

Support for Foster Carers

- Foster carers will receive full and detailed information regarding each young person
- Foster carers will have the most up-to-date contact details for support from all members of the Team around the Child
- There will be monthly supervision with the Specialist Supervising Social worker
- There will be a monthly group/peer supervision session with other carers
- A monthly Programme Review Meeting with TAC will evaluate progress of young people
- There will be telephone support from a Psychologist and the Integrated Service for Looked After and Adopted Children (ISL)
- There will be additional support from the Fostering Support Worker
- There will be planned, regular respite care where appropriate

The Rewards

- A valued member of professional team (TAC)
- Ongoing professional development
- A enhanced fee payment (£600 per week plus age allowance)
- Payments made from introductory period (first TAC Meeting)
- 4 weeks planned respite a year
- Retainer paid for 2 weeks if no planned placement

"When I first went into the care system I was adamant that I didn't want to go into foster care as I didn't know who I would have to live with. Eventually, I ended up living with Ashley (Worcestershire Placement Plus Scheme foster carer), which made me the person I am today. She helped me with so many different things from issues I was having with family to preparing me to live independently. Going to live with Ash has changed my life for the better, she gave me the life I have always wished for and I can't thank her enough!"

Freya, aged 18

Contact details

To call and find out more about Placement Plus:

Email:
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Freephone:
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Worcestershire,
WR5 2NP**

Facebook:
[fosteringworcestershire](https://www.facebook.com/fosteringworcestershire)

Website:
www.worcestershirefostering.co.uk

This document can be made available in other formats (large print, audio tape, computer disk, widget and Braille) on request from The Fostering Team on the contact details above.



Placement Plus

Fostering our next generation

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Case Study: Ashley Ellis

I am Ashley Ellis and I have been a specialist teenage foster carer for the past 3 years. I was in care myself and lived at Downsell Road when it was a Children's Home. I was also raised by my grandmother. My early life experiences are one of the main reasons I wanted to become a foster carer.

As an adult I worked for 20 years in Downsell Road with older young people and most of the residential homes across Worcestershire. I have 4 birth children of my own and worked full time whilst bringing up my children as a single mother. At one point my daughter's friend lived with us for 7 years as well. I decided to leave my role as a residential worker four years ago, because I wanted to care for young people in a more personal way, rather than in shifts. I remember thinking I would have loved to take some of these children I was working with home with me.



I have a special relationship with fellow foster carer, Michelle Aldred, who has also been my best friend for the last 26 years and is now also a specialist foster carer for teenagers.

I generally foster 14 or 15 year olds. I like teenagers because they are at a stage in their lives where they are finding themselves and I like being part of that journey. It can be difficult for children who experience trauma and loss in their teenage years, but I enjoy being part of that transition. You need to be consistent and strong, as they often feel they are falling apart inside.

My social worker gets back to me quickly and is always there for me. She is a highly experienced person and we regularly talk in a lot of detail about placements. The best thing you can ever have as a foster carer is a sense of humour. You need to be very broad minded and having attachment training is crucial because you have to remember these children were created and you've got to try and unravel some of their layers. You have to look beyond the challenging behaviour and remember them when they were younger. I often do this by looking at photos of them when they were much younger, you can see they have often experienced a very frightening world.

What is Placement Plus?

Placement Plus is an intensive support specialist fostering scheme providing tailored fostering placements to older children and young people in the care of Worcestershire County Council.

These young people are likely to have experienced failed foster placements and currently be accommodated in residential care. Our Placement Plus foster carers will have received additional training and will be part of a Team Around the Child (TAC). The TAC will provide an enhanced level of support for these young people to ensure a successful placement. The foster carer is a key member of the TAC and will play a crucial role in planning and maintaining placements. All placements are made in a planned manner with introductions prior to a placement being made.

The facts

- There is a significant lack of in-house specialist fostering provision for the age range 10 years +
- Worcestershire has a high number of young people accommodated in residential care and external agencies
- The high cost of agency placements diverts funds from Worcestershire County Council.

The Young People

- Male and female aged 10 - 15 years
- We are looking at the 10 to 14 year range for the first 6 placements
- The first group of young people will be placed from residential care
- The young people placed will be identified as having an attachment issue or disorder
- The young people will have expressed a wish to live in a family
- Preference will be given to young people subject to a full Care Order
- The young person will have a complex range of needs and previous placement disruptions.

The Team around the Child

The team around each child will include:

- The Placement Plus foster carer; a key professional member of the TAC
- A Clinical Psychologist to support the carer and plan for the young person
- A dedicated Fostering Manager to have overall responsibility for the scheme
- A Specialist Supervising Social Worker to support the carers and recruit further carers
- A Fostering Support Worker to help provide activities and practical support
- The Child's Social Worker "contracted" to work with the young person's family
- The Team around the Child will work closely with the Integrated Service for Looked After and Adopted Children.

How will the placement work?

- All young people eligible will be subject to a full placement assessment which will include consultation with the foster carer
- The Psychologist and Supervising Social Worker will undertake an initial assessment, visit the placement and formulate an initial support plan
- The TAC will agree the suitability of the referral
- There will be planned introductions with the identified foster carer
- A full plan will be agreed, including respite care periods prior to placement
- The Child's Social Worker will then be "contracted" to work with the birth family.

