

If you would like this information in large print, braille,
audiotape, or another language, please contact 020 7926 5575

Spanish

Si desea esta información en otro idioma,
rogamos nos llame al 020 7926 5575

Portuguese

Se desejar esta informação noutra idioma
é favor telefonar para 020 7926 5575

French

Si vous souhaitez ces informations dans une
autre langue veuillez nous contacter au 020 7926 5575

Bengali

এই তথ্য অন্য কোনো ভাষায় আপনার প্রয়োজন
হলে অনুগ্রহ করে ফোন করুন 020 7926 5575

Twi

Se wope saa nkaeboy yi wo kasa toforo
mu a fre 020 7926 5575

Yoruba

Tí ẹ ba ẹ imoràn yí, ní èdè Òmíràn, ẹjẹ,
ẹ kàn wà l'ágogo 020 7926 5575

Lambeth Fostering Service

A guide to fostering, for children and young
people looked after by Lambeth, 3-10 years



For further information contact:

Lambeth Fostering Team
London Borough of Lambeth
International House
6 Canterbury Crescent
London SW9 7QE

Telephone: 0800 952 2926



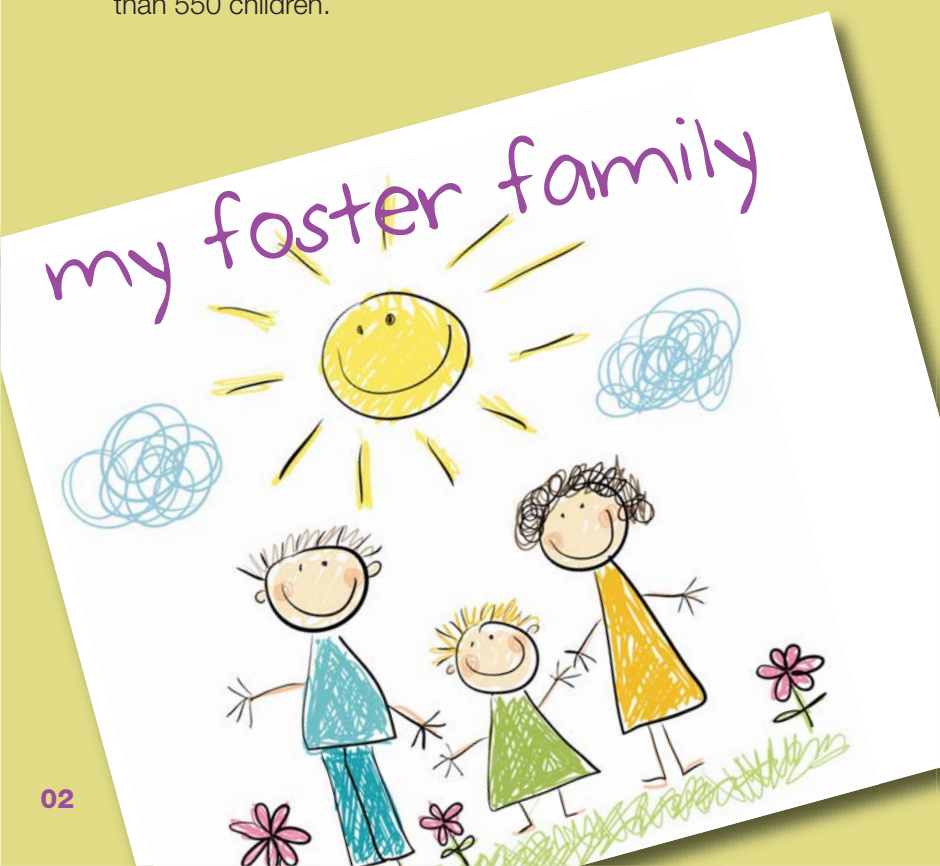
Welcome to the children's guide to fostering

This booklet will tell you about the fostering service in Lambeth so you know what to expect when you are in foster care.

Our fostering service are all the people involved in finding foster homes for children and young people with foster carers.

The fostering service wants to make sure we have enough foster carers for all of the children who need them. It is important that they are able to look after lots of children of different ages and backgrounds.

We have approximately 80 foster carers looking after more than 550 children.



Who does what?

Foster carers

Foster carers are people in the community want to the help look after children. They are carefully chosen and given training before looked after children are placed with them. Many of them have already shared their homes and given their time to help young people.

Social workers A social worker for you

You will be supported by your own social worker. Your social worker will be keen to know what you think about being looked after and what you want to happen to you. They will be available to speak on your behalf, as well as discuss any plans for you with your family.

A social worker for your foster carers

All foster carers have a supervising social worker who visits them. The supervising social worker guides and supports the foster carers.

What sort of things will my foster carers do?

Your foster carer will do lots of things to make you feel happy and comfortable whilst you are living with them.

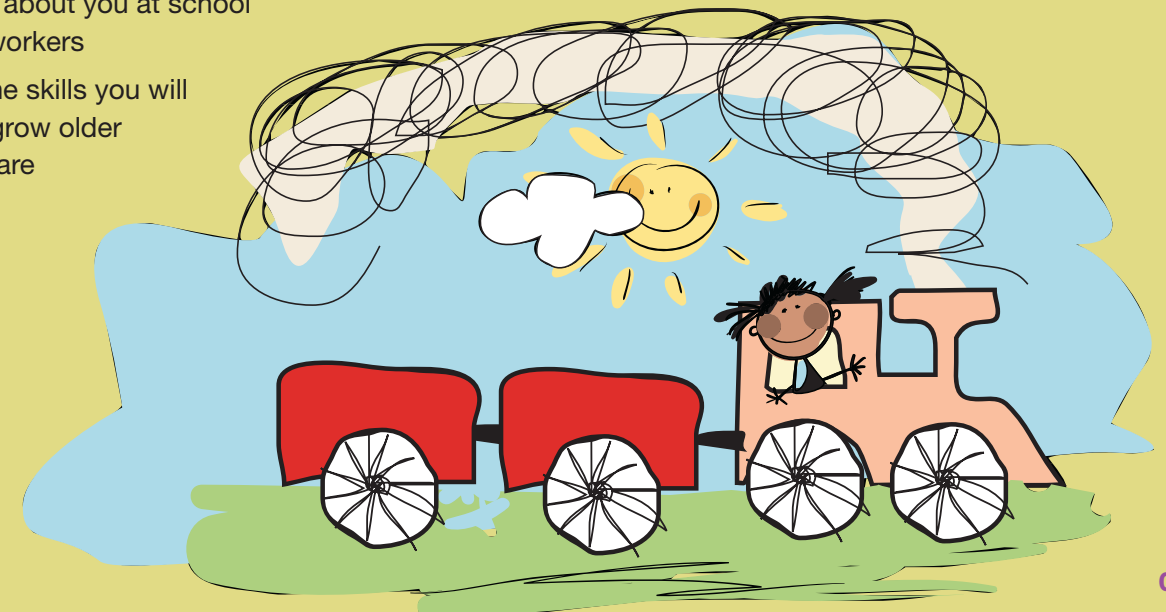
They will:

- Make sure you are well looked after
- Try to make you feel part of the family, for example by taking you on holiday with them
- Listen to you
- Treat information about you and your family as confidential
- Respect, help and support you
- Explain why they are asking certain things of you
- Enable you to follow your religion if you wish
- Support contact with your family when this is planned
- Attend meetings about you at school and with social workers
- Help you learn the skills you will need when you grow older and leave their care

What is going on?

Foster carers are there to help to look after you and make sure you are happy. They also help carry out plans agreed for you. Most young people stay in foster care for a short time and most return home. Some move on to live on their own when they are older.

It is important that all the people involved in providing care for you work closely together. They need to talk to each other to agree what should happen. Don't worry, you will always be asked for your views so that we can include them in any decisions we make.





What can you expect from living with your foster family?

Wherever you live, you will be treated with respect, you also should respect your carers and other young people you live with. You should be able to have a say and be listened to.

Family discussions should be planned and encouraged so that you can be a part of making decisions. You will be welcomed as part of your foster family.



They will make sure you have:

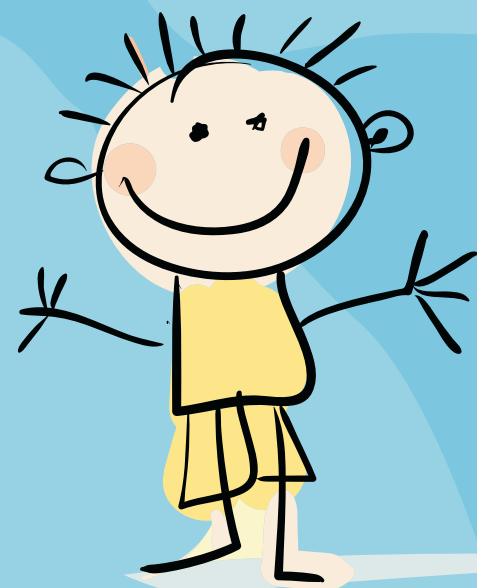
- A bedroom of your own or shared with other family children
- A proper bed with bedding
- Space to put personal items
- Space to store clothing and belongings
- Toiletries such as shampoo, creams, body lotion, soap, flannel
- Space where you can meet your social worker, independent visitor or solicitor
- Pocket money according to what is agreed in the placement agreement meeting
- A chance to celebrate your birthday and religious, e.g. Christmas, Diwali, Eid etc
- Fair and respectful parenting
- Someone to listen to your wishes and feelings
- Someone who is interested and will encourage and advise you
- Help to stay in touch with friends and family
- Help with your education

Your foster family should not:

- Treat you differently because of your race, religion or because you are a boy or girl
- Treat you unfairly – no smoking, biting, locking in rooms, withholding food
- Stop any contact with your family that has been agreed by your social worker

Meetings

A number of meetings will take place whilst you are with your foster carer. These are to make sure everyone is clear about what is going to happen to you.



The main meetings are:

Placement agreement meeting

This is a meeting held within three days of you moving into your foster home. It will discuss the day to day care arrangements such as:

Statutory reviews

These are meetings held to agree what the plan for your future should be. Usually the plan is to return home; sometimes the plan is to see whether this is possible. Where this is not possible, the review could agree a different plan such as remaining looked after.

Disruption meetings

If you and the foster family are having difficulties living together, a disruption meeting can be held so that we can sort it out.

Carers and annual review

All carers have an annual meeting that looks at their work over the past year and you will be asked for your views by the supervising social worker.





Rules

All family homes have certain rules to make sure that you are kept safe. They also make sure that the family home can run smoothly and that you get enough rest and nutrition to develop physically and healthily. When you join the family, the foster carer will let you know what these basic rules are.

Foster carers will expect you to:

- Show respect to everyone
- Join in the family meals and activities
- Attend school regularly
- Stick to your coming in times
- Stick to the rules the family live by
- Respect the property of others
- Share your views
- Display no racial, religious or sexual discrimination

rules are cool!



Allowances



Foster carers are given an allowance to look after you. This helps towards the house bills and the food and clothing that you need. Some of it goes towards your travel costs and carer will give you some of this money as pocket money. If you are older your carer may also give you an allowance that will allow you to purchase some of your own personal toiletries.

Parents have asked us not to pay a set of rate of pocket money to all young people looked after therefore, there is no set amount you should be given.

Individual decisions will be made at the placement agreement meeting.

Your views

The fostering service is there for you. It is important that we listen to what you want and, where possible, help provide it for you. It is very important that you express your views and we will listen to them. Talk to your foster carer about what you like, what you don't like and whether there is anything else that could be done to make things better for you.

It is important that you let us know what you're thinking because sometimes adults try to guess what young people want and we don't always guess right.





Personal belongings

It is always nice to have some of your personal belongings with you. If you are unsure of bringing something with you, ask. If you have anything of value (e.g. jewellery, savings book) you need to let your carer know, so it can be kept safe. You will have a proper bag or suitcase to move your belongings.

Getting independent advice

If you are unhappy about something, it is really important that you let someone know who might be able to help.

If this happens please tell someone. You can speak to your foster carer, your social worker, supervising social worker, teacher or anyone who will help to make things better. You can also contact the Children Rights Service on the number listed on the next page (p10).



Activities and holidays

You should be able to continue with the same interests you had at home and also find new ones. These could be things like youth club, karate, photography, swimming and dancing, going out with friends or going to the pictures.

You may go on holidays, weekends or day trips, maybe with family, friends or carers. This will be discussed between you, your family carers and your social worker.





Other useful information

Children's Rights Service

If you want to get some advice, support or information you can contact Lambeth's Children's Rights Service.

They can:

- Let you know your rights
- Give you information
- Help with complaints
- Help you have your say
- Come to meetings with you
- Help you sort out what you want

Tel: 020 7926 7084

Website: www.g2k.org.uk

E-mail: info@g2k.org.uk

Child Line

This is the free 24-hour helpline for children and young people in the UK. You can call the Helpline on

Tel: 0800 1111

about any problem, at any time – day or night. Child Line's counsellors are there to help you find ways to sort things out. Child Line is confidential – which means they won't tell anyone about your call unless you want them to talk to somebody for you, or you are in danger.

Website: www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

If you need help or advice, or are concerned that you or another child may be at risk.

Tel: 0808 800 5000

This helpline is open 24 hours a day.

Ofsted

An organisation called Ofsted checks the work of fostering agencies in England and Wales.

Ofsted Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

Tel: 08456 404045

Website: www.csci.org.uk

Website: www.csci.org.uk

G2K - Get To Know

This is a website designed by Lambeth's Young People in Course. There is information about what to expect when you are in foster care.

Their details are:

xxxxx

Tel: 00000 000000

Website: xxxxxx

11 Million

11 Million is the organisation led by the Children's Commissioner, Lord Al Aynsley-Green. The Commissioner ensures that children and young people from different backgrounds have an opportunity to express their views and experiences.

11 Million

1 London Bridge
London SE1 9BG

Tel: 0844 800 9113

Website: www.11million.org.uk

Voice for the Child in Care

Confidential advice and help for children and young people in care or leaving care.

Voice for the Child in Care
Unit 4, Pride Court
80-82 White Lion Street
London N1 9PF

Tel: 020 7833 5792

Fax: 020 7713 1950

Website: www.voiceyp.org

E-mail: info@voiceyp.org

My Notes

Use this space to make notes or list any contacts you need:

You can write the names and telephone numbers of people you might need to talk to here.

Social worker name:

Social worker telephone no:

Foster carer name:

Foster carer telephone no:

Other important people:

Making complaints

All councils must have a complaints service. All looked after children and young people have a right to make a complaint. If you are unhappy and you feel it is not being sorted out in the way you want it to be, you can make a complaint by getting in touch with the complaints manager.
Children's Complaints Manager
Children & Young People's Services
International house
6 Canterbury Crescent
London SW9 7QE

Tel: 020 7926 9777 or Tel: 020 7926 6335

E-mail: cypscomplaints@lambeth.gov.uk

They will be happy to help you with any worries you have. You can make a complaint in writing, over the telephone or arrange to visit the Complaints Manager where someone will help you to make your complaint.