

Statement of Terms & Conditions of Foster Carer Agreement & Contract

Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 Schedule 5

The purpose of this agreement is to provide written information about the nature of the partnership between foster carers and the agency. It constitutes a statement of responsibilities, requirements and expectations of each.

Full name of Foster Carer(s):

Address:

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Foster carer terms of approval and matching criteria:

Approval	0-18yrs
Matching	

Sheffield Fostering Service

AGREES

1. That foster carers will be provided with a foster carer welcome pack of information which the agency undertakes to update at regular intervals. A handbook will be on line on foster forum. The information provided includes skill levels and payments as well as NMS.
2. That foster carers are members of the care team for children placed with them and will be expected to attend reviews and planning meetings concerning children in their care. The foster carer's opinions and views will be given the same value and respect as any other professional in the team. In arranging meetings and appointments with other professionals, e.g. health and education, reasonable care will be taken to fit these into the lifestyle of the foster carers and their household.
3. The implications of any illness or developmental issues of the child will be fully explained to carers.
4. That foster carers will be provided with written information about the child, their family background, educational and medical information plus any other information relevant to the placement. Information will be supplied at the time of placement, or for children previously unknown to the agency, within twenty working days. This information will be kept up-to-date and any facts affecting placements of children will be communicated immediately to foster carers.
5. That at the time, or prior to each placement, a written placement plan and child's plan will be drawn up in consultation with the foster carers, child, parents and agency which includes contact arrangements and delegated responsibility. Where a placement is made at short notice, the plan must be completed within five working days of the start of the placement. This will be reviewed within 28 days, then within three months and at no more than six monthly intervals.
6. That the agency will provide foster carers with their own supervising social worker who will provide supervision, support and advice. Where a worker is not available, foster carers should contact the relevant Team Manager or duty worker. Where a worker is off sick long term a temporary worker will be allocated.
7. Sheffield City Council purchases Public Liability insurance which provides cover for foster carers who, in the proper course of their authorised duties, become legally liable to pay compensation for injury or damage to property. Cover does not extend to loss or damage caused by, or arising from fraud, dishonesty or criminal offence
8. That carers will be made aware of, and have access to, social care complaints procedures.
9. A review of the foster carer(s) will take place within one year of approval and registration and thereafter every 12 months. The foster carer review will include the views of household members, child (ren)/young person(s) and will provide an opportunity for both the foster carer(s) and the agency to consider how each has helped to provide services for children in their care and what, if anything needs to change in order to improve these services.
10. That the supervising social worker will undertake regular Supervisory Home Visits (including 1 unannounced at least per year) with the foster carer(s). Each visit will be recorded.
11. That information held by the agency in relation to foster carers is available to them and also to departmental staff and other professional agencies (e.g. Education, Health Cafcass, and Police) in connection with the placement of children.

12. That following approval the agency will provide training opportunities on a continuing basis in line with the Children's workforce development council Training, Support and Development Standards. In addition there are specific workshops and courses that are available to you during your fostering career.
13. A social worker should be allocated for every child placed with carers and any changes will be notified. That any child will be visited and seen in the foster home by a social worker within one week of placement and then at least six weekly during the first year of the placement. Thereafter, visits will be at no less than three monthly intervals. At other times, the child should be visited whenever a reasonable request is made, either by the child, social worker or foster carer. That the social worker will request to see the child alone and will request to see the child's bedroom.

In exceptional circumstances, there may be no social worker. In such cases, the foster carer should first contact the relevant Social Work Team Manager in the event of any concern or query, who will take responsibility for any action needed. The supervising social worker should also be informed.

14. That no placement will be terminated by the foster carer(s) or the agency without prior discussion or reasonable notice being given on either side, except in circumstances where safeguarding issues arise. That where a placement ends prematurely, a meeting may be called to review the implications for the child (ren), foster carer(s) and for the department. At least 28 days is required and longer if a permanent placement.
15. That the agency will provide foster carers with procedures, guidance and advice on safeguarding.
16. That the agency will provide foster carers with procedures, guidance and advice on investigating complaints and allegations against foster carers.
17. That the agency will provide foster carers with procedures and guidance on looked after children/young people missing from care.
18. That the agency will be open and honest in dealing with foster carers and provide them with all available information to enable a child's needs to be met.
19. That in an emergency, where the child's social worker cannot be contacted, the fieldwork office duty worker or Team Manager or fostering should be contacted. For emergencies out of office hours, contact should be made with the fostering service helpline on 07785396722
20. That the local authority will be financially responsible for the placement and will endeavour to assist financially in childcare arrangements thereby allowing foster carers to attend court, reviews, training courses and other meetings/forums as agreed.
21. That this agreement may be terminated by either party giving at least 28 days' notice. If the agency terminates the agreement, foster carers may challenge this decision via the Representations or Complaints procedures.

I/We, the Foster Carer(s),

AGREE

1. That I/we will treat any child (ren) placed with us as an equal and valued individual in their own right and to promote their welfare having regard to the Every Child Matters agenda, National Minimum Standards/Fostering Service Regulations 2011 and Skills requirements.
2. That as a member of a care team I/we will attend reviews, case conferences, planning and other meetings concerning the child/children in my/our care and give my/our views clearly. If unable to attend, I/we will provide, if requested, a written or taped statement/report for the meeting. I/we will give evidence in court and meet with other professionals if the needs of the child (ren/young person(s) require this.
3. That I/we will receive a copy of the written placement agreement(s) drawn up between the agency, myself/ourselves and, where appropriate, the child (ren) and his/her/their parents and will work with all parties towards the goals identified and keep this information confidential. I will return all information regarding the child (ren) to the social worker at the end of the foster placement.
4. That I/we will inform the agency immediately if a new member joins the foster carer household, and that I/we understand that a DBS check must be undertaken for all household members 18+
5. That I/we will not offer my/our services as a carer to another agency without the consent of this approving agency. That I/we will not apply to adopt or apply to register as a child minder(s) without prior notice to the agency.
6. That I/we will have a supervising social worker with whom I/we will maintain open communication and from whom I/we will receive supervision, advice and support. I/we will inform him/her immediately of any changes in household composition, change of address, illness or any other significant events which may affect the fostering household. eg separation, illness, accident.
7. That I / we will attend the required training opportunities and support groups.
8. That I/we will maintain appropriate household contents, buildings, and motor insurance and inform my/our insurers of my/our approval as a foster carer(s
9. That I/we will arrange for any child/ren to receive medical attention whenever s/he is ill and I will keep the child's social worker and the fostering service informed of this. I /we will also allow him/her to be examined at such times and places as the agency requires, e.g. dentists, opticians, medical checks etc.
10. That I/we will ensure that all children placed with me/us are encouraged to practise their religion if they and their parents wish and will advise the agency of any difficulties or expenses incurred in achieving this.
11. That I/we will encourage and enable a child (ren)/young people, to understand their ethnicity, cultural background and family history. That I/we will use training and advice offered by the agency to enable this to be done and will advise the agency of any difficulties or expenses incurred.
12. That I/we will promote and support and supervise where requested by the agency and in accordance with the placement plan contact between a child(ren)/young people and /their family and will advise the agency of any expenses and difficulties incurred.

13. That the welfare of the foster child is paramount. I/we will be positively committed to the best interests of a child/young people in my/our care and be an advocate for that purpose at all times. I/we am committed to using my/our skills to enable the agreed aims of a placement to be achieved and completed, in accordance with the care plan.
14. That I/we will be responsible on a day-to-day basis for encouraging the child (ren)/young people to attend school/college/work, support a child's Personal Education Plan, and will maintain contact regarding progress at school and attend meetings at/with school where appropriate.
15. That we will maintain a notebook for each child, recording significant events.
16. That I/we will allow social workers to have access to the child (ren) in my/our care at all reasonable times and for the child (ren) to be seen alone when requested. I/we will allow any agency authorised person to visit my/our home to see the child if approved by the social worker. We understand an unannounced visit will be undertaken at least annually by our fostering worker.
17. That I/we will keep the agency informed about the child (ren)'s progress and notify them immediately of any serious illness of the child (ren) or any other significant events affecting the child (ren).
18. That I/we will communicate with the child (ren)'s social worker and my/our fostering social worker, particularly if things are not going well with the child (ren). I/we will try to avoid the situation reaching crisis point without warning by discussing matters openly at an early stage.
19. That I/we must allow the agency to remove the child (ren)/ young people if they decide to do so.
20. That I/we will not terminate a placement without prior discussion or reasonable notice being given. If I/we do not give reasonable notice of termination, my/our approval and registration may be reviewed.
21. That I/we will inform the agency immediately if any child in placement runs away or is taken away from the foster home without agency authorisation.
22. That I/we will inform the agency if the police are involved with any child (ren) in my/our care or ourselves.
23. That I/we agree to keep a record of the child (ren)'s life while placed with me. I recognise the importance of photographs and other mementos for children leaving my care.
24. That I/we understand that the use of CCTV within the foster home is not acceptable.
25. That I/we will undertake to maintain the child(ren)'s clothing from the clothing allowance received and that any clothes purchased will be the property of the child concerned, will be transferred with the child(ren) on leaving the foster family, and I/we will maintain a clothing inventory for this purpose.
26. I/we am/are aware of the agency's policy and guidance on dogs in foster homes and will advise my/our social worker if I/we obtain a dog or any other pet that may potentially present a risk to a child/young person.
27. That I/we will have due regard to health and safety in the home and will advise my/our social worker if this is compromised in any way. I/we will also inform my/our social worker if I/we require any equipment, financial assistance or advice to promote the maintenance of a safe environment for children/young people.

28. That I/we will maintain a safer care plan for my/our household.
29. That I/we understand and agree to adhere to agency fostering policy regarding smokers and smoking.
30. That I/we understand and agree to the agency's policy of no physical chastisement of looked after children/young people and will not use corporal punishment or any measure of control, or discipline which is excessive or unreasonable. We will not restrain any child.
31. That I/we understand and agree to the agency's policy and procedures on safeguarding.
32. That I/we understand and agree to the agency's policy and procedures on investigating complaints and allegations involving foster carers.
33. That I/we am aware I/we need to request permission from the agency to take a child (ren) out of the country with enough notice to obtain a passport if agreed. For babies it is unlikely the agency would agree. We will not take a child for a holiday within school terms.
34. That I/we will co-operate as reasonably required with regulatory bodies and fostering service inspections, facilitating interviews with responsible persons and allowing visits to the foster home if required.
35. That I/we will repay any overpayment of fostering fees and maintenance payments.
36. That I/we accept that this agreement may be terminated by either party at any time giving the other 28 days' notice in writing.
37. That I/we agree to our names and contact details (e.g. address, telephone no. and email) to be provided to other departments within Social Care for the purposes of support, training and development.
38. That I/we agree to move children on for adoption as requested appropriately supporting the adoptive parents.

Signature(s) of the Parties to the Agreement:

Signed:	
	Foster carer Date

Signed:	
	Foster carer Date

Signed:	
	Supervising Social Worker Date