



family and friends

...becoming a foster carer

make a difference...

www.caerphilly.gov.uk/fostering

Fostering Team 0800 587 5664



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg, ac mewn ieithoedd a fformatau eraill ar gais.
This document is available in Welsh, and in other languages and formats on request.

Some of you may be thinking about becoming a foster carer for your grandchild, niece, or cousin's son, etc. Perhaps you didn't realise relatives could become foster carers. Whatever your situation you may find this leaflet helpful in explaining what is expected of you. It will help you make the decision whether you do want to proceed.

There are other ways of you caring for the child/ren, apart from becoming a foster carer. Special Guardianship Orders and Residence Orders provide an alternative means of providing a looked after child with permanence.

A Residence Order details where a child should live. It gives the holder of the order shared parental responsibility with the parent(s). Where a Residence Order is granted, the child will no longer be looked after.

A Special Guardianship Order gives the guardian parental responsibility which can be exercised to a greater extent to that of the parent(s). Following the granting of a special guardianship order, the child will no longer be looked after. A special guardian may also request an assessment of need for special guardianship support services.

If you decide to proceed with your application to become a foster carer and are approved, the child/ren concerned will remain looked after by the Local Authority and you will not have any parental responsibility.

If you do decide to continue with your application then Social Services will be involved in your life. Ideally you will have been assessed and approved as a foster carer before the child/ren come to live with you, however it is possible, for practical reasons, that some of you will undergo the assessment after the child/ren has moved in.

The assessment will be undertaken by a Social Worker from the fostering team.

The assessment will gather information to:

- **help the Local Authority decide whether you could be approved as a foster carer**
- **explore what your support needs are in connection with caring for the child.**

It is really important that you are open and honest with the Social Worker during the assessment.

The assessment process has 5 key elements:

1. The suitability of your property
2. Criminal records checks
3. Health checks
4. References
5. Talking to you and people who live with you

This assessment process can take anything up to four months.

The assessment will be undertaken in line with The Fostering Services Regulations 2003 and the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services.

When the assessment is completed:

The Social Worker will write a report which you will need to read and sign. This report is presented to Foster Panel, which is made up of people who have not been involved in the assessment process. This panel has the responsibility to make a recommendation as follows:

- **To approve you as a foster carer**
- **To approve you subject to any specific conditions identified during the assessment, or**
- **Not to approve you as a foster carer**

The Local Authority decision maker, who will not have been involved in the assessment or in the fostering panel will then take account of the recommendation and make a decision. You will then be notified of the decision.

Once you are approved, the Local Authority will place the child/ren with you and will pay you a fostering allowance. You will be asked to sign a Foster Carer agreement which sets out details of what we expect you to provide for the child/ren. Once the child/ren placed is with you, both you and s/he will have your own Social Workers who will visit you on a regular basis. You will also be expected to attend a number of meetings with regard to the child.

Every year your Social Worker will carry out a review, this will give you the opportunity to discuss how you feel the past 12 months have gone. The Social Worker will then write a report based on this review and present it to foster panel.

Hopefully this may have answered some of your questions, but please discuss any other concerns you have with your Social Worker.