

Worcestershire Children and Young People at the heart of everything we do



The Foster Carers' Charter

This Charter is an agreement between
Foster Carers and the Fostering Service.

worcestershire
fostering

Find out more online:
www.worcestershirefostering.co.uk
www.facebook.com/fosteringworcestershires

 worcestershire
county council



It wasn't until I took up my new role earlier this year that I began to fully appreciate the essential contribution made by Worcestershire's largely unnoticed (and sometimes unsung) foster carers. I knew that the majority of our Looked after Children live with foster carers and that their role is invaluable. But did I acknowledge the level they deserve to be recognised and supported? Probably not.

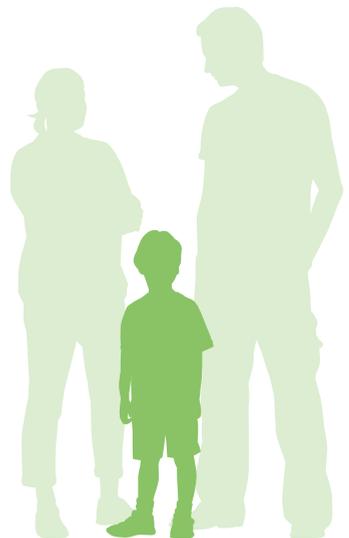
They provide a glowing example for new and dedicated prospective foster carers we hope will come forward to help ease growing pressures. These new foster carers will be motivated by knowing they could provide a good quality foster placement and help a child achieve stability. We are not naïve about the challenges but it's hard to imagine a greater gift.

It is understood that the role can't be done in isolation and without support. I am committed to improving services for Worcestershire children and families. Hearing the voices of children in foster care and those who care for them will play a vital part of this improvement.

Being a foster carer is never easy, but this Charter illustrates the agreed commitment that our Worcestershire Foster Carers and Fostering Service have with one another to improve the lives of our Looked After Children and Young People.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "A. Roberts".

Councillor Andy Roberts
Cabinet Member with Responsibility
for Children and Families
Worcestershire County Council



The Fostering Services' Commitment

Working in partnership – we will...

- support you through the process of becoming a foster carer
- recognise you are the people who live with the child every day and know them well
- treat you as an equal member of the team around the child and consult you when making decisions
- be clear with you about your responsibilities as a foster carer
- invite you to attend meetings about the child.

Information – we will...

- provide you with all the information you need to care for the child
- arrange for a placement meeting to be held and agree a placement plan with you
- ensure you receive information about the fee and allowance you will receive.

Support – we will...

- ensure you have an allocated support worker
- ensure you receive regular supervision
- ensure you have contact details for the fostering team, including who to contact out of hours
- arrange foster carer support groups
- ensure that you can access additional support services to help you care for a child.

Learning and Development – we will...

- provide a programme of training that promotes your skills and understanding of the fostering task, including: consideration of a priority place for training which will assist you with a particular child
- provide support for completion of Training, Support & Development Standards and maintain a record of your training and development.

Fair treatment – we will...

- treat you and your family with respect
- provide clear procedures for dealing with any allegations and ensure that you are treated fairly and respectfully throughout the process and are told what support you can access.

Communication and Consultation – we will...

- ensure you are consulted in matters related to the child
- tell you of any changes to the child's care arrangements
- ensure you are consulted and kept up to date with important change to the Fostering Service.

Clarity about decisions – we will...

- ensure that through delegated authority you are able to make decisions for the child that do not require unnecessary bureaucracy.



'My Social Worker'
drawn by Jake

The Foster Carers' Commitment

Respect for the Child – we will...

- ensure a child feels safe, secure and part of a positive home environment
- ensure a child's opinion is heard
- show respect and celebrate a child's identity; their religion and linguistic and cultural heritage
- give a child a sense of their past
- encourage healthy living and lifestyles
- respect a young person's birth family
- encourage and support a child in their education
- we will work together with the team around the child to support and maintain a young person and child's placement with us.

Partnership working – we will...

- be committed to being an equal member of the team around the child
- regularly attend and contribute to support groups and forums in our local area
- work with agencies, such as schools, health and religious establishments
- ensure the child is part of the family and is treated equally
- respect confidentiality.

Information – we will...

- ensure our records are housed in one place and easily accessible
- inform our supervising social worker about changes in our households
- inform our supervising social worker about any difficulties that arise for us.

Learning, development and support – we will...

- attend regular and relevant training
- let you know if we are unable to attend
- be prepared to develop our skills throughout our fostering career.

Communication and Consultation – we will...

- actively participate in consultations to inform the development of the Fostering Service
- meet with councillors, service managers and others in order to promote dialogue in a good working relationship.



Who Cares We Care (Worcestershire's Children in Care Council) were consulted about this Charter.

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To the best of our knowledge all information was correct at the time of printing: September 2017

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