

# Fostering

Eligibility and 'The Process' documents

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# Our service

Here at Birmingham City Council's Fostering Service, we want to provide the best quality care - and the best choice of care - for the hundreds of our children who need a foster home.

Every child or young person we look after deserves a home that makes them feel comfortable and cared for – a home that's right for their age, ethnicity, religion and overall needs, and which can cater for any disabilities or special requirements they may have.

We look to you, the general public to provide that caring home. And we want to make sure that whatever section of the community you come from, you'll get the best quality advice, training and support you need to do the job properly.

This pack aims to give you all the information you'll need before deciding to take the next step. But if you have received this pack without speaking to a social worker, you will need to do so before taking the next step.

Our Adoption & Fostering Recruitment Centre is open Monday to Saturday, and if you need further advice, there will be someone there to talk to you about your individual situation during opening hours (see below). You can drop in without an appointment but it is best to phone ahead to book.

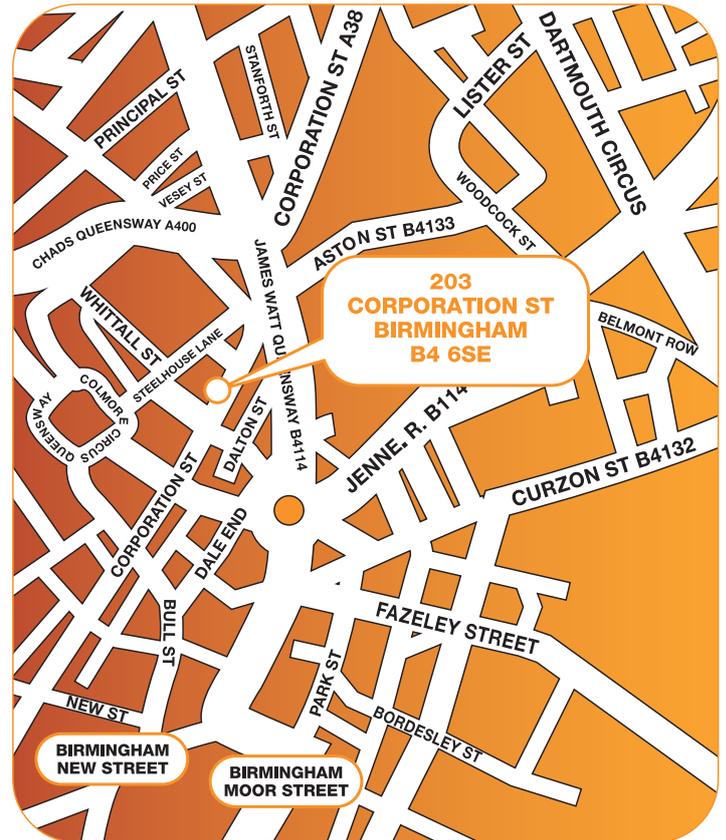
If you can only contact us outside our office hours, please leave a message on our answer-phone, saying when you will be available, and giving your landline and mobile telephone number (if you have one) - and we will ring you back.

You may also wish to email us, but if you do, please give us your full names, telephone number and address so we can phone you or post you any written information.

## Opening Hours

<b>Mondays &amp; Tuesdays</b>	<b>9.30am – 5.00pm</b>
<b>Wednesdays</b>	<b>2.00pm – 5.00pm</b>
<b>Thursdays</b>	<b>9.30am – 8.00pm</b>
<b>Fridays</b>	<b>9.30am – 4.15pm</b>
<b>Saturdays</b>	<b>10.00am – 1.30pm</b>

**Adoption & Fostering Recruitment Centre**  
203 Corporation Street Birmingham B4 6SE  
Telephone: 0121 303 7575  
Email: [A&FRecruit@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:A&FRecruit@birmingham.gov.uk)  
Internet: [www.birmingham.gov.uk/adoptionandfostering](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/adoptionandfostering)



# Eligibility Criteria - Fostering

**In order to be considered as a foster carer for Birmingham City Council, you must meet the following criteria:**

## Age

Ideally you need to be aged 23 years or over when you apply. You must be sufficiently emotionally mature and financially stable to provide the support children will need. You need to be sufficiently fit and healthy to meet the child's needs for activity and exercise as well as – in the case of long term fostering – seeing the child into adulthood.

## Accommodation

Your home may be rented or privately owned, but if you rent you will need to seek your landlord's written permission. You will need to have a spare bedroom for a foster child and this should be available (i.e. no one sleeping in it) before you apply. This room should have sufficient space for a bed (or cot) and a storage unit for the child's belongings. A baby up to a maximum of 18 months old may share an adult carer's bedroom but there must be adequate space around the cot.

Your home (and garden if you have one) needs to meet Health & Safety regulations and the National Minimum Fostering Standards in terms of hygiene and play and homework space.

## Child Care Experience

An age-gap of at least a year is advised between a foster child and any child in the family. Ideally your youngest child should be at least one year old before you apply.

## Your own children

An age-gap of at least a year is advised between a foster child and any child in the family. Ideally your youngest child should be at least one year old before you apply. If you become pregnant during assessment, we will close your application, with a view to you reapplying when your new child is of a suitable age.

## Adult relationships

If you are married, cohabiting or in a civil partnership, you must have been living together for at least one year, and you need to apply as a couple. Even if your long-term partner does not live with you, he/she will still need to be fully involved in the assessment, as they will play an integral part in the child's life. If you have recently separated from your partner, we ask you to wait at least a year before applying. If you cared for children in a past relationship, we will also want to interview your ex-partner and adult children in most cases.

A good support network of family or close friends is essential for all applicants, and single applicants will need to demonstrate how they will meet the demands of fostering.

## Financial Stability

Applicants need to be able to demonstrate financial security. If you are the sole earner and give up paid employment in order to foster, you'll need to satisfy us that you can manage on State Benefits at those times when a Fostering Allowance may not be payable.

## Health

You must be physically and mentally fit for the task of fostering, and you will be required to undertake a medical. If you have any serious health issues then these have to be taken into account. If you have had an acute illness or operation in the recent past, we may seek further medical advice before proceeding with your enquiry. There is an expectation that you will disclose any drug or alcohol dependencies.

## Smoking

We require that all members of the fostering household and their visitors **do not smoke** around children or in places where children spend time. This means no one should smoke inside the home or in the cars. Because of their particular health needs, young babies 0 – 18 months of age will only be placed in non-smoking households.

## Language

Foster carers will need to be able to speak, read and write English to a competent level, and be able to communicate in this language both with children and other professionals. Bilingual applicants are very welcome.

## Working hours

Pre-school children (0 – 5) need full time care, so the main carer cannot work outside the home. If the child is of school age, carers may work up to 16 hours per week, but this must be compatible with the child's needs. All working carers must demonstrate how they would manage school holidays, illness, or times when a child cannot attend school. Ideally carers should be able to identify someone in their support networks who can provide regular support. Fostering will impact significantly on your day if you are the main carer, and you will need to give careful and sensitive consideration to how you will manage any paid work you do.

## Pets

All pets should be kept in clean conditions, be regularly immunised, and treated for worms and fleas. They must be under control at all times. We will arrange for vet assessments to be done on most dogs and all exotic pets.

## Transport

If you intend to use your car to transport children, it is essential that it is roadworthy and properly maintained. It must meet all UK legal requirements and have adequate room for each child to have a seatbelt and safety seats where necessary. All drivers need to be fully insured and have a valid UK/EU licence.

## Statutory checks

All household members aged 16 years and over will be asked to apply for a Criminal Records (CRB) check. If you have lived outside the UK for a continuous period of three months as an adult, you will also need to apply for a Certificate of Good Conduct from that country, for which the cost has to be met by the applicant.

All past offences and cautions as well as motoring offences (including speeding offences) must be declared and no offences are 'spent' when considering your suitability to foster. If you have been convicted or cautioned for any offence, we may not consider you suitable until a period of time has passed according to the severity of the offence. Some offences will automatically bar you from working with children.

If any of your relatives or friends regularly visit your house and are likely to have unsupervised contact with any foster child, they will also be required to undertake a CRB check.

We will also carry out checks with our Children's and Adults' Services, to see if you have had any contact with them, and the nature of that contact. If you live in another local authority area or have worked for another fostering agency in the past, we will need to contact them too.

These are the basic eligibility requirements for us to start considering your application as a foster carer. If we decide to proceed with your application then it is our expectation that you will undertake a full assessment.

# Allowances for Foster Children

With effect from August 2009

## ► Fees (per week)

<b>Level 1</b>	Families & Friends Fostering – maintenance only, per child in placement
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>£138.74</b> per week for each child, plus maintenance, as detailed below
<b>Level 4</b>	<b>£214.13</b> per week for each child, plus maintenance, as detailed below

## ► Maintenance Allowances

<b>Age of Child (under 5 years)</b>	<b>Weekly Maintenance</b> (payable per child in placement)
<b>Under 5 years</b>	<b>£125.09</b>
<b>5-10 years</b>	<b>£142.45</b>
<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>£177.38</b>
<b>16-18 years</b>	<b>£215.32</b>

## ► Holiday Allowances (payable per child in placement)

<b>Under 5 years</b>	<b>£250.18</b>
<b>5-10 years</b>	<b>£284.90</b>
<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>£354.76</b>
<b>16-18 years</b>	<b>£430.64</b>

## ► Equipment Allowances

<b>Equipment Set-Up</b> (one off payment)	
<b>0-5 years</b>	<b>£500.00</b>
<b>Over 5 years</b>	<b>£350.00</b>

<b>Equipment Maintenance</b>	
<b>£150.00 is given per child, for however many children a carer is approved for, whether or not these are in placement</b>	<b>£150.00 annually</b>

## Notes

- New temporary carers will start on **Level 3**.
- **Long-term carers** will be paid at **Level 3 or 4**, depending upon skills required.
- **Approved emergency carers** are paid on a continuous basis and work shift patterns of four weeks on duty and two weeks off. Rates are a weekly fee at Level 4 of **£428.26** for one child, **£600.11** at Level 5 for two children and **£723.03** at Level 5 for three children.
- **Respite carers** will be paid fees and maintenance at the same rates as full-time temporary carers, but on a pro-rata (day-by-day or week-by-week) basis, depending upon how long children stay.
- Where there are **exceptional circumstances**, allowances are available upon application.
- A **Carer Recruitment Fee** of **£500.00** is earned by existing foster carers by recommending a new foster carer. This is payable in two parts, £150.00 initially and the remainder of £350.00 is payable upon the new carer's first placement.

**Please note that although fostering payments are taxable, there is a very generous exemption allowance. Please see our information sheet on Tax, Insurance & Benefits**

**For further information please call:**

**The Adoption & Fostering Recruitment Team  
0121 303 7575**

# I'm interested – what do I do next?

**The enclosed flowchart shows each step you'll need to take. The process should take no longer than 6 months between your Formal Application and approval by Panel. However, the length of time between your first contact with us and your formal application can vary according to your own availability for meetings, interviews etc.**

## Step One – Information Meeting

You need to contact the Recruitment Centre and arrange to attend on one of the dates we have sent you. Please advise us before the meeting if you have any special requirements, eg. access. The meeting is not appropriate for children; therefore we ask that you do not bring your children with you.

If, after attending, you wish to continue the process, you'll be given some initial paperwork to take away. This includes a 'Resource Offered Form', and information on how to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).

## Step Two – CRB check and Initial Screening Visit

Once you have returned your completed Resource Offered Form (ROF) and CRB disclosure paperwork to our office, your file will be allocated to a social worker who will contact you to arrange a visit to your home to carry out an initial screening visit and to complete your CRB paperwork.

We will visit you at home to discuss what you can offer. This visit lasts about two to three hours and is a good opportunity for you to put questions to us on a one-to-one basis. It also allows us to gauge whether you can provide a nurturing environment for children with enough physical and emotional space to satisfy the National Fostering Standards, and meet the needs of the children needing care. We'll also check on things like home hygiene, safety, and arrangements for pets – especially dogs.

As part of the CRB Disclosure we need to verify the identity of all applicants face-to-face. **You will**

**need to provide us with at least three forms of identification. At least one form of photo ID is essential, as is a recent proof of address and your NI number.** Please consult the list of acceptable identification you are given at the information meeting. If in doubt, please provide as many items as possible.

Everyone living in the home over the age of 16 will be required to complete a CRB disclosure.

You may have already applied for or obtained an Enhanced Disclosure elsewhere but unless this check has been carried out by our own Directorate (Children, Young People & Families) in the last six months, we cannot accept it. Effectively, most people will have to apply for a new CRB check.

If you have lived outside the UK for a continuous period of more than three months as an adult, you will need to obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct from that country, normally at your own expense.

If you are aware of any criminal convictions or cautions in your family, please let us know at the outset to avoid delay or embarrassment. Please note that you have to declare all offences, including motor offences, even those normally considered as 'spent'. If you do not disclose an offence this is likely to affect your application detrimentally. Please make sure all family members are aware of this.

**Your Disclosure document will be sent to you directly and is valid for three years. You will need to renew it every three years while you are fostering.**

## Step Three – Preparation Groups

If everything is satisfactory, you'll be notified in writing that your details have been passed on to the Training and Assessment Team, who will invite you to attend Preparation Group Training in due course. Here you can meet other prospective foster carers, and explore the issues connected with fostering and what it could mean for your family – in greater detail.

Applicants' children are also given the opportunity to attend their own preparation sessions. Separate sessions are organised for children aged between 7-11 years and 12 to 16 years. The groups run for one or two days during holiday times or at weekends. Held every six to eight weeks, Preparation Training usually takes the form of nine separate sessions spread across weekdays or evenings and Saturdays. The sessions include training on Listening to Children, Team Work,

Development of Children, Safeguarding, Abuse, Understanding Behaviour, Fostering and Your Family and Moving On. You are likely to wait longer if you can only attend the evening/Saturday groups as these are held less frequently. We expect applicants to make themselves available by taking time off work if necessary.

### **Step Four - Home Study/Assessment**

After Preparation Group training, you will complete a formal application form and be allocated an assessing social worker. We aim to do this as quickly as possible after training. The Team Manager will let you know if you have to wait. Once allocated, the assessing social worker will visit you at home to carry out your assessment. This involves about ten visits.

You will also need a medical examination by your own GP (if not already done), and at least three references from people who know you well – one relative and two non-relatives. Your assessing social worker will then draw up a detailed report covering all aspects of your family life. You will have an opportunity to read this and comment on its content. By this point, you will also have compiled a portfolio of evidence about your competency as a carer.

If you have been married or lived with a partner previously (and cared for children together) we will need to make contact with your ex-partner and/or adult children to obtain a reference. Talk to us about this if you have concerns.

If during the assessment we do not feel that fostering is right for you, or what you have to offer does not match the children waiting for fostering, we will advise you prior to Panel.

The assessment process is expected to take 16 weeks from allocation of a social worker to the presentation of the report to the department's fostering panel.

This process involves an average of between eight and ten visits to applicants plus visits to referees and significant others. The social worker will produce a written comprehensive assessment report (BAAF Form F report) regarding your suitability as foster carers and this will be supported by the production of your portfolio of competency-based evidence.

### **Step Five - Fostering Panel**

All the reports and evidence will then be put to the Birmingham Fostering Panel which has an independent Chair. Panel will recommend whether

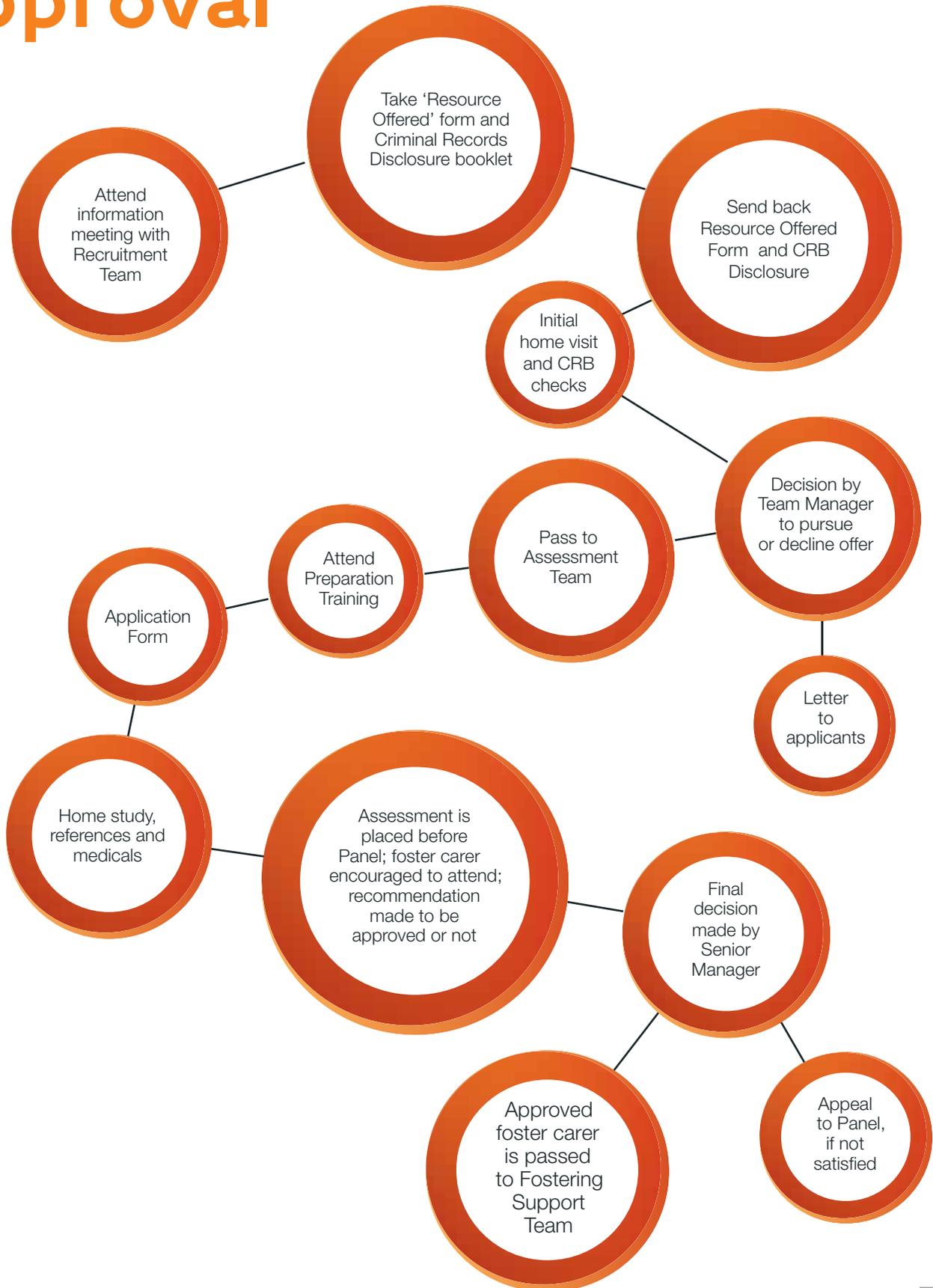
or not you should be approved. You will be invited to (and are encouraged to attend) this meeting.

The Panel's recommendation must then be ratified by a Senior Manager in the Children, Young People and Families Directorate before formal approval can be granted. If you are not approved, you will be given 28 days to make another representation to the Panel if you wish.

### **Step Six - Support Team**

Once approved, you will be allocated your own supervising social worker from one of the support teams. They'll get to know you, make sure you have all the practical things you need, help you through your first placements, offer you further training, and (for long-term) discuss any children who could be a possible match for you. Your supervising social worker will visit regularly, review your performance every year, and assist you when they can at case conferences and various meetings. They will also work with you on your future development and will help you to complete a portfolio as part of the CWDC Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Carers. You will also have access to the BCFA network and to your local cell group.

# Process of approval



# Relationship guidance

Both single people and couples applying to foster may find some of the information below helpful.

## Previous Relationships

If you are single and have previously been in a permanent relationship, on any basis, that has subsequently broken down, you will be asked to take time to work through any issues before applying to foster. In this circumstance you will be asked to wait for one year before coming back to us to apply.

## Breakdown of a Relationship

Should an existing relationship breakdown for any reason prior to and during the screening process you must inform us of this change. Again, you will then be asked to wait one year for your personal circumstances to settle before you approach us again.

## Recently Formed Relationships

If you are in a new relationship where you have been involved with the person for less than one year you will be asked to take time for this situation to become a more permanent and settled situation before applying to foster.

Any present partners will need to go through the CRB process in the same way as yourself. They will also be party to the screening, assessment and training process along with yourself. Therefore, it is very important that once any relationship is in a settled position that you are both in agreement on fostering.

## Different Types of Relationships

Should you have a partner who is not resident with you but this is a long term relationship, the partner must be screened along with yourself and will also be part of the entire fostering process.

There will be an opportunity during the screening interview to discuss the issue of relationships fully and you will also be able to ask any questions you may have.

## Future Relationships Once Approved

If you are a single person and approved to foster you will need to give some thought to the issue of any future relationships you may form. Likewise if you currently have a partner but then separate, you need to be aware that you are REQUIRED to notify us of any changes in your personal circumstances once you are approved.

Any new partners will need to go through the CRB process in the same way that you have. They will also be party to the screening and assessment process along with yourself. If approved and you form a new relationship, your new partner will need to be fully assessed.

The above guidelines have been put in place in order to protect children waiting for placements. They have often already experienced great upset and are vulnerable as a result. Therefore, it is necessary for them to have as much stability as possible.

## Support Throughout the Process

As the fostering process can be very demanding it is possible to have the support of a family member or friend with you. This may be limited during certain parts of the process, for example, during screening and this should be discussed with you in full by the duty social worker.

In addition there are certain organisations that can provide more information and support to yourself once you are approved:-

### Fostering Network

Tel. 020 7620 6400  
[www.fostering.net/england](http://www.fostering.net/england)

### Birmingham Foster Care Association

Tel: 0121 464 3037

## Any Questions?

Should you have any specific questions regarding the above you will have ample opportunities throughout the process to raise these. However, you can contact the duty social worker at any time to clarify any queries if you wish on tel: 0121 303 7575.

# Fostering Service

## Health and Safety Factsheet

Every child should be protected from harm; however children with a history of abuse or neglect may fail to recognize hazards or danger.

The Fostering Service needs to make sure that the home environment of every prospective foster carer is safe, secure and suitable for fostering. The social worker completing the fostering assessment will consider a variety of health and safety issues to ensure the well-being of looked after children.

The following is a list of the health and safety issues that we would expect you to begin to address as you progress through the recruitment process. It is appreciated that you may not currently have all these things in place; however, these things would need to be addressed prior to any child being placed with you.

### Generally

All accommodation will need to be clean and good hygiene standards maintained. It should be tidy and free of clutter in all rooms.

### Fire Safety

If you become approved as a foster carer, your home will need to be fitted with a working smoke alarm, a carbon monoxide detector and a fire blanket. All heating appliances will need to be fixed to the wall and fireguards in place both for fires and for heaters. Electric sockets should not be overloaded and safety covers should be in place in unused sockets.

### First Aid Box

Your home will need to have a basic first aid kit for 1-10 people.

### Toys

You will need to be sure that all toys in your home are safe, clean and in good condition. You will need to consider how you will supervise the use of toys.

### Baby and Toddler Equipment

Any equipment for use with babies and toddlers will need to be clean, in good working order and be fit for purpose. Safety gates will need to be fitted on the stairs, and cots need to be regularly checked to ensure they are stable and secure.

### Inside Your Home

Space will be needed for a child to pursue their homework and engage in quiet activities as well as space for more boisterous play.

All floor coverings and carpets need to be in good condition and secure. Stairways must be adequately lit, free from obstacles and have a handrail in place. Glass furniture and windows need to comply with safety standards. Any glassware or fragile objects need to be out of reach of young children.

### Kitchen

Electrical cords on kettles and other electrical goods need to be short and out of reach of children. A cooker guard will need to be fitted and all sharp knives kept out of children's reach. Any chest freezer will need to have a lock fitted and all hazardous substances stored securely.

## **Bathroom**

All lights and heaters need to have switches outside the bathroom or a pull cord of a safe length. Any locks need to be out of the reach of children and any medication kept in a locked cupboard. All cosmetics and shampoos etc need to be kept out of the reach of children. There should be a way of controlling the water temperature, such as thermostatic taps.

## **Bedrooms**

There will need to be sufficient bedroom space including space for a bed, wardrobe, chest of drawers and personal belongings. Beds and cots will need to be safe and robust and wardrobes and other large pieces of furniture sturdy and secure. Any mirrors need to be secured to the wall and window locks/restrictors need to be in place. Beds and cots should be placed away from heaters. Bunk beds should not be used with young people over 14 years old and should not be used for children under 5 years old.

## **Gardens**

You will need to give consideration to the plant content of your garden. Your garden should not contain dangerous berries or poisonous plants. All outside toys such as swings and slides will need to be secured into the ground. Garden fences, walls and gates should be safe and secure. Any garden equipment, including chemicals, will need to be stored in a locked shed or garage. All pathways surrounding the property need to be clear of debris. Any trees or bushes should not be overgrown. Ponds, swimming and/or paddling pools will need to be covered with a rigid cover. Greenhouses must contain safety glass and be adequately secured.

## **Utilities**

All gas and electrical appliances should be serviced on an annual basis and evidence of this kept. There will need to be a trip switch on the electrical fuse box.

## **Smoking**

All matches and lighters need to be kept out of the reach of children. Steps will need to be taken to reduce the risks of passive smoking. This includes not smoking indoors, in vehicles or near children. We strongly encourage any enquirer who smokes to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the NHS to assist them in giving up smoking.

## **Pets**

All pets will need to be fully immunised and vet assessments will be required if you own two or more dogs. Certain breeds of dogs are not permitted; for a full list please see the website below.

## **Cars (used for transporting children)**

Full driver's licences, insurance documents and MOT certificates need to be valid, correct and up to date. We will need to see these documents and record their details. Car seats and booster seats need to be used strictly in accordance with legal requirements. Details of these can be found on the website listed below.

## **Firearms**

Any firearms kept will need to have a valid gun certificate and you will need to be able to demonstrate the safekeeping of the gun(s).

## **Useful Websites**

### **[www.rosopa.co.uk](http://www.rosopa.co.uk)**

Includes details of various health and safety advice and information including legislation.

### **[www.safekids.co.uk](http://www.safekids.co.uk)**

Information available on safety issues for children, could be used for guidance/ discussion with carers.

### **[www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)**

Details about prohibited dogs.

### **[www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk](http://www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk)**

Includes the new legislative changes required for car seats.

### **[www.bsi-global.com](http://www.bsi-global.com)**

Lists all the British, European and International standards.

# Access to personal information

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, you have rights that influence how we collect and use information about you. This leaflet explains those rights

## Why do you need information about me?

- To find out what services you need
- To ensure that you receive the most appropriate service
- To keep a track of the services we provide
- To help plan future services

## How do you get this information?

- From you or someone acting on your behalf, such as a friend or relative
- From people who think you may need our services such as a doctor or teacher
- From agencies that will help us provide the best service for you

## Who is given this information?

Your information will only be passed to staff involved in providing the service. Normally we will not share information with others without your permission, but we may be obliged to if you or someone else is in danger.

## How do you look after the information?

We will ensure the information we keep about you is:

- Relevant – what we need in order to provide a good service
- Correct – please keep us informed of any changes to your name, address, etc.
- Kept confidential – on a need-to-know basis only
- Kept only as long as required – in our case, at least three years

## How can I get to see this information?

- You have a right to see any information that we hold about you
- You can only view someone else's details with their permission, although parents may sometimes access information about their children
- To access information you can pick up an application form from any of our offices, or simply put a request in writing
- We must then send you a copy of the information within 40 days, or arrange for you to see it in person at one of our offices
- You are entitled to a copy of any information that we hold about you

## What if the information isn't true?

If you feel that any of the details are inaccurate we will correct them, or make a note of your additional information.

## If you are unhappy

If you are unhappy about our Fostering Service refusing to give you access to your records or to amend or delete information from your records, you may appeal the decision to:

The Information Commissioners Office,  
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow,  
Cheshire, SK9 5AF  
Tel: 01625 545 700  
Web: [www.dataprotection.gov.uk](http://www.dataprotection.gov.uk)

You may also apply to the courts, but we suggest discussing it with a solicitor first.

# Improving our service

We strive to offer an efficient and effective service to all enquirers to the Fostering Service, but are always keen to improve.

## Access to our service

We endeavour to make our service accessible to all sections of the community. Should you require an interpreter, a signer or any other special arrangements, please let us know as soon as possible to avoid delays.

## Eligibility

In order to recruit people who will do the best possible job in fostering for us, we work from strict selection criteria - including government standards and specific fostering legislation. As a result, some applicants will unfortunately not be accepted as foster carers.

Should your offer be turned down and you feel you have been treated unfairly at any stage or are not happy with our reasons, let us know and we will investigate the matter. Ultimately however we are acting on behalf of some of Birmingham's most needy children, and if you do not meet our criteria we will not be able to reverse our decision.

You should put your complaint in writing to the appropriate Team Manager, who will examine the complaint thoroughly and liaise with Senior Managers, if appropriate, to resolve any issues. You can also contact the Customer Services, tel: 0121 303 0052, if you wish.

Even if you do not wish to make a complaint, in the interests of continual improvement we are grateful for any comments and feedback. The information you provide will help us to improve the way we attract and retain the carers we urgently need.

## Delays

If you meet our criteria and are fully committed to fostering, we very much welcome your application.

Should any issues arise, we will always aim to process enquiries within an appropriate timescale. To help us achieve this, please ensure that you complete and return forms fully, accurately and as quickly as possible.

Given that we liaise with other agencies and departments however, delays are regrettably sometimes out of our control.

## Contact details for our Team Managers

### Recruitment Team Manager

**Vivien Meadows**

203 Corporation Street, Birmingham, B4 6SE  
tel: 0121 303 7575

### Training & Assessment Team Manager

**Anita Earl**

Pype Hayes Hall, Chester Road,  
Birmingham, B24 0HG  
tel: 0121 303 0219

### Family Finding Team Manager

**Janet Groves**

### Panel Team Manager

**Eleanor Larkin**

Silvermere Centre, Silvermere Road, Sheldon,  
Birmingham, B26 3XA  
tel: 0121 303 8400

### Fostering Support Team Managers

**Joyce Carey** (HOB)

**Barbara Gregg** (South)

CYPF

HOB & South Fostering Support Teams

PO Box 15742

Birmingham B2 2QW

Tel: 0121 303 5313

**Michelle Gardiner** (East & North)

CYPF

East & North Fostering Support Team

2nd Floor, Tamebridge House,

202 Aldridge Road, Perry Barr,

Birmingham, B42 2TX

tel: 0121 303 9523

**Bobby Bhullar** (Family & Friends)

CYPF

Family & Friends Support Team

2nd Floor, Tamebridge House

202 Aldridge Road, Perry Barr

Birmingham B42 2TY

Tel: 0121 303 9523

### Principal Development Manager, Fostering

**Jacque Smith**

Adoption & Fostering Management Team,

31 Dollman Street, Nechells,

Birmingham, B7 4RP

tel: 0121 464 2309

## For Comments & Complaints

Submit a feedback form at:  
[www.birmingham.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/contactus)

Or write to:  
Customer Relations Service  
Birmingham City Council  
Feedback  
Freepost License 15136  
Birmingham  
B1 1BR

Or call:  
Tel: 0121 464 9995

## Other options

If it's not possible for you to foster, or you've decided that it's not right for you, there are many other ways to get some personal satisfaction from helping the community.

### 1. Neighbourhood Care Service

For residents in Hall Green, Selly Oak, Northfield and Edgbaston wards, the council runs a part-time caring scheme offering short breaks to children under eight years old.

You will not need a spare room, and no child will stay longer than seven consecutive nights – usually it will be a weekend, a single overnight stay, or even day care only – arranged beforehand to help the child and his family in times of difficulty.

To find out more, ring Ali Bradley, Rachel Hancox or Sue Smith on Tel: 0121 464 1300, or write to them at Neighbourhood Care Service, CYPF, PO Box 15728, Birmingham B2 2QR.

### 2. Share Friends & Birmingham Adult Placement Service

These are two separate council schemes for disabled adults.

Share Friends links you up with over-18s with learning difficulties or other disabilities, and you accompany them on leisure experiences such as trips to the cinema or bowling. To volunteer, contact John Lawson on Tel: 0121 303 0564.

If you would like to offer a disabled adult a place in your home on either a short- or long-term basis, the Positive Moves scheme can facilitate this. Contact Lynne Porter on Tel: 0121 464 3610.

## 3. Independent Visitors Scheme

Run by Action for Children, this project provides a befriending service to children and young people who are accommodated by the Local Authority, but do not currently see much of their families.

Independent visitors take children out on excursions, and participate in activities with them. They may be required to speak up on the child's behalf if necessary, and support and protect them as a parent would. All applicants would be thoroughly vetted first.

To apply, please contact Birmingham Independent Visitors Project, 2-4 Guild Close, Ledsam Street, Ladywood, Birmingham B16 8EI, call Tel: 0121 455 0120 or visit [www.actionforchildren.org.uk](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk)

## 4. Childcare Information Bureau

To become a registered minder for children under eight, please contact the Childcare Information Bureau on tel: 0121 303 3521.

## 5. Other kinds of voluntary work

There are many ways in which you can help others, depending on your age, experience and aptitude. The Birmingham Volunteer Centre at the BVSC has connections with a huge number of voluntary agencies:

BVSC  
138 Digbeth,  
Birmingham, B5 6DR  
tel: 0121 643 4343  
[www.bvsc.org](http://www.bvsc.org)