



| Becoming a foster carer

Our children and young people must be placed in safe and caring environments where they feel welcome, cared for, respected and valued. It is important for our carers to feel fully supported and able to take on any challenge. Therefore we undertake a rigorous approval process that involves assessments, reference checks, interviews and training.

Becoming a foster carer

Anyone can apply to be a foster carer. They need to be over 21 years of age, physically fit, single, married or in a partnership.

Why do children need to be fostered?

Children are placed in foster care for a variety of reasons. It may be that a parent has experienced significant personal difficulties, affecting their ability to care for their children. In other instances the child may have behavioural issues and families struggle to cope, or they may have been abused or neglected by parents or members of the family.

Who can be a foster carer?

Anyone can apply to be a foster carer. They need to be over 21 years of age, physically fit, single, married or in a partnership. They may have children of their own, be in or out of paid work and own or rent a house. It is essential to have a spare bedroom to accommodate each child. Children benefit from living with families who have similar backgrounds, culture, language, religion and general lifestyle. People of all ethnic origins, ages and geographic locations are needed and welcome to apply.

Do foster carers get paid?

Foster carers are paid a professional fee along with an allowance for children's daily living needs. An outline of our current fees, associated expenses and allowances is included in the information sent to you.

Will I have support as a foster carer?

Care Visions provides 24 hour support from a skilled social work team, training in Sanctuary® and links with other experienced foster carers. Our foster carers are members of a professional team working to ensure the wellbeing of the children and families involved.

Supervising social worker

This social worker is responsible for recruiting, preparing and assessing new foster carers. After an applicant has been approved as a foster carer, they are allocated a social worker who provides them with individual supervision and support.

Child's social worker

Working closely with the child and their family, they visit the child on a regular basis, discuss any problems or issues that have arisen and check they are healthy and happy. It is also their responsibility to make plans for the next step in the child's life. Foster carers have a lot of contact with a child's social worker. It is important that you let them know if you have any anxieties about the child you are fostering.

Other foster carers

Care Visions is committed to offering comprehensive and personalised support to our foster carers and this involves new carers having access to a regular foster care support group. We operate a 'buddying' scheme, which partners all new carers with an experienced carer.

Specialist support

Children entering foster care have often suffered emotionally distressing experiences and may need help from therapists, counsellors or children's support workers. Their involvement will be discussed as part of the care planning arrangements for each child. They may undertake one-to-one direct work with the child or, depending on their needs, the child may also participate in short or long term therapy.

Schools and teachers

Children in foster care may experience problems with their education. Disruptions and changes in their lives often mean that they are struggling to keep up with their peers. Problems and uncertainty in their lives may be expressed through 'challenging behaviour'. Foster carers need to develop a close relationship with teachers to ensure staff are aware of the child's circumstances and the relevant support is given.

Health practitioners

Foster carers will work closely with health visitors and doctors. All children living with carers will need to be registered with a GP, optician and dentist.

Will the child's family still be in contact?

With many foster placements the aim is to assess home circumstances and ensure a safe return home for children. If a child is placed with a foster carer on a long-term basis and won't return home, there is often still contact with the child's family. Experience tells us it is important for the child to remain in contact with people who are important to them.

Carers often find themselves working closely with the parents or other relatives. They may visit the child at home or meet them at a place pre-arranged by the social worker. Our carers are offered support in relation to contact with birth parents and significant family members.



For further information about fostering, contact a member of the team.

T: 01786 289 211 **E:** fostering@carevisions.co.uk **W:** www.carevisions.co.uk/fostering