



The Foster Carers' Charter

FOSTERWITHUS

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In partnership with



Stonewall





Children come first

- Children in foster care should experience as full a family life as possible and be part of a safe, loving and caring foster family. Their carers should be able to make every day decisions for them, in order for them to feel supported in placement. The delegated authority for day-to-day decision making is delegated to the child's carer(s). (As detailed in the child's care plan and placement plan.)
- Children can expect to be placed with a family who will meet their needs and promote their culture and ethnicity.
- Children must be given every opportunity and support to develop their own identities and aspirations and to fulfil their potential. Above all, they should be listened to.

Hertfordshire Fostering Services must

- Recognise in practice the importance of the child's relationship with his or her foster family as one that can make the biggest difference in the child's life and which can endure into adulthood.
- Listen to and involve foster carers and their foster children in decision making and planning.
- Engage foster carers and children to help develop and improve the fostering service.
- Carers have the maximum and appropriate flexibility in taking decisions relating to the children in their care, within the framework of the agreed Care Plan and Placement Plan. Delegated Authority sits within the body of the placement plan, and this plan respects the views and wishes of the children and their birth parents. Authority for day-to-day decision making about a child looked after is delegated to the child's carer(s), unless there is a valid reason not to do so.
- In making placements be clear about the continuing care and support there will be for the child, including their transition into adulthood. Be sensitive to the needs of the foster carer and the child in making and ending placements and have support contingency plans should the placement not work.
- Treat foster carers with openness, fairness and respect as a core member of the team around the child and support them in making reasonable and appropriate decisions on behalf of their foster child. (as described within the placement plan delegated authority)
- Ensure that foster carers have the support services and development opportunities they need in order to provide their foster child with the best possible care. That includes liaising with local foster carers groups and seeking to respond to problems and disseminate best practice.
- Make sure foster carers are paid on time and are given clear information about any support, allowances, fees, and holidays they will receive including in cases of dispute with the service or during gaps in placements.



Foster Carers must

- Be positive role models and provide opportunities and life experiences for the foster child and to treat the foster child as they would their own children.
- Be a strong advocate in advocating all aspects of the child's development and co-operate fully as part of a team with other key professionals in the child's life.
- To actively promote the educational attainment and physical and emotional health and wellbeing of the child.
- Support their foster child and do all they can to sustain the placement. Take part in learning and development, use skills and approaches that make a positive impact and enable the child to reach his or her potential.
- Provide and cultivate an environment of dignity, respect and consideration. Support their foster child to help them to counter any bullying and discrimination including as a result of their care status.
- Support and promote appropriate links with the child's family and their history. To maintain records of their life with the foster family and to ensure confidentiality.

Hertfordshire County Council in partnership with the Fostering Forum agrees to reflect the spirit and Intentions of the Charter in their actions.

The Child's Local Authority

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Marion Ingram, Assistant Director (Specialist Services)

The Fostering Service

Lynn Costello, Service Manager, Fostering

Foster Carer/s

Patrick D. Glennie, Foster Carer on behalf of
Hertfordshire foster carers and the Fostering Forum.

