

Children's Social Care

A young person's guide to **FOSTER CARE**



What is foster care?

Foster carers are special people who can look after children who cannot live at home. They will look after you and make sure you fit into the foster family. They will make sure you go to school and help you in all things.

Why do I have to live with a foster family?

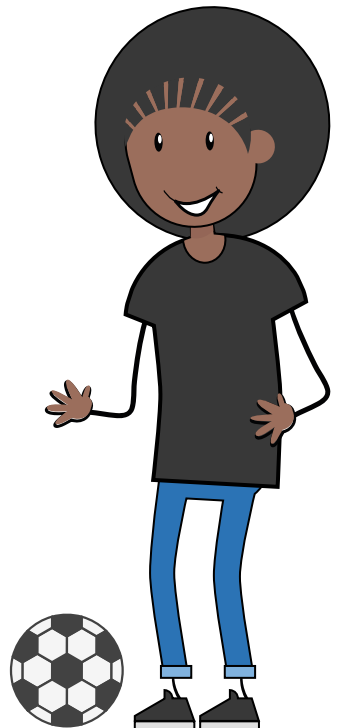
If it's not safe to live at home with your family or someone you know, you will live with a foster family.

talking to your social worker. They will help you understand.

This is a guide to which will help you understand foster care.

You can find out more by visiting www.Care4Us.co.uk

We want you to remember
it's not your fault or
something you have done.



How will my foster carers look after me?

Foster Carers have been hand-picked to make sure they are good people who care about the children they look after. They get lots of training about the needs of children and how they listen to children. They are welcoming and really want to get to know you, your likes and dislikes.

When you first move into foster care there will be a meeting to make sure the person caring for you knows the most important things about you, such as what you like to eat, what you like to do, where you go to school and how to listen to you.



What is a Review?

When you first come into foster care, you might feel scared or upset, or even happy straight away because it's all new. We hope you soon start to settle in to your foster home and feel better. When you live in foster care for a bit longer you will have a 'review'. This is a meeting about you and how you are getting on in your foster home. Your social worker will make a plan with you. This is called your 'care plan' or Pathway Plan. Children can attend their reviews and say how they feel about being in foster care and what they think will help them to do well.

There is a whole team of people who will help your foster carer look after you and they want to listen to what you think, so you can get the best care. You will have a review at least every five months. The Mind of My Own App will help you have your say.

What are things like in foster care?

Here are some things young people have told us:

I made new friends and get to see my brother and sister. I like everything about my foster carers

I got to go on holiday with my carers

My foster carers help me at school and I do Majorettes, Gymnastics, Art, Theatre and Martial Arts!

They help you to do stuff and teach you how to look after yourself like going to the dentist.

What about school?

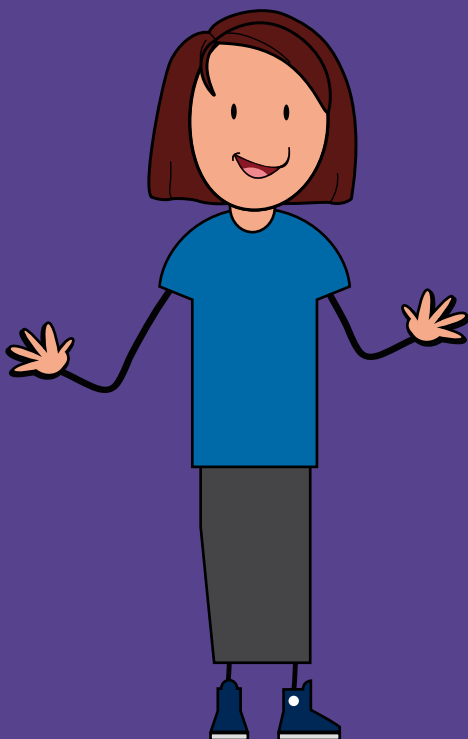
School is very important because it's where you learn about subjects, growing up, making new friends and allows you to take part in activities and hobbies after school. OK, sometimes you might find it boring BUT it can lead to great things.

Your teacher will know that you have gone to live with a foster carer, but it is your choice if you want to tell other people. If you have any problems, difficulties or are being bullied, you must tell your teacher, social worker or foster carer.

Your foster carer will help you with homework, support you with any after school activities you want to do and will attend your parent's evenings. Ask if there is anything you don't understand. If you think something is unfair - tell your social worker, they will help you work things out.

What are the rules?

Your foster carers will talk with you about how they expect you behave. Like looking after the home, being kind to others and following the rules. For example, they will have some rules about bedtime, going out, seeing friends, being polite and kind and trying hard at school.



What about seeing my family?

We know its really important for you to keep in touch with your family and other important people and your carers will help you with this.

Your Social Worker will arrange 'Family Time' which says how often you get to see them - and they have to stick to that unless you are unhappy with it!

What if I have a problem or I am unhappy?

We want to know if you have any problems at all, your carers and social workers are there to help. Talk to them, be honest, this is the best way to solve a problem. There are lots of other ways you can tell us what you think or if you are worried or want to make a complaint and can't tell your social worker, foster carer or teacher.

An advocate is someone who is not working for Children and Young People Services, so they can speak out for you. They will make sure everyone hears what you want. They can come and speak to you in private if you cannot talk about a worry to anyone else.

My Advocate's name

Telephone number

We even have a complaints officer to help you work things out. Sometimes it is hard to tell people you live with that you are unhappy or that you do not like something that they do. If you want to talk to someone other than your carers you can call: Children's Complaints Officer: 01924 302840

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These are some of the different kinds of care that you may have heard mentioned by your social worker and carers.

Short Term Care

Short Term care is when a child or young person stays with a foster family for anything from one day to maybe two years.

Long Term Care

Long Term care is when a child or young person goes to live with a foster family or in a residential home for many years, until they are ready to live independently.

Breakaway Care

Children can have Breakaway Care where they go for short regular stays.

Pre-Adoption Fostering

This is when a child or young person stays with foster carers before going to live with the family who are going to adopt them.

My Connected Care

This is being cared for by a family member, a family friend, or someone who knows the child well.

Kinship Care

When a child goes to live with family or family friends as their carer.

Special Guardianship Order (SGO)

When carers have obtained Special Guardianship Order which gives them Parental Responsibility. This is shared with the parents but the Special Guardian has the power to decide matters for the child.

SGO can only be applied by the courts and by the making of this order the children are no longer in the care of the Local Authority.

Private Fostering

This means a child is living with a friend or someone not related to them for more than 28 days at a time. The Fostering Team must know about these arrangements to make sure it is a good place to live.

My rights

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC) states that Children have a right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.

This is the stuff about your rights and the law. It might seem a lot to take in, but this information is really important and you can refer back to it if you ever need it.

- Participation is a right - see 'Article 12' above.
- Participation is not a privilege, and it does not have to be earned - it values children and young people in their own right. Any adult that works with you is required to take seriously your wishes and feelings. Wakefield Council, who looks after you, will involve you meaningfully in individual decision making and planning.
- When you first go into care, your first review should take place within 28 days.
- The next review should be within the next 3 months.
- Then you should have a review every 6 months.
- You can request a review anytime if you feel changes need to be made to your care plan.



Who has the right to make decisions about what I am allowed to do?

This is called delegated authority

1. It means your carers can be more involved in making day to day decisions with you that are about your care.
2. Your carers are given delegated authority because it makes children in care feel like they are part of a 'normal' family and are not singled out for being in care. It should speed up the amount of time it takes to make a decision about your care.
3. Your carers will be able to support decisions about you by saying 'yes' or 'no' to things such as sleep overs, school trips, haircuts - without waiting for a decision from the social worker.
4. As part of your Placement Plan your social worker will complete a checklist to agree who has delegated authority (the right to make decisions) for each area of your care (such as school, health, family time, hobbies, etc.). If you are unsure about who can/should make a decision about your care, you can always double check with your social worker.
5. Anyone making decisions for you should make sure you are included in the process - that's part of the Councils promise to you while you're in care.

Designated Teacher

At your school, there will be a special teacher for children in care. You can talk to them or another teacher you like or trust. They can make sure that any problems you have in school are sorted and can arrange for extra help and support for you, they won't 'single you out' because you are looked after – it's their job to help you get the best out of school.

The Personal Education Plan (PEP) is the part of your care plan which looks at your educational needs. It will be reviewed termly. It is a record of what needs to happen to help you fulfil your potential. To help you get the best out of your education. The PEP should include details of the things you do well (strengths) and things you need some help with along with educational progress, short term and long term goals.



Children In Care Health Team

Children in Care Nurses and Doctors

We are a team of Nurses and Doctors that are dedicated to looking after the health children of children in care.

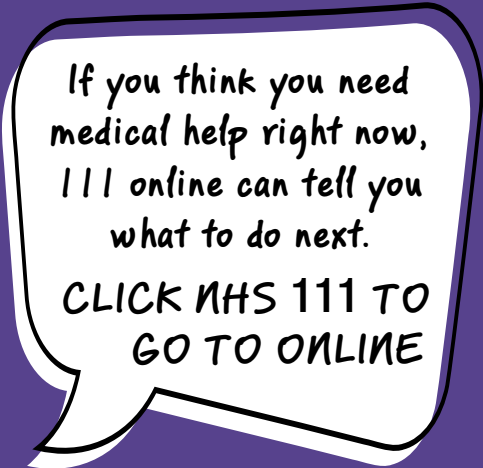
All children will be seen within 28 days of coming into care by a Doctor, this will take place at the hospital and you will be supported by your Carers and Social Workers. They will undertake a health assessment by asking you and your carers questions. They will also look at your medical history to make sure you are well and don't need any medicines or extra support.

You will then be seen by a nurse who will then see you, every 6 months if you are under 5 years of age or every 12 months if you are over 5 years of age.

Your nurse will also check that you vaccinations, eye checks and dental checks are all up to date. They will also find out if your health needs are being fully met by talking to other people such as your carer and social worker.

The nurses will be able to support you and offer you advice on emotional health, toileting issues, healthy eating and healthy lifestyles, puberty and sexual health and any other health issue you would like to talk about.

GET HELP FOR YOUR SYMPTOMS



*If you think you need
medical help right now,
111 online can tell you
what to do next.*

**CLICK NHS 111 TO
GO TO ONLINE**

The Emotional Wellbeing Team

We work with children and young people in care who are living in Wakefield who need some extra support with their emotions, feelings and behaviour. We work directly with children and young people to find out what their worries and difficulties are and support them to work through this together. We can also work with your carers, social worker and any professionals who work with you, such as school/college, to help them support you in the right way.

Spending money

You will receive pocket money that you can spend each week or save.

You are also entitled to money for your birthday, Christmas or religious festival which will be paid to your carer to buy the things that would like. The exact amounts are on www.care4us.co.uk.

Find out more about being in care and see what other young people are doing to challenge stereotypes about children in care.



VoiceAbility

Talk to an advocate,
scan the QR Code or
phone **0300 303 1660**

