

INFORMATION

for Older Young People

IN CARE



fosteringworcestershire



worcestershirefostering.co.uk

WORCESTERSHIRE
CHILDREN FIRST

Fostering



THE ROLE OF THE

WORCESTERSHIRE CHILDREN FIRST FOSTERING AGENCY



This is a booklet all about foster care. As you read it, we hope that some of your questions are answered. You may be just going into foster care for the first time or moving to new foster carers.

It is normal to have a lot of questions and everyone will help you to settle in and make you feel at home as soon as possible.

As a fostering agency our aim is to provide you with a home where you will feel safe, you are well looked after and supported to do well whether you are with our carers for a short time or for a longer period.

Best wishes

Laurie-Mo Gullachsen
Registered Manager



For compliments and
comments, please email:
fostering@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

THERE ARE LOTS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF

FOSTER CARER



SHORT TERM FOSTERING

Some children need to be cared for away from their home for a short period of time. Short-term fostering can be for a period of days, weeks, months and sometimes can last a year or longer.

FAMILY & FRIENDS FOSTERING

Also known as Kinship Fostering. This is when a looked after child is placed with a family member who is approved as a foster carer.

LONG TERM FOSTERING

Long-term foster carers will normally care for you through to independence. Long-term fostering allows children and young people to live with a family where they can feel secure and experience a stable family environment, while keeping in touch with their birth family where that's right for them.



foster families



Foster families should look after you like you were their own child and do their best to help you feel happy, do well at school and grow more independent.

They can be single, a couple, rich or poor, gay or straight or from a different race or religion. Foster families can be single, a couple, rich or poor, gay or straight or from a different race or religion.



A foster carer will be trained before they are approved. Carers will continue to do training after approval, so that they continue to learn and become an even better carer.

We expect our carers to create a positive atmosphere within their home and make you feel safe, happy and accepted within their home and by the whole family.



“We consulted with our Children in Care Council, Who Cares We Care, Speak Out and Big Voices 4 Little Kids about,” What Makes a Good Foster Carer?”

They said:



**Respect
birth
family**

**Good
listener**

Honest

**Sense of
Humour**

**Good
cook**

Committed

**Always
there for
you**

Encourage



Seeing your family

We know one of the most important things for you will be seeing your family.

Local authorities have a duty to ensure that you can keep in touch with your family as appropriate. There are many ways for you to keep in touch with your family, such as: letters, cards, video, skype or meeting up with them.

When you meet your family, you may be left alone or be supervised. It will only happen if it is safe, if you want it

and if your family wants it. If the meeting is supervised it will usually be supervised by your social worker, support worker or foster carer.

Your social worker will talk to you and your family about seeing each other and what you want to happen. Your foster carer will be involved in these discussions as well. Your social worker should tell you, your

family and your carer when this is going to happen.

There are occasions when you may not be able to see birth family because your social worker is concerned that this may not be helpful to you at this time. When this happens your social worker will explain what needs to change before you can see your family.

YOUR SOCIAL WORKER



Your social worker is a person who will come and see you in your foster home. A social worker's job is to help children and families through difficult times.

They will listen to your views and try to help your family work things out. Try to give them a chance – get to know them so you feel you can trust them.

You can call them when times are difficult and you need someone to talk to.

Your Social Workers name:

Mobile Number:

Email address:

If you are not happy about something your social worker has says or done you can speak to their boss :

Their name is:

Their Telephone Number is:

Their Email address is:

YOUR CARERS WILL HAVE A SOCIAL WORKER TOO. THEIR ROLE IS TO MAKE SURE THAT YOUR CARERS HAVE ALL THEY NEED TO LOOK AFTER YOU.



NO.

DATE.

INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER

An Independent Reviewing Officer supports you in your meeting and makes sure you have your say and they will follow up actions to make sure people do what they said they would do.

Independent Reviewing Officers will visit you and get to know you and you will be given an Introduction Card to know how to contact your Independent Reviewing Officer should you need to.

Independent Reviewing Officers will help you:

- Ensure your wishes are being considered
- Make plans for the future
- Ensure the placement you are in is right for you

Remember they are there to help you.

My Independent Reviewing Officer's Name:

.....

Their telephone number is:

Their email address is:

Please refer to the Independent Reviewing Officer Introduction Card for details.

CARE PLAN

NO.

DATE.

Your Care Plan includes information all about you and your plans for the future and is regularly updated. You should be aware of what is included in this. This plan includes information regarding:

- Health • Education • Where you live • What's working well
- What's worrying you • When you see your family
- What we need to do differently • What happens when you leave care

PLACEMENT PLAN

When you are first placed with a foster carer a Placement Plan meeting will be scheduled. At this meeting we will also talk to you about any difficulties you are experiencing and agree with the carers how they will help you manage these.

For example, if you need any additional support with medication or managing your feelings when you are upset. Arrangements for day-to-day living will be written at the beginning of your stay with your foster family. Part of the plan will be what decisions foster carers can make on your behalf.

This will include things like:

- Overnight stays with friends • School Trips

This is called Delegated Authority and you, your parents, social worker and foster carers will agree on this. The views of you and your parents will be taken into consideration when making decisions.

REVIEW

MEETINGS

A review is when the people who support you arrange a meeting with you to talk about the things that you want to discuss with people who you want there at the venue you chose.

Your Independent Reviewing Officer supports you in your review meeting. These meetings take place regularly, but can happen more often if needed.

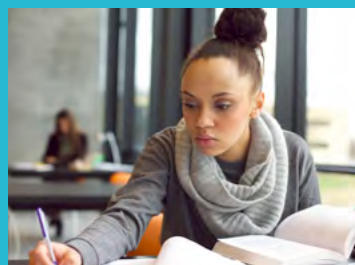
Your Independent Reviewing Officer and Social Worker should talk to you before your meeting to check how you think things are going and what you want to talk about.

It's a good idea to go to your review so that you can be involved in making decisions.

You may want to run your own review meetings, so that you can talk about the things of most importance to you at a particular moment. This is something you can discuss with your Independent Reviewing Officer.

Going to a review is important because you can be involved in making decisions about your future.

You can take someone you know and feel comfortable with to your review, like: a teacher, advocate or a social worker.





YOUTH VOICE TEAM

AND

CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL

WHO CARES WE CARE

If you would like to have a voice and want to help shape the way Children's Services is run then you could become a member of the Children in Care Council.



WHO CARES WE CARE

Who Cares We Care work really hard locally and nationally to help improve things for all children in care. They get involved with all kinds of activities, like:

Consultations on anti-bullying and mental health

Speaking at Council Chambers and national conferences

Corporate Parenting Board

Charity parachute jump

...and just hanging out, going bowling and playing pool

If you would like to find out more about becoming a member of **Who Cares We Care** then contact: **Sally Clewes, Participation and Engagement Co-ordinator for Children and Young People (with particular responsibility for Looked After Children)** | Office: 01905 846498 | whocareswecare@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

SCHOOL

DESIGNATED TEACHER

Your education is important for your future.

A Designated Teacher makes sure you are okay and gets the most out of school. They are usually (but not always) the head teacher and are responsible for the educational achievement of any children in care in their school.

Designated Teachers should:

- Talk with other agencies
- Be an advocate for Looked After Children in school
- Ensure that staff in school have relevant information on Looked After Children
- Manage the Personal Education Plans for each Looked After Child
- Ensure high expectations for Looked After Children
- Have sufficient authority in school to influence policy and practice for Looked After Children

A Personal Education Plan (PEP)

The Designated Teacher is also responsible for the child's Personal Education Plan (PEP), a vital document which outlines your educational history and looks at how you can be supported with your education.

My Designated Teacher is:

Name of school:

.....

Telephone number of the School:

.....

Email address of the School:

.....



Health assessments can also be called 'Health Checks'

Your health is important for you and to those who care for you. The health check is your chance to talk about anything to do with your health – things you are worried about like:

your skin, growth, smoking, friends, getting on with people and lots more. You will be invited to a health check when you are first looked after and then every year after that.



Your foster carer will register you with a doctor, dentist and an optician if necessary.

Young Minds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

www.youngminds.org.uk

Kooth - Free, safe and anonymous online support for young people.

www.kooth.com

Reach4Wellbeing

- Promote Positive Wellbeing
- Reach Children and Young People in their Communities
- Reduce the Stigma of Mental Health

www.hacw.nhs.uk/starting-well/reach4wellbeing/



CARE LEAVERS SERVICE



THERE ARE TWO TEAMS IN THE WORCESTERSHIRE CARE LEAVERS SERVICE THAT WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16-25. EACH TEAM WITHIN THE SERVICE HAS A TEAM MANAGER AND PERSONAL ADVISORS (PAS)

The Care Leavers Service provides support, advice and guidance to young people who are in care, or who have left care, aged 16 up to 25.

To find out more about the Care Leavers Service and the role of Personal Advisors, please visit:

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/careleavers



pathway planning

*A Pathway Plan must be prepared and continued until the age of 25**

Your first Pathway Plan should be completed around the age of 16 after consultation with you and the important people in your life.

The pathway plan must make plans for:

1

Your health and development

2

Your education, training and employment – what you want and what support you will get to help you with your goals

3

Contact with your support network, focusing on the help they can give you at this time

4

Managing your money, including an assessment of what money you need to live on and any changes to the Benefits System – for example, whether you have a bank account and understand about saving money. This section must say exactly what the local authority is doing to support you financially

USEFUL WEBSITES





The CRUSH Project


focuses on Helping Young People Make Safe and Healthy Relationships.





The CRUSH Project

 www.westmerciawomensaid.org/crush/

 @CRUSHwmwa

 @CRUSHProject

 0800 014 9084



Helping Young People Make Safe and Healthy Relationships

 **BullyingUK**
Part of family lives

Bullying

 www.kidscape.org.uk

 www.bullying.co.uk

Childline 
0800 1111

 www.childline.org.uk

 **Childnet**
International

For more information on staying **Safe Online**

 www.childnet.com/primary



The Rees Foundation



01527 916559

www.reesfoundation.org

Switchboard
LGBT+ helpline

<https://switchboard.lgbt/>

0300 330 0630

@switchboardlgbt

@switchboardlgbt



Local NHS Support
(sexual health)

Time 4U:
0800 7832936

Time 4U Out-reach Nurses:
01905 681744

Sexual Assault Referral Centre:
01886 833555

FRANK

Call FRANK 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

0300 123 6600
Text: 82111

www.talktofrank.com



HEALTH FOR TEENS

www.healthforteens.co.uk



AND CONTACTS

DO YOU

HAVE A

complaint

compliment

OR

comment?

When things go wrong you need someone to listen to you! Your agency has to listen to you.



It is best to try and talk to your carer, key worker, social worker, independent visitor or teacher about things that are bothering you.

If you are still unhappy about something and want to complain then contact your Independent Reviewing Officer, registered manager or advocate who can help.



If you would prefer to talk to someone who is not in Children's Services then you can contact Ofsted or the Children's Commissioner.

Ofsted

Ofsted's job is to check on social workers and Children's Services to make sure foster carers and Children's Homes are doing their job properly.

If so, contact Ofsted:

✉ enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

☎ 0300 123 1231



The Children's Commissioner for England

The Children's Commissioner for England listens to what children and young people have to say about how they are looked after. The team are responsible for the rights of all children and young people until they are 18 years old, or 25 years if they have been in care, are care leavers or have a disability

Telephone: **08005 280731**

www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Children's Commissioner
Promoting and protecting children's rights

Other useful websites:
childlawadvice.org.uk
lawstuff.org.uk

Advocates and Independent Visitors



Advocates are not just for when you are unhappy. It could just be for support or you may just want to talk things through with someone.

These are independent people who are there to represent **YOU!** All young people in care are entitled to support from an advocate.

They can:

- give you advice about the rights
- speak for you at Case Review meetings
- help if you want to make a complaint
- know short-cuts and knowledge that could help you


To get help, call the **Coram Voice Helpline: 0808 800 5792**
Visit: www.coramvoice.org.uk | Text: 07758 670369

Find us on:    

Worcestershire Children First - Fostering Agency Details

 fostering@worschildrenfirst.org.uk

 01905 765765 (main hub)

 Worcester Children First -
Fostering Agency, County Hall, Worcestershire WR5 2NP

 [fosteringworcestershire](https://www.facebook.com/fosteringworcestershire)

 worcestershirefostering.co.uk

A big thank you to Speak Out (our Children in Care Council for Worcestershire County Council) for your invaluable contribution to this guide.

This document can be made available in other formats (large print, audio tape, computer disk, widget and Braille) on request from The Fostering Team on the contact details above.

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