



JOIN SURREY'S BIGGEST FAMILY

Your guide to becoming
a foster carer



OPEN YOUR HOME AND HEART TO FOSTERING

With over 900 children in our care, Surrey County Council is recruiting more foster carers. Our foster carers provide children with a warm and loving family environment, where their emotional needs will be supported.

When someone chooses to foster with us, they're joining Surrey's biggest family and part of a growing support network intent on making the lives of children and young people better.

Children who are fostered through us have better outcomes. This is because, where possible, they stay close to their family, friends, school and community.





COULD YOU FOSTER?

If you have a spare room, are understanding, resilient and able to develop trusting relationships with children then yes you could!

Our foster carers come from a wide range of backgrounds but what they all have in common is the desire to learn about fostering so they can support children and young people in Surrey.

WHY FOSTER WITH US?

We understand how important it is to support our foster carers, so we offer an attractive package, which includes:

- Bespoke training at local venues
- 24-hour emergency support
- One-to-one support from a supervising social worker
- Support from other foster carers
- Generous allowances paid for each child in your care
- Fostering Network membership
- National Association of Therapeutic Parents (NATP) membership
- Opportunities to gain accredited qualifications

MOCKINGBIRD FAMILY MODEL™

We use the Mockingbird Family Model™ to deliver our fostering service. This is an innovative method of providing foster care using an extended family model offering sleepovers and short breaks, peer support, regular joint planning and training, and

social activities. The programme improves stability and strengthens the relationships between carers, children and young people, fostering services and birth families. For more information please visit our website.

TYPES OF FOSTERING

Short-term fostering

From an overnight stay to a period of several months or a couple of years. Short-term foster carers provide a temporary place to stay until the child can return home to their own family or a longer-term arrangement can be made.

Long-term fostering

Sometimes children will not be able to go back to live with their own families for a number of years, if at all. Long-term fostering allows children and young people to stay in a family where they can feel secure, while maintaining contact with their birth family.

Fostering unaccompanied asylum seeking children

These children, who have travelled to the UK alone, need support and advice to help them come to terms with their previous experiences and to adjust to life in the UK. Foster carers will receive additional support and training to meet the needs of these young people.

Parent and child fostering

If we are concerned about a parent's capacity to care for their baby or young child they need to be assessed and provided with additional support. The parent and child live with a foster carer whilst a parenting assessment is completed. The foster carer's observations and good record-keeping will help professionals to reach a decision.

Short Breaks

This offers a child with a disability an opportunity to share different experiences and meet different people while still living with their family. A child might stay with a short breaks carer for one or two nights a month giving their family an opportunity to recharge their batteries, safe in the knowledge that their child is enjoying the experience of being with trustworthy people. The child being cared for under the Short Breaks scheme may have a physical or learning disability, or an autistic spectrum disorder. The child will be carefully matched to the foster carer.

PAYMENTS

As a foster carer in Surrey you will receive a weekly allowance towards the costs of caring for a child.

You will also receive a competitive weekly fee payment in recognition of your skills and experience. For more information about allowances and fee payments please visit our website or contact us.



WHAT OUR FOSTERED CHILDREN SAY

Lewis and Megan, two care leavers, explain how their foster carers helped them:

“My early childhood consisted of neglect and physical abuse. But my foster carers were lovely and gave me a real sense of self-worth. They provided me with boundaries that I hadn’t had before, giving me the stability I needed to settle away from my birth family.”

LEWIS, 21

“Going into foster care aged 15 was really scary at first, but after a few weeks I started to settle in and then everything was perfect. My foster family are still very much part of my life. I speak to them every week, spend Christmases with them and call them up if I need to have a moan about something. They are always there for me! They’re my family now, no words can express how thankful I am for them and what they did for me.”

MEGAN, 20

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

If you are interested in finding out more about becoming a foster carer, take a look at our website surreycc.gov.uk/fostering or give our friendly team a call on **0800 096 9626**

Find us on social media **@surreyfostering**

