

Foster for Gloucestershire County Council



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL

**LOCAL
FOSTER
CARERS
FOR LOCAL
CHILDREN**



Fostering is helping a child by looking after them in your own home, at a time when their own family is not able to do so. Children need fostering for all sorts of reasons and for different lengths of time.

Types of fostering

Emergency fostering Providing a child with a place to go to immediately, no matter what hour of the day or night.

Respite care Building a relationship with a child who regularly stays with you for short periods to give their parents or foster carers a break.

Short-term fostering Looking after a child for anything from a few days to a couple of years.

Long-term fostering When a child cannot return to their own family, providing a home for them until they are ready to be independent.

The children

Children in foster care come from all walks of life and range in age from babies to older teenagers. You can choose the age group you are most interested in fostering and you will always have a say about the children who stay with you.

The children we really need foster carers for are:

- A baby and one or both of their parents as part of a short-term parent and child placement,
- Siblings, so that we can keep brothers and sisters together,

- Teenagers,
- Children whose complex behaviour means they need highly experienced foster carers,
- Children with disabilities,
- Young, unaccompanied asylum seekers.

Who can foster?

There is no such thing as a typical foster carer. All kinds of children come into care and we need a diverse group of foster carers to look after them.

You can foster if:

- You are over 21,
- You have a spare room in your home,
- You have experience caring for your own or other people's children (your own children will need to be over two years old),
- You have the time to care for a child and can give them stability and security.

Foster carers can be single, cohabiting (for at least two years), married or divorced. It doesn't matter if you rent or own your home and if you are employed or unemployed. We welcome applications from any ethnic background and regardless of your sexuality.

Support

“GCC foster carers are well trained and supported.”
Ofsted inspection 2017

When you foster for Gloucestershire County Council, you can expect:

- Generous fees and allowances to cover all the costs of looking after a child,
- A dedicated fostering social worker who will support and supervise you,
- Local training to help you develop your skills as a foster carer,
- Local support groups where you can learn from other foster carers,
- Out of hours support in an emergency,
- Social events, discounts and quarterly newsletters.

The application process

It takes between six and eight months to become a newly-approved foster carer, although we fast track anyone who has fostered before or has particularly relevant experience. Your social worker will provide you with help and support throughout the application process.

Step 1 Make your initial enquiry online, in person or by telephone

Step 2 A social worker will telephone you for an informal chat and will ask permission to carry out background checks if you'd like to continue

Step 3 Attend a two-hour information session

Step 4 Complete and return an application form

Step 5 A social worker will see you at home for an initial visit

Step 6 Attend a Skills to Foster course to prepare you to start fostering

Step 7 Along with a social worker, undertake a detailed assessment that lasts approximately four months

Step 8 Attend Panel who consider and approve applications to foster

Step 9 Start fostering!



Benefits of fostering for Gloucestershire County Council

- Regular placements and the best possible match for you and your family,
- Helping local children to stay local,
- Training and support groups close to home,
- A focus on meeting the needs of the child rather than on a business model.

More information

If you are interested in finding out more about fostering, please contact:

Fostering Service
Gloucestershire County Council
Shire Hall
Westgate Street
Gloucester
GL1 2TG

01242 532654

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