

# Children's Guide

**ascent  
fostering  
agency**

## What is Foster Care?

Foster carers look after children and young people who, like you, cannot live at home. Foster carers have had the training to help them understand what's going on and have been 'checked out' to make sure that they can offer you a safe place to live.

Foster carers are ordinary families who care and will have some understanding of how upsetting it can be to be living away from your family. Talk to them about how you feel, and they will do their best to help.

## What is going to happen to me?

The plan is always to help you go home to your family, as long as it is safe for everyone. Your social worker will talk to you regularly to keep you informed of what is happening.

Within four weeks of coming into care, there will be a meeting called a 'review' to look at how you are. You will be asked what you think and invited to attend. If you find it hard to talk with lots of adults in a room, you can speak to the 'reviewing officer' on your own before the meeting. You can ask for an 'Advocate' to be there with you to help you put your views across.

The review meeting makes sure that the plans for you are working. The adults will make changes to the plan if things can be better. They will invite people such as your parent, teacher, key worker or foster carer etc., to hear what they think about your care, but most importantly, they want to know what you think too.

You can ask your social worker for an Advocate. Your foster carers will have their social worker as well. This social worker works for Ascent Fostering agency they are there to support you as well as your foster carer.



**CORAM HELPLINE**  
**0808 8005792**

**NYAS HELPLINE**  
**0808 8081001**

## How long will I be here?

Some young people remain in foster care for a short time; others need to stay for longer. Your social worker should give you some idea of how long this could be.

Your social worker will be working hard to get you back home as soon as possible, but only if they know that it will be safe to do so.









## Who else lives with my Foster Carers?

It will be different for each foster family; sometimes, you may be the only child, or you may live with the foster carer's family. The important thing is that they will treat you as one of their family.



## What does my Foster Carer know about me?

The social worker will need to tell your foster carers only the important information about you and your family. If you are worried about this, talk to your social worker, they are there to help you. Your social worker is the person who makes sure that you are getting what you need. Your foster carer will keep a record of the essential things that happen to you, such as achievements in school, when you may have had a stressful day and special celebrations.

# When can I go home?

Sometimes, parents have asked Social Care to look after their children while they sort out some problems. If you are one of these children, you can return home as soon as your parents can care for you.

For other children and young people, Social Care has decided to intervene to ensure the young person is safe. If you are one of these children, Social Services will need to ask the Court to help them decide if it is safe for you to return home. Some young people will remain in care until they are 18 years old.



## Why can't I go home?

Some families have problems which prevent them from looking after their children. It can be very upsetting and hard to understand. Please talk with your foster carer about how you feel, and they will help to make sure that everyone involved in your care knows this too and that your social worker knows any concerns that you have.

Sometimes the Court and Social Care agree that children cannot return home if it is not safe.



## When can I see my family?

As soon as you come into care, your social worker will talk to you about seeing your family. They will support you to keep in touch with your family and your friends. How often you see them and where you see them will depend on the reasons you are in care.



## Is it my fault?

No. All families suffer stress at some time, and unfortunately, your family has needed some time to sort this out. It is important to remember that everyone has problems when they are growing up, not just young people living in care.

Children often think that it is somehow their fault when things go wrong at home. Children are **never** to blame for the things that adults do (even if they believe they have been badly behaved).



## Do I have to change school?

Social Care will try to make sure that you carry on at your school if this is what you want, so that you can see your friends and carry on with the activities you enjoy.

However, sometimes this is not possible.

## When will I see my social worker?

Every child in foster care has someone from Social Care they see regularly and can contact if they need to. It could be a social worker, support worker, or fostering supervising social worker. You should see your social worker at least once a month at first.

If you want to see your social worker; talk to your foster carer. They will phone your social worker for you. You should also keep your social worker's telephone number in a safe place so that you can call them directly if you want to talk in private. You can also send them an email.

Fill in your social worker's details in this guide.

If you do not feel happy, then you must speak with another adult you trust.



SOCIAL WORKERS DETAILS

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## What does Ascent Fostering Do?

It is the job of Ascent fostering to find suitable families to look after children who come into care. The fostering supervising social workers visit the foster carers to help them understand children's needs. You may meet them when they visit, and they will also talk to you to make sure you are settled.

They will talk to your social worker to make sure everything is ok in your foster home.







## Do Foster Carers have any rules?

Like all families, foster carers have rules that you will be asked to follow. Most of the rules will be about keeping you safe or making sure that everybody in the home gets on together.

- **Be polite**
- **Be kind to each other**
- **Take care of your clothes and belongings**
  - **Do your homework**
  - **Come straight home from school**
  - **Don't bully or hit others**
- **Don't take other people's belongings**

Sometimes you might forget the rules or not be able to keep them all of the time, and your foster carer will talk to you about what has happened.

Foster carers have to follow some rules as well, but the most important one is that foster carers are not allowed to hit children or hurt them in any way. Foster carers must make sure that children are always kept safe.



# Your Rights

You have the right

- To be treated with respect
- To receive praise and recognition for your achievements
  - To be protected and kept safe
  - To be listened to and consulted on plans or decisions made about you
- To have help in expressing your wishes and feelings
- To access health, education, and recreational activities
  - To have help to keep contact with all relevant people in your life (The only exceptions may be where we think that contact may not be safe for you)
    - To make a complaint
    - To speak to an Independent Advocate for advice and support.
  - To celebrate your birthday and special occasions
    - To practice your religion

## Your Responsibility

It is your responsibility to try and behave as well as you can. Nobody is perfect, and foster carers know that it can be difficult living in a new family. However, you should at all times try to be respectful and not harm or endanger anyone in the foster carers home or family.





## What if I am unhappy with something?

If there is something that you are not happy about, it is important to tell someone. You may be unhappy about something your foster carer or someone else in the foster home has done. It may be something that is happening when you visit your own family or at school.

We believe everyone should be treated with respect. If you believe you are not well cared for, you should talk to someone you trust.

You could:

Talk to your foster carer or social worker or another adult you trust, like a teacher. You can talk in private, and they will be very discrete in sorting the problem out.

You could talk about it at your next review.

# If you want to complain about something

You can talk to:

## **Your social worker**

Your social worker is always the right person to talk to if you have any concerns about your placement.

## **Ofsted**

You can get in touch at [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk) or 0300 123 4666 to complain about a childcare provider.





## **Ascent Fostering Agency**

**Mark Pomell** Registered Manager on  
**0203 757 0070/07867 415 172** or  
**markpomell@ascentfostering.co.uk**

Or you can contact the Children's complaints office by phoning your local authority. The Complaints Officer will look into the complaint and give a full report in writing.

They will do their best to provide a full reply within ten days. They will explain to you what they have done. If you are not happy with this, tell us.

## **Children's Commissioner for England**

Sanctuary Buildings  
20 Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

**[www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)**  
**[events.occ@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](mailto:events.occ@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)**

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