

Children's Information Guide



Introduction from the Fostering Foundation

Welcome to our Fostering Foundation family. My role is to ensure that whilst you are with us you are always safe and that the people who support you and provide you with a 'home away from home' are doing everything they can to make sure your day to day life runs as smoothly as possible for you. I have worked across all areas of local authority children's services and in children's residential settings so I have a pretty good idea of the journey you might have been on and the amount of professionals that have already been involved in your life! Everyone at the Fostering Foundation wants to ensure that you have the very best experiences and that all your achievable hopes and dreams become your realities. If you ever want to talk to me, I am here for you. Nita, Registered Manager.



Introduction

This booklet is a guide to being in care, we know that this can be a very confusing time for you.

We hope this information will help you understand.

If you have any questions you can either speak to us
on

01884 211 816 (Exeter Team)

0117 9673744 (Bristol Team)

01822 618068 (South West Team)

or email us at

info@fosteringfoundation.co.uk

or you can contact your
Social Worker.

You can find out more information about us on our
website

www.fosteringfoundation.co.uk



Living away from home..



There are many reasons why, at this time, you are not able to live at home and we need to look after you to ensure that you are safe and well.

It could be a very strange and worrying time for you but we all want to care for you and look after you the very best we can.

Why am I living away from my home:

There are many reasons why people live away from home and we believe you should know why.

If you are unsure why you are being cared for by a fostering family please ask your social worker, who will be able to tell you what you need to know. Your foster carers can also find out for you if that feels better.

Moving away from your home can be worrying but before you move it is hoped that you will have the chance to meet the people you will be living with. This isn't always possible if you have had to move quickly or in an emergency but we will all try our best.

Everyone at The Fostering Foundation wants to make sure that you have everything you need from us during what can feel like a really strange time for you; moving into another home, away from your own. You have probably heard your social worker say things like 'being in care' or 'foster care'. These are just things social workers say to explain what is happening for you. We hope that this information booklet will help. If it doesn't, that's fine too. Further on in this booklet you will see the telephone numbers of people who will be more than happy to talk to you, as well as your own social worker.

Our job is to keep you very safe and make sure you get lots of chances to do well in all areas of your life and have a lot of fun at the same time, although you will still need to go to school and learn!

We will make sure that you are healthy and well fed and that you can continue to meet the life goals that you might have set for yourself. When you are a little older we will help you to learn some life skills such as cooking and cleaning so that you feel ready for adult life.

We have made a 'Children's Pledge', which is our promise to all the children we care for and this also explains what we will do for you.

There are lots of people who look out for you while you are with us, and cared for in your fostering household, and you will get to meet them very soon.

If you don't feel like reading the information on your own, or if you are unable to do this, maybe you could ask an adult, a carer, your social worker, or even a friend to read it with you - it's always good to share things.

Or if you need any part of this booklet explained to you in your language or in large print, Braille or in audio format please let someone know.



What we do at the Fostering Foundation

We find and train the right people to become foster carers, we then help them to care and look after you.

Just as you have your own social worker, each of our foster carers have their own social worker too who will also get to know you.. You will see them visiting your carers and at meetings. They may take you out and you will see them at groups and events.

We have lots of fun groups and activities for children to take part in. Look out for our next fun day—your foster carer will tell you what is happening.



About Foster Carers

Your foster carers are people who really care about children and young people.

They have all received training to become foster carers. We hope that this training will help them to understand and care for you.

All fostering families are different. Some have one adult, some have two. Some have children, some don't. Some work whilst some stay at home. Some have pets, some like going out, some have family holidays and some don't.

Whichever type of family you now live with, we hope that you will be happy and that they can meet your needs.



What do foster carers do?

Your foster carers will:

- Help you to feel safe
- Listen to you
- Provide you with good food
- Help you to see and hear about your family
- Make sure you have doctor, dentist and someone to check if you might need glasses
 - Help you follow any cultural or religious beliefs
 - Help you find out what you are good at
 - Help you understand how the family works
- Get to know you
- Provide you with your own bedroom
- Support you with school and homework
- Help you if you are feeling poorly
- They will keep information about you private
- Help you to be the best person you can be

Other people who will work with you

During your time in care you will have a number of people who will be helping you.

Below is a list of people and what they do.

Social Worker

You will have your own social worker who will make sure that you are safe and well and have what you need.

Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

This person checks that we are all doing the best for you and will meet with you to check how you are.

Advocate

This is another person you can talk to and they will make sure everyone knows if you are unhappy or want things to change.

Looked After Children's Nurse

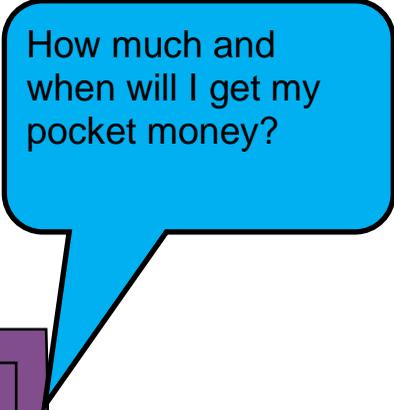
The nurse will meet you for your health check. The nurse is specifically for looked after children and young people.



Some of the questions you might want to ask



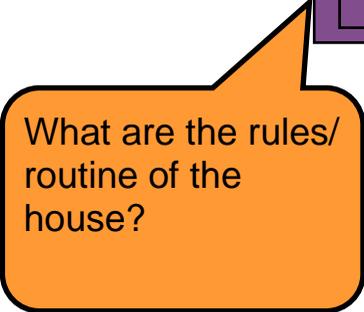
Will I stay at the same school?



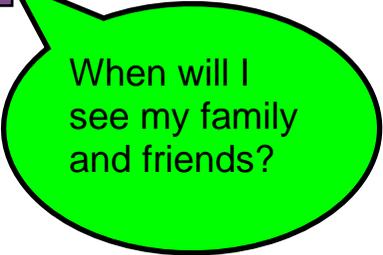
How much and when will I get my pocket money?



Welcome



What are the rules/routine of the house?



When will I see my family and friends?

Can I see my family and friends?



We believe it is very important for you to keep in touch with all the people who are important and special to you, your family and friends. We call seeing your family face to face 'family time' and this will happen if:

- You want it to happen
- Your family want it to happen
- You will be safe

When you are 'looked after' it may be important to you that you still see or speak with your family. Your social worker can tell you more about this.



Will I go to the same school or college?

Most children will go to the same school. If you are going to live with your carers for a longer time and your school is far away, you may be able to change to a school that is nearer and easier to get to.

Education is very important for the future life of every child and we hope you can continue to attend your present school, but if this is not possible your social worker and foster carer will try and find a closer school for you to attend.

Sometimes it's hard moving to a new school away from your friends. Your social worker and foster carer can help you stay in touch with your friends.

If you have any troubles or worries with your education, then speak to your foster carer or social worker as they are there to help you.

What is a review meeting?

A 'child looked-after review' is a meeting where everybody who comes to see you, talks with you about how you are getting on.

Things that are usually talked about are your health, your education, your activities, your foster home and your family.

Who will go to my reviews?

- You! You are the most important person in the review, and it is important that your feelings and wishes are heard. You can talk to your social worker about who you can bring with you.
- Your social worker
- Your foster carers
- Your parents or guardians
- Any important family members
- The Independent Reviewing Officer.
- Your teacher, doctor, or advocate.

If you feel that there is someone you do not want at your review tell your social worker or the independent reviewing officer.



Health

When you first come into care it is important that we find out if you have any health needs.



Your social worker or foster carers will take you to see a nurse and doctor who will talk to you and do some small checks like weighing and measuring how tall you are.

Be part of the Team

Getting Involved

The Fostering Foundation encourages our children to join us in our activities.

We hold lots of fun days throughout the year where you will have the opportunity to meet other children and young people who are living with foster carers within The Fostering Foundation.

Our adventure days out have included; teddy bear picnics, going to a theme park, making things and even wall climbing.



Pocket Money

You will get pocket money weekly. Hurray!



We really want you to learn how to look after money and how to spend and save it well.

Saving is really important, especially if you want things that cost more than your pocket money.



What if I have a problem or I am unhappy?



At the Fostering Foundation, how you are feeling really matters! Most things can be sorted out by talking. If there is anything that you are not happy about, such as the time you have to go to bed, or how much pocket money you get, then these are everyday matters that you should talk to your foster carer about.

Sometimes you may feel that things are more serious and talking to your carers or your social worker hasn't helped. You may then want to make a complaint. Making a complaint means letting people know that you are unhappy about something. You can do this in different ways. Always begin by trying to let your foster carers know what is wrong so that they can try and help. If they feel they need to get others to help, they will speak with someone from the Fostering Foundation or your social worker.

They will always ask your permission to do this. If you tell them something that is very serious that means you or someone else needs to be kept safe immediately, then they cannot keep this a secret and they **MUST** tell someone.

If you feel that you cannot share your problem with your carer, then your social worker, family or friends may be able to help you. If you are still worried, or unhappy, then please tell the Fostering Foundation tel: 01822 618 068 or you can speak to your independent reviewing officer.

Useful contact information

Commissioner for England

There is a commissioner for children in England and they work to 'promote awareness of the views and interests of children'. The office of the children's commissioner.

20 Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT

Tel: 0207 783 8330

Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/

info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Ofsted

An organisation called Ofsted checks the work of fostering agencies in England and Wales.

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street

Manchester, M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

You can make some notes here.....



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1st & 2nd Floor
46/47 Brook Street
Tavistock
Devon PL19 0HE
Tel 01822 618068

Exeter Team

Sowton Business & Technology Centre,
Capital Court,
Bittern Road,
Exeter EX2 7FW
Tel 01884 211816

Bristol Team

74 Regent St,
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Tel 0117 967 3744
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Email info@fosteringfoundation.co.uk

Website www.fosteringfoundation.co.uk

