

YOUR GUIDE TO FOSTERING

Foster
with
PETERBOROUGH

- ☆ Who can foster?
- ☆ Six steps to fostering.
- ☆ Who will I look after?
- ☆ Next steps...





WELCOME TO PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL'S FOSTERING SERVICE

Thank you for your interest in fostering with us. We have put this information together to tell you more about fostering and what it involves so you can see if fostering is a role you would like to consider. Fostering is life-changing and supports local children to have a safe, supportive and nurturing home, for as long as needed.



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WHAT IS FOSTERING?

Fostering involves caring for someone else's child(ren) in your family home during periods when they cannot live with their own family. This can be for a variety of reasons, such as neglect, abuse, illness, substance misuse or domestic violence.

Foster carers provide a safe and nurturing home for children and young people of all ages.

We will help you decide what age of child or young person best suits your family and lifestyle, whether it is for short periods or longer lengths of time.

For many children and young people being in care can be a very uncertain time but the help that you give can really make all the difference.



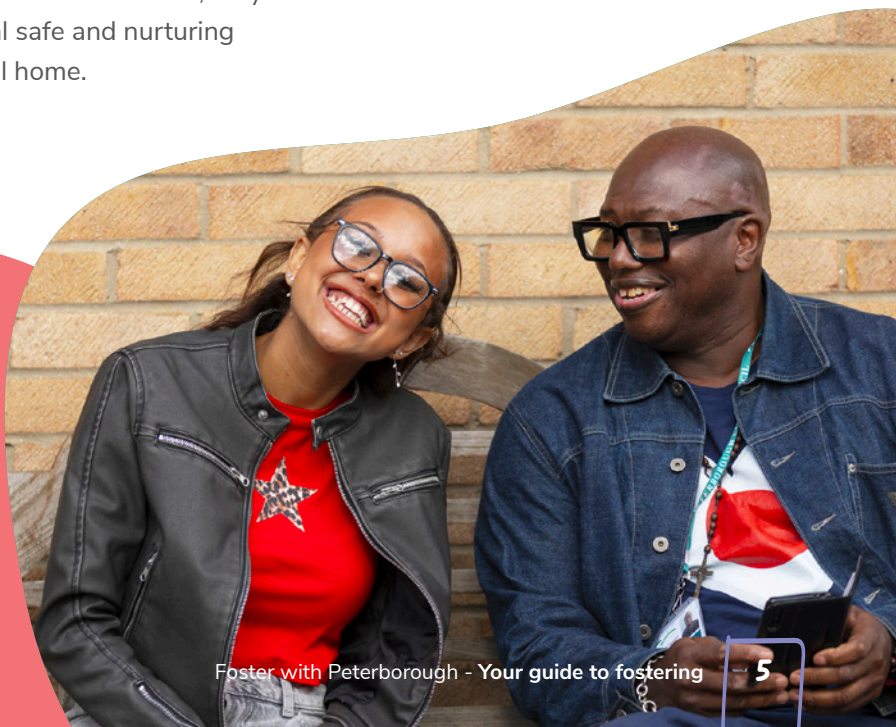
WHY DO WE NEED FOSTER CARERS?

We need to recruit more foster carers from across Peterborough to help the children and young people currently in our care stay local to their community, which is so important during a challenging time with lots of change.

Children need foster carers for lots of different reasons, but in all cases, children and young people need to be offered consistency, stability, and reassurance. Most of all, they need a local safe and nurturing place to call home.

While children and young people are in foster care, social workers work with other professionals, birth families and carers to help make important decisions about their care.

If a child or young person cannot remain at home, the decision may be made for a child or young person to remain in foster carer until they reach adulthood.



WHO CAN FOSTER?

There is no such thing as 'the ideal' foster carer – however you need to be over the age of 21, have a spare room, and have the time, patience, and desire to support a child or young person. We actively want our carers to be as diverse as the children we care for and welcome people from all communities to get in touch with us.

There are so many misconceptions about what you need to foster so we have pulled together a 'Am I eligible to foster?' quiz so you can find out if you meet the criteria.



**SCAN THE
QR CODE TO
TAKE THE 'AM I
ELIGIBLE TO
FOSTER?' QUIZ**



JACKIE SAYS...

“ We have been fostering since 2003. In this time, we have cared for six children long term and many more children on a short term or emergency basis. Our own children had left home, and it had just been the two of us for some time, but we adjusted very quickly when our first child arrived, and he was a real joy to have.

We have fostered children and young people aged 8-18 and the longest time a child has stayed with us was six years.

We find that it's the little things that are the best bits about fostering. For example, seeing a child with very low self-esteem grow in confidence and find their voice.

I have found the support from the council very good, and my social worker understands the realities of fostering. I also find it very helpful to go to support groups and meet up with other carers who I can share experiences with. It has been the most rewarding thing I have ever done. ”

DIFFERENT TYPES OF FOSTERING

There are a wide range of fostering opportunities available to you.

The type of fostering you are most suited to will depend on factors such as your skills, experience, and availability.

At present, we are particularly in need of foster carers who can provide homes for teenagers, sibling groups, and children with disabilities.

Time limited fostering:

Involves caring for children or young people on a time-limited basis, until decisions are made about where a child will live long term.

The length with this can vary from weeks to many months and sometimes over a year.

Long-term fostering:

Long-term fostering involves caring for children who cannot return to their birth families and where adoption is not considered to be a suitable option. In these situations, foster carers will often provide a permanent, stable home for a child or young person until they reach adulthood and are ready to live independently.

Supported Lodgings fostering:

This scheme provides young people aged between 16 and 21 years old with a stable home to live in and the support and guidance of an adult or adults living there to prepare them for independent living.

Parent and Child fostering:

Parent and Child fostering involves a young parent and their child living in your home for several months. You will offer valuable advice and guidance to the parent and support their care of the child.



Emergency care fostering:

Emergency care involves immediate, short-term care for children and young people in urgent situations. The placement typically lasts only a few days or weeks until a suitable care arrangement can be made.

Link Care fostering:

Link Foster Carers provide overnight care for children with disabilities. The children eligible for short breaks will live with their birth families and have a wide range of disabilities and health needs. Link Carers work closely with families to help give parents, siblings, and the disabled child valuable breaks.

Respite fostering:

Respite fostering involves caring for children and young people on an arranged, short-term break basis to give either their long-term foster carers or families a temporary break. Respite fostering can be from as little as two days per month, all depending on needs.

PACE fostering:

The Local Authority has a duty to provide accommodation to children and young people under the age of 18 who have been charged with an offence so that young people do not remain in police custody longer than needed.



WHAT TYPE OF FOSTERING IS RIGHT FOR ME?

It is important for potential foster carers to think about the types of children they feel comfortable caring for, which comes with considering your availability and your own family's circumstances.

You may not even know where to start in terms of what may be best for you, or you might even be open to offering several types of care, which is absolutely fine.

We are here to help you make the right decision as part of becoming a foster carer.

Take our 'What type of fostering is right for me?' Quiz.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO TAKE THE 'WHAT TYPE OF FOSTERING IS RIGHT FOR ME' QUIZ



WHY CHOOSE US?

Fostering with your local authority is not for profit, meaning the children we care for and our foster families always come first.

You will be part of your local authority as a valued foster carer for the children and young people in your community, helping them to stay local.

You will have access to extensive training and support groups for foster carers held at local venues.

You will have opportunities to develop your role within your local community as a foster carer ambassador or mentor.

You will have access to support delivered 24/7 by Social Workers employed by the local authority who can communicate directly with children's and young people's social workers.

You will be supported by local supervising social workers that are committed to improving and enhancing your skills as you develop and progress in your career as a foster carer caring for local children and young people.



WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO US?

We asked some of our fostered children and young people what they look for in a foster carer. Here's what they said!

RESPECT ME

TAKE ME ON NICE HOLIDAYS

DON'T JUDGE ME

TREAT ME LIKE FAMILY

BE FUNNY

BE SOMEONE I CAN TALK TO

TAKE TIME TO LISTEN TO ME

BE THERE FOR ME ALL THE TIME

BE HELPFUL

BE A GOOD COOK

INCLUDE ME IN DECISIONS

GIVE ME STABILITY

BE LOVING

BE UNDERSTANDING

6

STEPS TO FOSTERING

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Anyone looking to become a foster carer is required to have a fostering assessment to ensure they are right for the role. This is a six-step process to ensure we find suitable people to support the children we care for. It typically takes between four and six months to complete from when you first get in touch to when you are approved with us at Peterborough City Council and our team will support you at every step of the way.

STEP 1

CONTACT US

The fostering process begins when you get in touch with us, whether that be via phone or our website contact form to express your interest in becoming a foster carer. One of our friendly team will contact you to answer any initial questions you may have and run you through the next steps.

STEP 2

ARRANGE A HOME VISIT

When you're ready, we'll arrange a time convenient to you when we can come and visit you and your family at home. This is a great opportunity to find out more about which type of fostering will be best for you and ask any further questions you might have.

STEP

3

APPLICATION FORM

After the home visit, we'll discuss whether now is the right time for you to proceed to becoming a foster carer. If the answer is 'yes!', we'll invite you to apply to become a foster carer and help you complete your application form.

STEP

4

LOCAL MANDATORY TRAINING

To become a foster carer there is a mandatory training course based locally in Peterborough which runs over four non-consecutive days . Here you will get the chance to meet other potential foster carers, hear first-hand from some of our looked after children and learn more about the skills you need to become a foster carer.

STEP

5

COMPLETING THE ASSESSMENT

An assessment called a 'Form F' assessment is then completed for all potential new foster carers, which involves gaining information about you and your family, undertaking a number of background checks and gathering references. Although this may seem daunting as it is an in-depth process, it is here to ensure the safety of the children we care for.

You will be allocated a dedicated Social Worker who will work one-on-one with you to complete this assessment and support you during the assessment process.

If you are already a foster carer transferring from an Independent Fostering Agency (IFA), we have a fast-track process, so you will not be required to complete a full 'Form F'.

STEP 6

APPROVAL AT FOSTERING PANEL

Your final application will then be presented to our local fostering panel.

You will also be asked to attend, along with your dedicated Social Worker, to answer any questions the panel may have. The panel will then make a recommendation around your suitability to foster and the age group and number of children you would be approved to care for.

Once our agency decision maker has verified this recommendation, you will join our team of foster carers and be ready to begin making a difference to the lives of our children and young people in care.

FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN CREATE MOMENTS THAT MATTER.



SCAN THE
QR CODE TO
CONTACT US
TODAY

Lots of people think about fostering but never take the next step and all too often we hear our foster carers say, 'We wish we did it sooner!'.

Whether you have been considering fostering for quite some time, are new to the idea, have any questions, or would like to start the process, please get in touch with our friendly team by giving us a call on:

01733 86 86 86 or scan the QR code.



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OUT MORE