

Telford & Wrekin Foster Carers Charter



The Telford Fostering Service and Foster Carers have worked in partnership to produce this Charter which sets out the commitment of both parties.

The Role of the Fostering Service

The fostering service aims to provide stable and first-rate foster care for children who are valued, supported and encouraged to grow and develop as individuals.

To achieve this aim, we recruit, train and approve foster carers and deliver ongoing support to them, in order to give them the skills and confidence they need to develop meaningful relationships with the children and young people they care for and provide stable and loving homes while they are part of the foster family.

The Role of the Foster Carer

Foster carers are at the heart of the foster care service. We are assessed, trained and supported to look after children and young people by developing meaningful relationships in a family environment, providing them with stability, care, love and an opportunity to grow and develop and to reach their potential.

Our relationships with other members of the fostering team around the child are based on mutual trust and respect. This Charter explains what we expect from each other.



Both parties agree:

- To work in partnership.
- To provide information to the other.
- To communicate and consult.



The Fostering Service agrees:

- To provide clarity about decisions.
- To supervise and support its carers.
- To provide opportunities for learning and development.
- To treat carers fairly and with respect.



Foster carers agree:

- To treat children as a member of the family.
- To respect and value the child in their care.
- To take ownership of their own development and to access support.

1) Working in Partnership

Both parties recognise that each have skills and expertise essential for the wellbeing of the child in care. Telford & Wrekin Council is the corporate parent and has overall responsibility for the child. The fostering service aims to provide stable and high quality foster care for children who are valued, supported and encouraged to grow and develop as individuals.

The Telford Fostering service recognises it is the skills and expertise of foster carers that makes the biggest difference to the lives of the children they care for.

Both parties will:

- Value the skills and expertise of the other.
- Be co-professionals in the care of the child.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Treat the other party with respect.
- Value each other as colleagues.

The Telford Fostering service will:

- Ensure that it meets the standards set out in Fostering Regulations and guidance.
- Include foster carers in all meetings that affect them and the children they care for.
- Treat foster carers as professionals and show professional courtesy in respect to appropriate timekeeping and meeting arrangements.

The foster carer will:

- Attend all planned meetings in a professional capacity and provide written and oral input as required.
- Positively promote foster care within the borough.

2) Information

Information is vital in order for foster carers to provide care that meets the child's needs. Similarly, the Telford Fostering service is required to be kept informed about important events and incidents in the lives of the children for whom it holds a legal responsibility.

Both parties will work together to agree as much as possible of the placement plan in advance of the placement. For emergency placements, it will be agreed as soon as possible afterwards but a minimum of information needs to be available with placement.

The Telford Fostering service will:

- Provide foster carers with all the information available to the fostering service in advance of the placement (except for emergency placements) to enable foster carers to care safely for the child.
- Make available online to carers written procedures and policies relevant to foster care.

The foster carer will:

- Keep written recordings detailing day to day information relating to the child or young person.
- Inform the child's social worker as soon as possible about any significant incidents and important events in the child's life.
- Inform their supervising social worker of significant events or changes in the carer's life or family.

3) Communicate and Consult

Both parties agree that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship.

- Carers will run their own Foster Carers Association (FCA), supported by Telford & Wrekin. The aim will be to work cooperatively with a common understanding and shared goals.
- The Telford & Wrekin FCA will meet regularly with Telford & Wrekin staff.
- An agreed group of carers will be consulted about new policies, procedures and paperwork which will affect foster carers.
- The Telford Fostering service will provide foster carers with an annual foster carer conference (unless it is not possible to do so safely i.e. Covid).

4) Clarity about decisions

The Telford Fostering service recognises that in order for children to live a full family life, foster carers must be able to make decisions regarding the children they foster.

- Foster carers will make everyday decisions consistent with the care plan.
- At the time of placement, Telford & Wrekin will provide clarity about any decision the foster carer cannot make and who will make those decisions, including escalation process if that person is not available.
- The 'who decides what' list (delegated consent) will form part of the placement plan.

5) Support

The fostering service recognises that fostering is an isolating and challenging task, and that timely support makes all the difference to the fostering family and the quality of life for the child in their care.

The Telford Fostering service will:

- Provide a duty support service and an out of hours emergency service.
- Provide supervising social worker visits at agreed intervals.
- Provide foster carers with access to The Fostering Network support services (independent mediation and advice, stress support line).
- Provide support groups for foster carers.
- Support the Telford & Wrekin Foster Carers Association.

The foster carer will:

- Attend foster carer forums.
- Support the Telford & Wrekin Foster Carers Association.
- Be supportive of other foster carers both formally and informally.
- Prioritise supervision.

6) Fair Treatment

The Telford Fostering service will:

- Ensure foster carers are treated with respect, kept informed, and provided with emotional support should they be subject to an allegation.
- Provide trained foster carers as mentors during the allegation period if required.
- Provide a written procedure for the management of an allegation including agreed timescales and payment to the foster carer during the allegation process.

The foster carer will:

- Agree to attend training as detailed in their Foster Carer Review/personal development plan.
- Utilise the Safe Care training/documentation to prevent unnecessary allegations.

7) The child as a member of the family

All children have a right to a family life.

- Foster carers will welcome children into the family and will respect and nurture them as such.
- Foster carers will support and encourage education through partnership with schools, attend PEPS and parent evenings and having a positive influence on decisions made that may affect the child's educational future.

- Foster carers will work with the virtual school staff within Telford & Wrekin to prevent exclusions and ensure excluded children have access to appropriate education provision.
- Foster carers will support the health and wellbeing of all young people in their care. They will ensure that on placement, all children are registered as permanent patients with a local general practitioner, optician and dentist. All health appointments will be kept, any health recommendations actioned and any health needs identified in a timely manner. The Health Assessment will be kept up to date and passed on as appropriate if there is a change of placement.
- Foster carers will provide the children's nutritional requirements as per healthy living guidelines. We will support their emotional wellbeing through the good practice guidelines and training in behaviour management.
- Foster carers will recognise and value the importance of the child's birth family and promote appropriate contact and relationships.
- Foster carers will encourage and support children to pursue their own interests by facilitating their participation in clubs and societies as appropriate.

8) Respect for the Child

Both parties agree that every child and young person should be respected as an individual and be supported in meeting their needs and achieving their aspirations.

The Telford Fostering service will:

- Ensure the child is listened to and has a voice in decisions made for them.

The foster carer will:

- Respect and promote a child's religious, linguistic and cultural heritage. Foster carers will promote equality in gender, sexual orientation, race and all other areas.
- Afford the same level of protection and care to a child as they would to their own children and in accordance with the National Minimum Standards.
- Ensure the child has the right to make decisions regarding their own lives, as appropriate to their age and understanding.
- Encourage the children to take part in the Children in Care Council provided by Telford & Wrekin giving them an opportunity to voice their opinion.
- Provide the child with pocket money in line with the council's policies.

The Telford Fostering service will:

- Define how a child's religious, linguistic and cultural heritage can be promoted within the care plan.
- Encourage equality in dealings with foster carers and children in care.
- Ensure the child has the opportunity to influence decisions at statutory Children in Care review meetings and other planning sessions.

- Recognise that birth children are part of the foster family and respect and support the role they play.
- Show respect and value for children of all abilities and disabilities.
- Give a voice to children in care through the Children in Care Council.

9) Personal Development

Both parties recognise the need for foster carers to access training to ensure they have the skills and knowledge needed to support the children in their care.

The foster carer will:

- Agree a development plan as part of the annual review process and attend the training detailed in the plan.
- Attend and contribute to support groups.
- Support the Telford & Wrekin Foster Carers Association.

The Telford Fostering service will:

- Provide and deliver a comprehensive training programme to meet the training requirements of their foster carers and support foster carers in accessing training.
- Support foster carers in developing an appropriate personal training plan that will meet the current and future placement needs.

10) Signatures

Councillor Shirley Reynolds

Cabinet Member for Children,
Young People and Families

Shirley Reynolds



Jo Britton

Executive Director of Children
and Family Services

Jo Britton



Bev Moss

Chairperson, Telford & Wrekin
Foster Carers Association

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