



UNITED FOSTERING SERVICES

Nurture Confidence & Security

Foster Carers' Charter



FOSTER CARERS' CHARTER

At United, we aim to PROVIDE the highest standard fostering service for vulnerable children and young people, where they can thrive and blossom physically and emotionally in a therapeutic and healthy environment that helps them to move towards greater security and build resilience. This will allow them the opportunity to relate well to others, fulfil their potential and enjoy life. Key to this are the great relationships we have with our foster carers, which are based on the commitments we make to each other.

United Fostering Service's commitment.

We must:

1 Working in partnership

- Value your skills and expertise and respect that you are an important member of the professional team.
- Include you in all meetings that affect you and the children in your care. If it is not appropriate for you to attend, we will inform you of the reason and let you know the outcomes.
- Ensure that United Fostering Service meets the standards set out in the fostering regulations and guidance.
- Treat you without discrimination and respect you as a fellow professional.
- Work in partnership with you, the birth parents, wider family and people significant in the child's life, and with other agencies involved with the fostered child.
- Respect confidentiality at all times.



2 Information

- Provide you with all information held by the United Fostering Service that you need to carry out your role effectively. This information will be provided prior to the placement of each child and will be in writing, except in emergencies when this may not be possible.
- Ensure there is a placement plan drawn up in consultation with you and in advance of the placement (except in emergencies when this will be done within five working days of the placement being made).
- Ensure to secure clear and timely plans for the child's care

3 Clarity about decisions

- Ensure that wherever possible you can make everyday decisions affecting your fostered child that means that they will not be treated differently from their peers and can feel part of your family.
- Be clear at the outset about any decisions you cannot make on your own.
- Deal swiftly with any requests decision making

4 Support

- Give you honest, constructive and open feedback from all parties involved with you and your fostered child.
- Ensure that we consult and inform you in a meaningful way about matters that affect you.
- Provide you with regular supervision and telephone contact, including out of office hours.
- Provide regular, organised support meetings.
- Respond positively to requests for additional support, in the best interest of the child.



- Pay your allowances, fees and expenses in a timely manner and keep you informed if any delay, problem or change arises.
- Pay you fees that reflect the task.
- Recognise that as professionals you are able to use allowances in a way that best meets the needs of the child.

5 Learning and development

- Provide you with relevant, high quality training and development opportunities, which make the best use of your skills and expertise.
- Offer training at times to suit you and your family needs.

6 Fair treatment

- Consult with you before making changes to your terms and conditions outlined in your foster carer agreement, and other documents affecting your practice.
- Ensure openness in our discussions and communications with you.

7 Allegations and complaints

- Recognise that, if the United Fostering Service needs to investigate a complaint or allegation about you, this may be difficult for everyone involved and that it needs to be dealt with sensitively.
- Ensure that you are supported, that your personal feelings are respected and your confidentiality is protected.
- Ensure that you are kept informed should you be subject to an allegation.
- Provide a framework for dealing with allegations and adhere to agreed timescales.
- Duly consider the impact allegations have on your whole family unit.



- Ensure that you know the arrangements for the payment of fees and allowances in the event that you are not able to foster while the subject of an allegation.
- Respond fairly and within the agreed timescales if you wish to make a complaint about our service – we will acknowledge your complaint within three working days and look into it and respond in 10 working days.

8 Communication and consultation

- Welcome feedback from you, when you tell us something needs improving or changing, so we can enhance the service together.
- Give foster carers timely feedback from consultations
- provide clear information on how foster carers can give us feedback and report concerns.

Foster carer's commitment.

We must:

1 Working in partnership

- Demonstrate a high standard of care and conduct, and provide our fostered children with a positive experience of family life.
- Meet the standards set out in the fostering regulations and guidance, and follow the agency's policies and procedures.
- Respect confidentiality at all times.
- Attend meetings and be willing to work in partnership with birth parents, the wider family and significant people in the child's life.
- Professionally work with social workers and other agencies involved with the fostered child.



2 Respect of the child

- Listen to our fostered child(ren) and enable them to be heard and make decisions about their life.
- Offer our fostered child the same level of protection and care as we would our own child.
- Support our child to achieve their full potential.
- Respect and promote our child's religious, linguistic and cultural heritage.
- Advocate on behalf of our child.

3 Information

- Inform our supervising social worker about any changes in our family.
- Inform our supervising social worker when we are having difficulties and need support.
- Complete all paperwork required including care recording diaries, reports for meetings etc. to a good standard and within specified time scales.

4 Learning and development and support

- Attend and contribute to supervision meetings and support groups.
- Be willing to develop our skills throughout our fostering career, attend all relevant training on a regular basis, take up opportunities offered and complete training logs.

