



Foster parent's Charter

Fostering People staff and foster parents are committed to ensuring our children and young people achieve the best outcomes possible. Together with the child's responsible local authority, we will endeavour to provide each and every child an environment which allows them to achieve and succeed.

Fostering People believe that it is the foster parents who are responsible for developing the building blocks of stability for the young people and as such they deserve good quality support which is inclusive and respectful from all involved.

Consequently, all staff and foster parents are fully committed to reflect the spirit and intention of the Charter in all aspects of our care to children and young people.

Therefore, in consultation with staff, foster parents and our children we have reviewed our original Charter produced in 2012 and made some improvements that best reflect our commitment to each other and the children in our care.

Fostering People staff will:

- Recognise in practice the importance of the child's relationship with his or her foster family as one that can make the biggest difference in the child's life and which can endure into adulthood.
- Listen to, involve foster parents and their foster children in decision-making and planning, and provide foster carers and their foster children with full information about each other.
- In making placements be clear about the continuing care or support there will be (including for the child into adulthood), be sensitive to the needs of the foster parent and the child in making and ending placements and have contingency plans should the placement not work.

- Undertake regular visits and offer support that is reflective of the needs at any one time.
- Treat foster parent with openness, fairness and respect as a core member of the team around the child and support them in making reasonable and appropriate decisions on behalf of their foster child.
- Ensure that foster parents have the support services and development opportunities they need in order to provide their foster child with the best possible care. This includes liaising with local foster parent groups and seeking to respond to problems and disseminate best practice.
- Make sure foster parents are recompensed on time and are given clear information about any support, allowances, fees, and holidays they will receive including in cases of dispute with the service or during gaps in placements.

Fostering People Foster Parents will:

- Provide good adult role models and treat the foster child as they would their own child through inclusion with the immediate and wider family.
- Be a "positive parent" by advocating for all aspects of the child's development, including educational attainment and physical and emotional health and wellbeing and co-operate fully as part of a team with other key professionals in the child's life.
- Make day to day decisions by requesting Delegated Authority at point of placement; whilst recognising this will be dependent on the individual needs of the child in placement.

Whether you are a Foster parents' birth child or foster child we hope you will:

'Make the most of your family life – enjoy the good bits, learn from the hard bits and do the best you possibly can'.



Fostering People Foster Parents will...

- to understand the needs of your child/ren in placement in an effort to offer support and nurture appropriate to need.
- Support their foster child and do all they can to make the placement work. Take part in learning and development, use skills and approaches that make a positive impact and enable the child to reach his or her potential. Support their foster child to help them to counter possible bullying and discrimination as a result of their care status.

What Foster Parents can expect from the Agency:

- We will always listen to and take into account our foster parents opinions and represent them to the local authority to ensure their voice is heard when decisions are being taken about the children they care for.
- Be clear with our carers about the support they can expect from us. Our foster parents will always know when we will next be visiting them and know how to contact us should they need to in-between visits. The Supervising Social Worker will read the foster parents' Form F to gain an understanding of the matching issues and skills of the family.
- Fostering People will be open and honest with our foster carers. We will encourage and support them. Where we may have differing views from them we will discuss this with them in a timely and sensitive way.
- The Agency will provide our carers with a support group and training to meet their needs. Where the Agency is not able to provide a specific training course for foster parents we will enable learning in an alternative way such as reading material or an external training course.
- Fostering People will provide prompt foster payments as set out in our carer handbook. This includes clear information on payments to carers should placements come to an end. Foster parents are always able to contact their regional Team Manager or Service Manager should they feel in dispute with their social worker.

What the Agency can expect from the Foster Parents:

- To encourage our young people to fulfil their educational potential as well as their social and emotional development as any 'positive parent' would.
- To respect and promote the diversity and equality of all young people placed in our care including religious and cultural heritage.
- To attend training and support groups on a regular basis to help us maintain good standards of care and develop our skill base and knowledge.
- To advocate 'totally' for the young people so their needs are met and problems resolved.
- To work in partnership with our FP supervising social worker in an open, honest and respectful manner as well as other professionals involved with our young people.

What the Children and responsible Local Authorities can expect from Fostering People:

- A family placement that is safe, supportive, nurturing and respectful.
- Wherever possible foster parents will be able to make instant day to day decisions.
- Foster parents and staff who are able and qualified to deliver the service.
- Honest and open communication.
- An environment which promotes participation and consultation including paperwork suitable to the needs of individual young people.
- A service which monitors progress and celebrates achievements.
- A commitment to embrace and work with the values stated in the Charters produced by the individual local authorities.

This revised Charter was produced following national consultation during 2018 with Fostering People foster parents, young people and staff.