# FAMILY AND FRIENDS CARE AGREEMENT

This agreement is between **BOLTON CHILDREN SERVICES DEPARTMENT** and

………………………………………………………………………. (Family/friends carer)

………………………………………………………………………..(Family/friends carer)

Address: …………………………………………………..

 …………………………………………………..

 …………………………………………………..

**You have been specifically approved for the following children:**

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In order to help children placed with family/friends carers as effectively as possible, this agreement outlines the working relationship between the Department and its family/friends carers. The purpose of the agreement is to clarify what you can expect from us and also what we expect from you. During your time with us as a family/friends carer these expectations may change and will be discussed at your family/friends care annual review meetings.

**What *YOU* can expect from *US***

1. **Practical support**
	1. Financial support to cover the cost of caring for the child/young person. **Please note that you are not able to claim either Child Benefit or Child tax Credit if you are receiving a maintenance allowance for the child/children.**
	2. Reimbursement of mileage or the actual cost of transport for certain journeys in respect of your work- please refer to Family and Friends carers’ handbook – page 4.
	3. Discretionary grants to cover costs for clothes and school uniforms may be available and deemed necessary. Authorisation will be needed by a Family Placement Team Manager.
	4. The necessary equipment to help you do your job –handbook page 6.
	5. Training as appropriate including completion of CWDC standards for family/friends carers within the first 18 months of approval
2. **When the Children/Young persons Are Placed**
	1. A Placement Agreement will be completed to give you basic factual information about the child/young person and also to establish other features of the placement – aims, tasks (and who will do them), support (including financial).
	2. Delegated Authority will be discussed between the carers, the child’s social worker as well as the Supervising Social Workers to ensure that you understand the decisions you can make about a child/young person and when you need to consult with social workers.
	3. A safe care family policy must be in place.
	4. Please note that family and family carers ***cannot*** give their consent to any form of medical treatment. For each placement you will receive a copy of a consent form signed by the parent (or occasionally, the Department) giving permission for routine treatment or emergency treatment. This should be shown by you to the appropriate doctor.
	5. Support from child’s social worker and your own supervising social worker. There is a legal minimum to the number of visits social workers must make to you and certain requirements for their visits. See handbook page 7, which highlights the differences in the role of your supervising social worker and the child’s social worker. It is important that you work alongside the social worker in the best interests of your child/young person.
	6. The handbook provides you with a list of useful telephone numbers, which you may need in order to gain help and advice from other people and other organisations.
	7. The handbook also entails details to contact in an emergency or for support. Family/friends carers can sometimes feel very isolated and it is important you feel there is someone to whom you can turn.
3. **Review of Your Approval**

Your approval as a family and friends carer will be reviewed every 12 months at a meeting involving yourselves and staff from the Family Placement Unit. You will have every opportunity to contribute to the review and receive written notification of the outcome. These reviews are intended to be positive and look at your future role as family and friends carers. You will be invited to attend the review panel and you will be expected to attend.

In very exceptional circumstances, there will be occasions when we would seek to deregister carers – this would be in situations where there are serious concerns about the quality of care being offered to child/young person. Any such situation would be fully discussed with you and you would have the opportunity to challenge our plans.

1. **Complaints**

During your time as a family and friends carer it is possible that complaints will be made about the care your child/young person is receiving. We have a detailed procedure, which is outlined in the handbook page 31 so that you understand what is happening and why.

Family and Friends carers sometimes need help and support from outside the Department when these complaints are being investigated. Fostering Network is a very useful source of support and details are provided within the handbook (page 40).

Your supervising social worker will give you support through any process.

The Department also has a complaints procedure, which you can use either for yourself or on behalf of the child you are caring for if you feel dissatisfied and are unable to sort it out with your link worker or the child’s social worker.

Bolton Council have a comments and complaints section, the email address is quality@bolton.gov.uk

**What *WE expect from YOU***

1. To care for any child placed with you as if they were a member of your own family and to promote their welfare having regard to long and short term plans for the child

1. Not to administer corporal punishment to any child placed with you. The term ‘corporal punishment’ should be taken to cover any intentional application of force as punishment including slapping, punching, squeezing, shaking, throwing missiles and rough handling. It would also include punching and pushing in the heat of the moment in response to violence from young people. It does not prevent a person taking necessary physical action, where any other course of action would be likely to fail to avert an immediate danger of personal injury to the child or another person, or to avoid immediate and substantial danger to property. To ensure that any information you receive about the child and their family in connection with this placement with you is kept confidential and is not disclosed to any person without our consent. It should be returned to us when the child or young person leaves.
2. To comply with the terms of this Family/Friends Care Agreement and to care for the child(ren).
3. To comply with the Council’s Safeguarding Procedures ‘The Framework for Action’.
4. To immediately report any unauthorised absence from school or episode of being missing from placement.
5. To also comply with procedures in relation to the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
6. To agree to allow the Looked After child/ren to follow their own religion if at all possible.
7. To record and notify us immediately of any serious illness or accident of the child or any other significant event affecting the child and to keep us informed about their progress. To inform us if the child goes missing from home (see handbook, page 17).
8. To allow the children to be removed if either the responsible Authority (the agency placing the child) or the area Authority (the place where you live) feel it is in the interests of the child to do so. It is a legal requirement that you agree to do this. However, we are at all times seeking to avoid hasty and unplanned moves for children and so for any emergency move there will need to be a good reason which will be explained to you.
9. Attend training as appropriate.
10. To take advantage of the opportunity to attend family and friends carers support groups.
11. To give immediate notice in writing if:-

(i) you intend to change address

(ii) there is any change in the composition of your household.

(iii) any other significant change in your circumstances which will affect your ability to care for the child.

1. any request or application to take on another caring role such as adoption or child minding.
2. any member of the household has been cautioned or convicted of an offence

9. To co-operate as reasonably required with Ofsted and to allow a person authorised by them to interview, meet family and friends carers and visit their home at any reasonable time.

**Before signing this form and agreeing to its contents, please make sure you understand fully the responsibilities outlined above.**

Signed: ………………………………………………………. (Family and Friends carer)

Signed: ………………………………………………………. (Family and Friends carer)

Signed: ………………………………………………………. (Social Worker)

Signed: ………………………………………………………. (Supervising Social Worker)

Date: ……………………………