



Foster Carers Charter

FOSTER
FOR DERBY CITY COUNCIL

Welcome to the Foster Carers Charter

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US...

Working Together

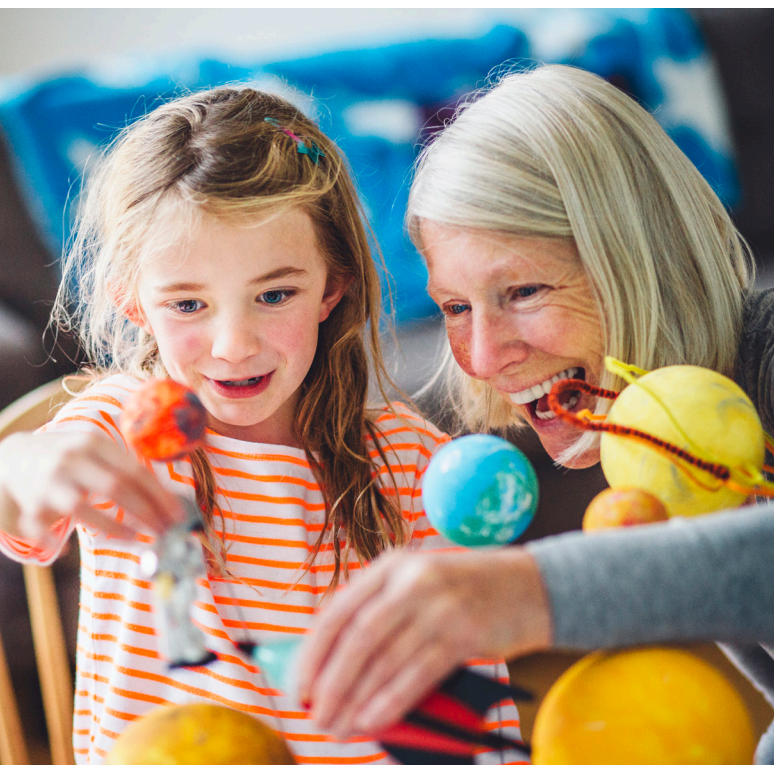
Foster carers from all walks of life help today's children to work towards a brighter future. We will work with you and:

- value the skills and expertise you bring to the role
- agree that, as you live with the child, you know them best
- include you in any meetings that affect you and the children you care for
- treat you with the respect you deserve as a colleague
- respect your confidentiality
- recognise the valuable role you play in the children's lives
- ensure that our fostering service meets the standards set out in fostering regulations and guidance.

Making Decisions

We appreciate that foster carers must be able to make decisions about the children they care for, to ensure the child feels fully involved in family life. So, we will:

- let you know at the outset about the decisions you can and cannot make – this is known as delegated authority and the placement plan makes it clear who is responsible for what
- ensure you are kept informed about decisions in a timely manner, whenever possible.



Sharing Information

We'll ensure that you always have the the information you need to care safely and effectively for each child. You'll have the information in writing before the child comes to live with you, and we'll also work with you to draw up a placement plan before the child arrives with you*or within five working days. We'll also:

- provide you with information on financial matters, including tax, allowances and additional entitlements
- provide you with full details of all relevant departmental policies and procedures these are available on TRIX: <https://derbycsc.proceduresonline.com/index.html>
- give you the information you need to deal with emergencies
- tell you how to raise any concerns or complaints you may have, and respond to them fully and promptly.

(*except when there are emergency placements, in which case we'll provide information and your placement plan as soon as possible)

The Voice of the Child

Good foster carers make such a difference to our vulnerable children. Children expect a lot from our foster carers, once they have settled in and got over any initial apprehension, they want the best you can give. Children thrive from foster carers who:

- find out about each child's individual identity, including their religious, linguistic and cultural heritage
- are good with children, helping them feel safe, loved and cared about
- support children with their achievements and show them that you are proud of what they have done.
- give children opportunities to experience the world, learn and enjoy themselves by being reliable and dependable foster carers.
- encourage children to take part in decisions and choices about their lives.
- help children make sense of losing their home, family, friends, pets and the life they had before.
- ensure children are prepared for when you need to arrange a break using your delegated authority.

Supporting You

Being a foster carer can mean facing some difficult issues and challenges, so ensuring that you are supported can make all the difference. We will:

- respond quickly if you ask for support
- arrange regular supervision with additional visits as required. Other forms of contact will be either email, phone or online
- provide you with access to 24 hour support from people with fostering expertise
- pay you allowances, expenses and fees which reflect the task accurately and on time
- provide you with open and honest feedback
- ensure that there is a local group, recognised and supported by the fostering service, where you and your family can find support and share experiences with other fostering families. Derby City Foster Carer Association can be emailed: **Fcaderby@hotmail.com**
- maintain your full membership with Fostering Network whilst you are a foster carer for Derby City Council.



Fair Treatment

All foster carers have the right to be treated fairly in all circumstances. So, we will:

- consult with you before changing terms and conditions
- ensure open, honest and clear communication verbally and in writing
- ensure that you are treated with respect, kept informed and given emotional support from your supervising social worker should you be subject to an allegation
- provide independent support from Fostering Network if you want it
- provide a framework for dealing with allegations and adhere wherever possible to reasonable timescales as outlined on TRIX: <https://derbycsc.proceduresonline.com/index.html>
- ensure that you know the arrangements for the payment of fees and allowances in the event that you are not able to foster while the subject of an allegation
- give you feedback following any investigation and ensure you have the opportunity for your views to be heard at the fostering panel
- the fostering service will provide advice should you wish to make a formal complaint to the council
- attend meetings and work with all agencies involved with the child such as schools, health and religious establishments
- be committed to working with the birth family, wider family and other people significant to the child
- respect confidentiality
- contribute by supporting training, mentoring and support groups
- meet the standards set out in fostering regulations and guidance and follow departmental policies and procedures.

Developing You

Being a foster carer can be about your own learning and development too, with opportunities to build your skills and knowledge. We provide a comprehensive training programme organised by a dedicated training officer. We will:

- provide you and your family with appropriate and relevant training
- provide you with development opportunities which make the best use of your skills and expertise, such as mentoring or providing training or support
- provide support if you need it, to take up learning and development opportunities
- help you to reflect on what you've learnt and put it into practice
- provide specific training if you are looking after children with more complex needs.

Communicating Well

We hold regular meetings and consultations with our foster carers to get your feedback and to see how we can keep developing people and processes to achieve the highest standards. As an ongoing learning process, we encourage foster carers to:

- respond to local consultations and discussions to help drive improvements
- come along to meetings with service managers, councillors and others to promote successful two-way communication
- make the best use of your annual review to share your views and experiences of being a foster carer for the local authority.

Developing Skills

Being a foster carer is a demanding role but very rewarding. That's why we want you to commit to developing your knowledge and skills, with our full support and attending training and support groups.

As your fostering experience develops, we encourage foster carers to contribute to the training programme and service development. Foster carers are expected to:

- complete the Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care
- be prepared to develop your skills throughout your time as a foster carer and attend relevant training
- let us know if you're unable to attend
- attend and contribute to support groups
- take up opportunities offered to you.

Keeping Informed

As a foster carer you'll also need to be open and honest with us about how you're getting on. It means we can all work together to make the experience a positive one for everyone involved. As part of your foster carer agreement, you should:

- inform us about any changes in your household
- inform us about any difficulties you're having so that we can support you
- keep clear and accurate records about the children you care for
- make yourself available for supervision meetings and do your best to keep appointments.

We can give you this information in any other way, style or language that will help you access it. Please contact us on: 01332 718000. Minicom: 01332 640666

DERBY.GOV.UK/FOSTERING



CALL 01332 640880
TEXT 07774 333412