



How to become a foster carer

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cymru**
Sir y Fflint

**foster
wales**
Flintshire

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COUNTY COUNCIL

What is foster care?

Becoming a foster carer is a decision to help local children who need someone to listen to them.
To believe in them.

Children who need someone on their side. Someone to love them.

It's a decision to work with people who share those aims.
People like Foster Wales Flintshire, your Local Authority fostering team.

Every child or young person in need of foster care in Wales is in the care of your Local Authority. We have legal responsibility for them, and we're dedicated to finding the right local home for them.
The right match for you both.

Because staying local can often mean the world to foster children.
It means their sense of identity, their daily routine of school and friends.
It can reduce stress and increase confidence, building better futures for them and their community.

Your community. Our community.

Welcome to
Buckley
Higher Common



How do I become a foster carer?

Part 1:

Start the conversation. We are happy to talk to you about fostering whenever you are ready.

You can tell us about you, your family and show us around your home. We will answer your questions and advise you on the right type of fostering for you.

Our Skills to Foster preparation training is six sessions where we discuss the foster carer's role. The training will help you to make an informed decision about whether fostering is right for you.



The first step on your fostering journey is all about information sharing. We will give you some key facts about fostering and explain how it all works.

We will give you some forms to complete and check your ID.

Part 2:

When you are ready, we will start your assessment. The social worker will meet with you at least eight times to get to know you and your family. When we are ready to present your assessment to the fostering panel you can attend with your social worker.

Can I foster?

Fostering is something that pretty much anyone can do, whatever their circumstances. There are just a few essential things you will need in order to be ready to foster:



Spare bedroom

You must have a spare bedroom. We don't recommend that the children you look after share a bedroom with your own children.



Time

You will need time to spend with children during a difficult time in their life. You will also need time for the practical stuff like attending training courses, meetings and the school run. You can continue to work part time or full time. One person must be available at home if you are caring for children under age five or specialist fostering.



Age

There is no limit on how old you are, up or down, so long as you are old enough to be a parental figure. We recommend that you foster children who are younger than any other children at home.



Stable home life and stable relationship

You can be single, married, civil partners, divorced or living with a partner. If you are in a relationship, you must have been together for two years or more. You can be of any sexual orientation.



Look after your own health

You must look after your own health. If anyone is a smoker, you won't be able to care for children under five years old. You won't be ruled out if you take regular medication, but you must be healthy enough to provide a caring stable home.



Criminal record

You must have a clean criminal record check which is clear of any convictions of violence or sexual abuse and have no convictions against children.



Determination

You will need strength and courage for the good times and bad, and a sense of humour.



Supportive family and friends

It is important that your whole family is keen on the idea of fostering as it involves everyone.

What type of fostering is right for me?

All of our foster carers are different. When you apply to foster, we will listen to your own story to understand your biggest strengths and then guide you towards a type of fostering that is right for you. When you foster with Foster Wales Flintshire, there is a huge choice of different types of fostering to suit you, your family and your availability.

Here are some of our Flintshire foster care stories to give you an idea of some of the ways to foster in your community.



BABIES & 0-4

"I'm Anne and I'm 41 years old. We have a five year old daughter in a local school and I'm home during the day. This age group is perfect for our little family; it often means 'short term' (anything up to a year) as they move onto adoption or go back to their family."

Anne



SCHOOL AGE

"I'm Caroline and I'm 46 years old and I foster along with my husband Rob who is 49. Our daughter is 20 and currently at university. We foster school-age children. I work every day and I do school friendly hours. This gives me the flexibility so I can do the school run and be home when they get back from school and college."

Caroline & Rob



RESPITE

"My name is Lindsay. I am 59 years old and live on my own. I work full time and I'm available most weekends. As a respite carer it means that I foster at weekends and school holidays. The same girls come to stay with me one weekend a month. I collect them on a Friday and take them back to school on Monday morning."

Lindsay



PARENT AND CHILD TOGETHER

"The good things about parent and child is when they move on and you see them 2-3 years later and they've got a young toddler and another baby and they are smiling. You can clearly see the support you gave in the initial vulnerable months was well worth it."

Gwen

What financial support will I get?

When a child is living in your care, you will receive a fostering allowance (per week per child) to help cover the costs of caring for the child such as food, heating and clothing.

Age	0-4	5-10	11-15	16+	18+
Level 1	£194	£177	£179	£220	£220 (WIR)



As you develop your career as a foster carer, you will receive additional foster carer's payment (per week). Foster carer pay is only made when a child is living in your care.

Skills & Experience	Carer's Payment
Level 2	+ £65
Level 3	+ £125
Level 4	+ £230
Specialist	+ up to £461



Special Occasion	Allowance
Birthday Allowance	£177-220
Religious festival allowance	£177-220
Annual holiday allowance	£354-440

Tax & National Insurance:

As a foster carer, you are required to register as self-employed. Foster carers are eligible for substantial tax and national insurance exemptions.

When I am Ready

You can continue to support a young person beyond their 18th birthday as a When I am Ready carer.

Why foster with your Local Authority

As a not-for-profit organisation responsible for the children in our care, Foster Wales Flintshire believes in working as a team with foster carers to build better futures for local children by helping them stay in their local area when it's right for them.

We want your fostering future to be a success, so we take time and care to match you with the right child for you and your family. We believe that better matches make for more sustainable, stable placements, and create better outcomes for foster children and foster carers alike. Wherever your fostering future takes you, we'll be beside you every step of the way with all the dedicated local support, expertise and training you'll need.

What we offer you

**Foster children
of all ages**

**Local training
and support**

**Join over
120 local
foster carers**

**50%
Council Tax
discount**

**Match you
with the
right child**

What we offer you



Regular visits from your dedicated social worker



An experienced team at the end of the phone



Support from experienced foster carers via telephone and Mockingbird



Out-of-hours 24-7 support



Meet other local carers in your community



Young Fosterers group for your own children



Regular training courses



Membership to the Fostering Network



Foster Carer Discounts

What our Foster Carers say

"We have been very happy with the support from the fostering service."

Foster Carer

"The fostering staff were so welcoming and lovely"

Foster Carer

"Our supervising social worker has only been a phone call away whether for advice or just for a chat."

Foster Carer

It's the most rewarding thing I've ever done.

Louise,
Foster Carer

What children say...

We have been fostering for nearly three years now and we can happily say we have enjoyed it.
Charlotte, Age 15

Fostering is about sharing. I have made lots of lovely new friends and my family has not only grown bigger but a lot more exciting.
Caoilfhionn, Age 9

My foster carer and her family have made me feel like I belong here and like I'm part of their family.
Young Person, Age 15

Working together
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