone. Within foster care, consistent relationships are vital to a child's growth and development. Their lives have already been rife with instability, so you want to work with a foster care agency that is committed to building and maintaining solid, consistent relationships. Also, when staff retention is good, it often means people are happy not only in their role, but feel aligned to the core values and principles of the organisation.

**At Fostering People,
we're proud of our
staff stability rates.
47% of our team have
been with us for over
5 years and some as
long as 20 years!**



How to transfer to Fostering People

It's easier than you might think, and the process is largely the same. While we still need to carry out our own checks and references and undertake our own Form F assessment (as these are non-transferable), we're able to complete the process faster as we can transfer a lot of the information from when you first went through the process.

The transfer process is a lot quicker than when you first became a foster parent, taking approximately 3 months from start to finish

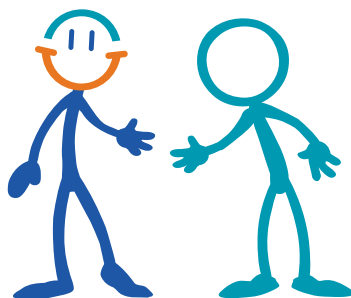


1 Enquiry

Send us an enquiry and one of our experts will get back to you.

It's a chance to ask any questions and for us to give you the information you need. Rest assured; we'll treat your enquiry with the strictest of confidence.

[Enquire Now](#)



2 Initial visit

If you're happy to proceed, we'll arrange an initial visit to get to know each other, discuss fees and walk you through the transfer process.

It's an opportunity to get a feel if we're the right agency for you.



3 Application and assessment

If you decide to apply to foster with us, it's at this point you have to let your current provider know you're considering a transfer. This is simply a notice of intent and is not your resignation notice.

Once you've applied and we've also got a copy of the notice of intent, we'll begin the assessment. A dedicated social worker will complete the Form F for you, capturing your existing skills and experienced you've gained through fostering so far.

4 Panel

As you've experienced before, once your Form F is complete, your assessment will be reviewed by our panel, who will then make a recommendation to our Agency Decision Maker.



5 Transfer

Once you're approved, you'll officially resign from your current provider and automatically be transferred to our service within a few weeks!



Transferring with a child in your care

The welfare of the child you're currently looking after will always be our main priority. That's why there are two key differences to the process if you're transferring with a child already in your care.

- When you send your notice of intent to your current provider, you also need to send this letter to the child's placing authority.
- There will be a protocol meeting within 28 days of the notice of intent being received. The meeting will involve yourself, the child's placing authority, your current fostering service and Fostering People. The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that transferring is in the child's best interest, that Fostering People can meet the child's needs and that transferring won't have a negative impact on their wellbeing or progress.



“The assessment was carried out by an independent social worker who was very thorough leaving no stone unturned, so when it came to the final panel there was little else for the panel to ask... If you are unhappy for any reason with your current agency and considering a transfer, then make the change; you will not be disappointed. You will have to undergo another assessment but you will be glad that you did.”

- Lisa and Martin, Fostering People foster parents who transferred from another IFA

Why transfer to Fostering People

When you join Fostering People, you'll be joining an agency with a local 'family feel' where you'll be an integral part of our community. We care about our foster parents, children and wider community immensely, and have worked hard over the years to build strong local networks of support that everybody can tap into. We're based around you, in your community. We share your experiences, and work alongside you to achieve the very best for children. This, combined with a very powerful fostering model and excellent training and benefits is what sets us apart from other independent fostering agencies.

We are an Ofsted rated 'Outstanding' agency across all areas of our work, and have been since 2013.



Lisa and Martin transferred to us after feeling unhappy with their previous independent fostering agency. Here's what they had to say about their experience of joining Fostering People.

“...we feel really valued as part of the Fostering People team, they regularly provide feedback and offer support, there are occasional treats like Christmas lunch and hampers, and we recently received a thank you card from our own social worker expressing his gratitude for the service we provide. These little things make the difference, but the main difference is that we genuinely believe Fostering People appreciate our contribution and are there for us when we need them. We are 100% satisfied with the service provided by Fostering People. Their staff are professional and friendly and we have good relationships with them all, they invest in regular training and have excellent support services, the overall impression is that Fostering People is a rare feel good organisation where everyone enjoys their work and pulls together.”

[Read their full story](#)

Benefits of transferring to Fostering People

Support

At Fostering People, we are renowned for our outstanding levels of support. From regular supervision with a dedicated supervising social worker (SSW) to access to qualified therapists and a 24/7 helpline, advice, guidance and support is available whenever our foster parents need it.

Also, many of our foster parents meet up for coffee, chat in our fostering forums about shared problems and develop life-long friendships, which is a testament to the peer support networks we've established over the years.

Training

Even though you've been fostering for a while, there is always more to learn alongside mandatory training, helping you keep up to date. Being a therapeutic fostering agency, we use the PACE model, which we provide full training on if you've not come across this methodology before.

Our training programme is extensive, and we'll work with you to identify the right courses, but you're free to attend as many as you like. Choose from a wide range of specialist subjects, including and has been designed to suit the needs of our foster parents and children. For example, some of our specialist subjects include managing difficult behaviour, understanding self-harm and recognising the dangers of County Lines.

Generous fostering allowance

Our fostering allowance is one of the best available. As a seasoned foster carer, you'll receive an allowance that reflects your experience. Why not give our finance calculator a go to see how much you could earn with us? If it seems less than what you're currently receiving, don't worry. We only show our standard fees, so feel free to speak to us directly as we'll do all we can to surpass or at the very least match your current allowance.

Thousands of discounts through The Exchange

We provide all of our foster parents with discounts to hundreds of high street brands, online stores and supermarkets; helping you save hundreds of pounds a year on everyday items.

Free membership to Foster Talk

All our carers receive free membership to Foster Talk, which offers a range of services including legal insurance to protect against allegations, helplines to give daily advice and guidance, counselling at any time of the day or night, as well as support and training to help you feel safeguarded in your role.

Birthday and Christmas presents

To help celebrate those special occasions, you will receive a financial contribution from Fostering People towards the cost of birthday and Christmas presents for all foster children in your care.





Paid respite

Everybody needs a break, so we pay our foster parents 14 nights of respite, pro rota, to ensure you have the opportunity to relax and unwind. Sometimes, you may not feel the need to take a break, however you'll still receive your respite payment regardless, with many foster parents choosing to use it towards the cost of a family holiday instead.

Refer a friend and get up to £3,000

We know that our foster parents are amazing advocates for fostering. That's why when you foster with us, we give you a thank-you payment if you refer somebody who successfully becomes an approved foster parent. You'll also receive another payment after they've completed their first year of fostering with us.



94%
of foster parents would
recommend us to a
friend and 96% feel
their training has helped
them meet the needs of
children in their care

Events and activities for all the family

Each region holds its own events and activities, paid for by Fostering People. Activities include informal picnics, craft sessions and trips to theme parks and local zoos.





“We’ve been really pleased we made the move to an independent agency and the support from Fostering People has been marvellous. We believe the placement breakdowns we experienced in the past wouldn’t have happened with the backing we get from our current social worker. It’s the little things that make such a big difference.” -

- Tracy and Ian, Fostering People foster parents who transferred from a local authority

Ready to have a chat with one of our experts?

Whether you've already made up your mind or need to ask a few more questions about Fostering People - or transferring in general - our friendly experts are here to help. Get in touch today and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

[Get in touch](#)

Or call our dedicated line for experienced foster parents
0330 021 3113

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