

**ascent
fostering
agency**

Ascent Fostering Agency believes in children and young people. We were formed in 2013 with the commitment to provide the best care and support for children who need foster care.

As a therapeutic fostering agency we have built a creative team of professionals who bring their diversity and experience to the care of children. We want you to join the journey and foster for Ascent.

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'We believe that children and young people can and will succeed in life with the right support, nurturing and guidance.'

Our Mission

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OUR VALUES



Our team feels valued

We are committed to our people, and demonstrate this by ensuring everyone has a voice, are supported and developed to achieve shared success within the organisation.



Supporting people

Ascent is committed to offering high quality support to children, and their care givers. This is achieved through a commitment to training, therapeutic thought and promoting wellbeing throughout the organisation.



Exceeding for children

We are committed to providing services to young people that surpass expectations. Their voice is listened to and we proactively respond to their needs; we have high hopes of good outcomes and their future success.



We pursue excellence

We are committed to continuous improvement and learning as an organisation. We measure ourselves against challenging targets.



WHAT IS FOSTERING?

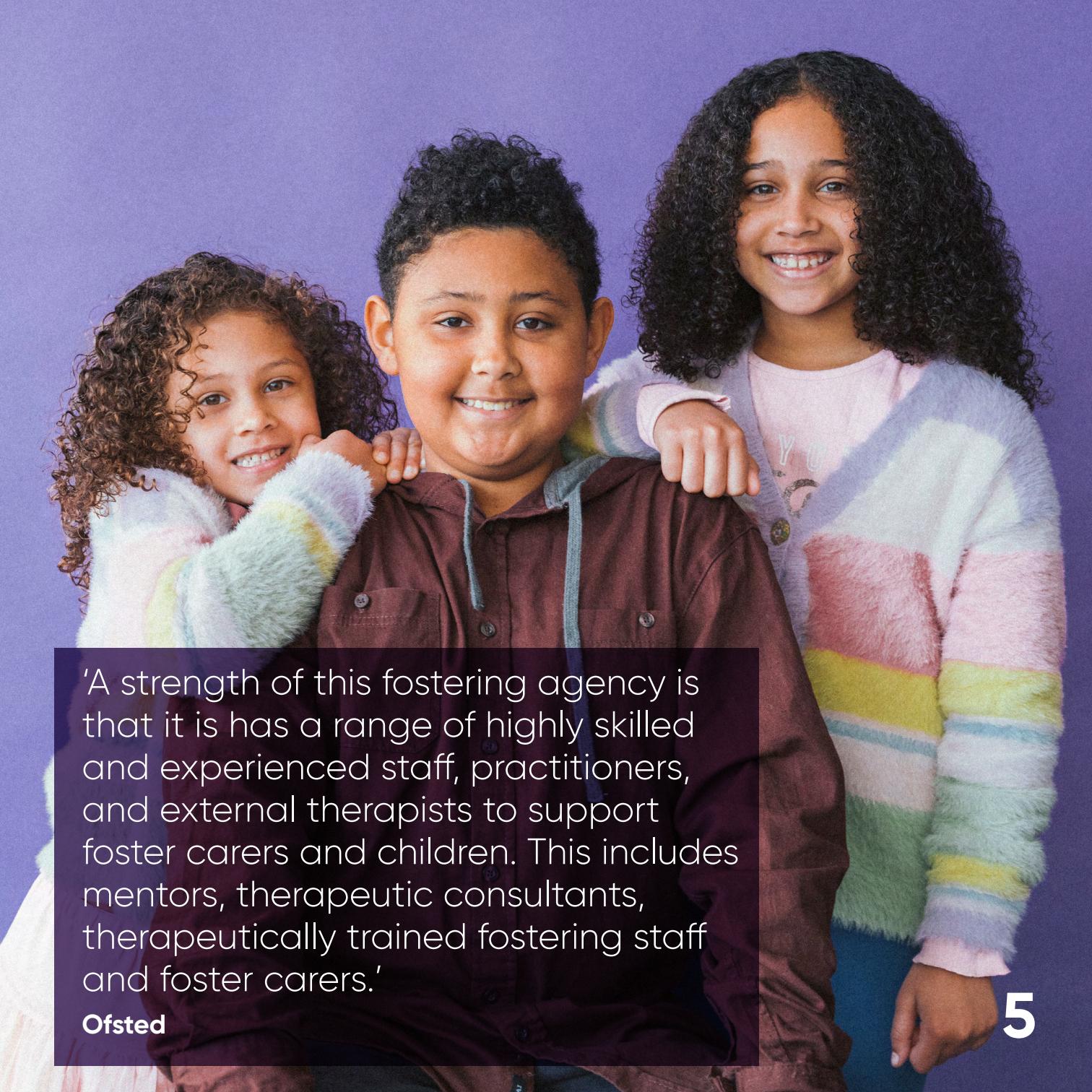
Simply put, fostering is looking after someone else's child whilst Children's Social Care work with the family to resolve the issues that has led the child/ren to be taken into care.

In the UK children enter the care system every day. This can be for a day, a week or for years. Foster carers support children and young people at the most difficult time of their lives.

The reasons children come into care are complex and varied. It could be because a parent is unable to cope, or due to issues of neglect or abuse. Whatever the circumstances, children need to be looked after by families who are sensitive and non-judgemental.

During this initial period Children's Social Care investigate and try their best to resolve the issues facing families. Understandably children are often hurt, angry and confused by the situation and they require a lot of reassurance and support.

We require families who can work with children who are unhappy or upset and are able to help them make sense of their situation.



'A strength of this fostering agency is that it has a range of highly skilled and experienced staff, practitioners, and external therapists to support foster carers and children. This includes mentors, therapeutic consultants, therapeutically trained fostering staff and foster carers.'

Ofsted

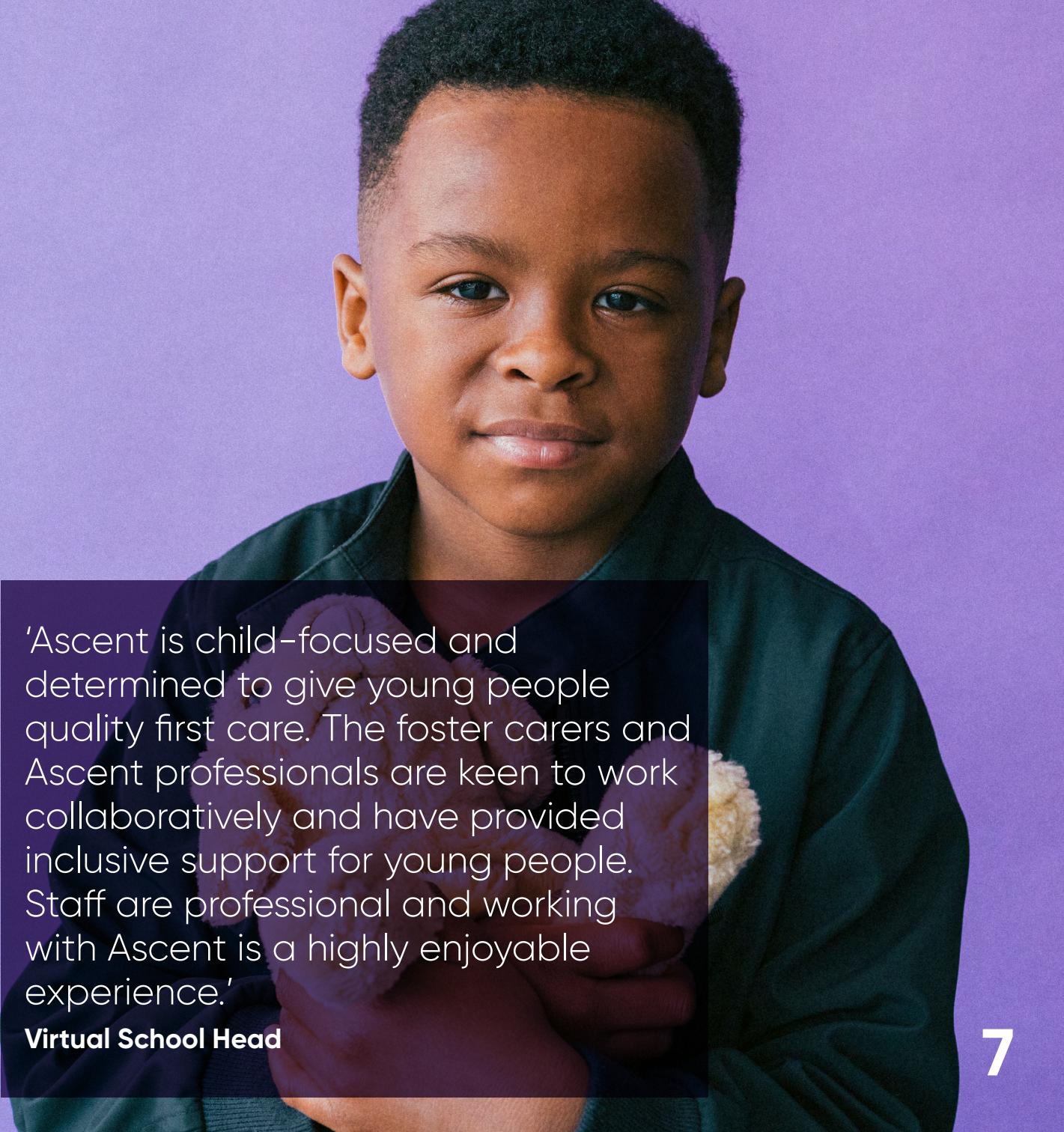
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Children who have experienced trauma and loss need foster carers who parent them intentionally, unafraid to face into their hurt, confusion, sadness and anger that results from their early life experiences. We provide therapeutic support and training to enable our foster carers to journey with these children as they process and heal from their hurt.

Intentional parenting is a term we have coined to identify the attitude, behaviour and therapeutic parenting style. Our response must be empathetic and proactive in how we support children. The onus is on us as adults to respond to unmet needs of children in a positive way. This can sometimes be challenging to a carer as their own personal style of parenting in itself is not enough to meet the needs of children who have experienced trauma.

We believe that foster carers need to act intentionally in their interactions with vulnerable children; to nurture, affirm, love and provide safety and challenge that attempts to bridge the deficits of their previous parental experiences.

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'Ascent is child-focused and determined to give young people quality first care. The foster carers and Ascent professionals are keen to work collaboratively and have provided inclusive support for young people. Staff are professional and working with Ascent is a highly enjoyable experience.'

Virtual School Head

WHY FOSTER?

Fostering will give you the opportunity to assist vulnerable children and help them through difficult life circumstances. Fostering is not right for everyone and you need the time and space to commit to a child.

From a personal and emotional point of view, it can be extremely fulfilling to see a child stabilise, grow and develop in your care. Without doubt it can be one of the most rewarding and life-changing things you will ever do.

THE ROLE OF A FOSTER CARER

Different children require different types of care and it is part of a foster carer's role to be sensitive to the particular needs of the child they look after.

A younger child will demand a lot of practical, hands-on attention and possibly higher levels of family time with their birth family. A teenager, however, may benefit more if you take the role of a mentor, guiding and preparing them for independence.

You will be asked to look after children and young people who may have had traumatic life experiences. They can manifest their trauma in different and sometimes demanding ways. We need resilient people who can work alongside our professional team to help these children.

At Ascent we offer you training, support and professional advice to help you meet the needs of children. All our foster carers are provided with and required to complete a variety of therapeutic parenting courses and demonstrate a commitment to their ongoing learning and development.



'Children build trusting and secure relationships with their foster carers. Children benefit from highly individualised care, provided by exceptionally skilled foster carers.'

Ofsted

Your role as a foster carer could include simple things like ensuring the children you look after eat properly, getting them to school on time, as well as helping them develop routines and social skills. In turn, you can start to build their confidence and self-esteem in small steps.

You could find yourself taking them to football club or dance classes, dropping them off to see friends or going shopping together, so you also need to be relatively fit and active to be a foster carer.

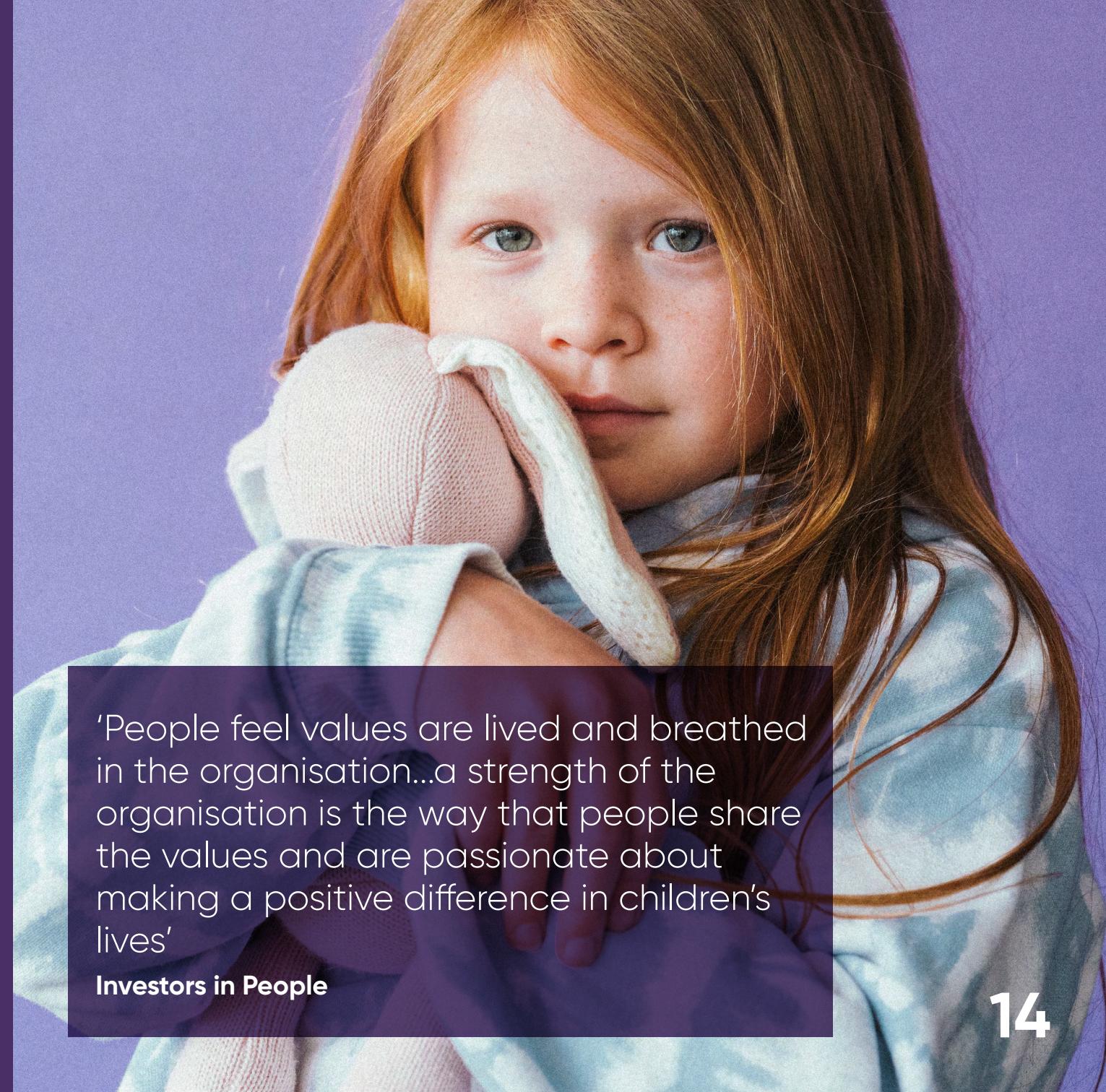
We will work alongside you to assess and identify the best possible match, in terms of what age, gender, background or child's unique needs will best suit you and your household.



SUPPORT AT ASCENT

We are seeking families who are able to work with children who need additional support and guidance. Often these children have had several placement break downs, and have had difficulties in education. They need to know that they will be looked after by consistent, caring, mature and committed carers. We will give you an enhanced fee and the professional help and guidance to support you in meeting the child's needs. Do you have any additional skills, such as a background in social care, education or nursing that might prove useful in your role as a foster carer?

In addition to you having a Supervising Social Worker, all foster carers also have a Therapeutic Consultant to support you. We also provide, where appropriate, mentoring and offer direct therapy to our children and young people.



'People feel values are lived and breathed in the organisation...a strength of the organisation is the way that people share the values and are passionate about making a positive difference in children's lives'

Investors in People

COULD YOU BE A FOSTER CARER?

There are a lot of myths surrounding what is required to be a foster carer. You can become a foster carer if you have sufficient understanding and empathy for children. You can foster:

- if you have your own children or not
- if you are single, married or living with a partner
- if you are in or out of work
- whether you live in your own home or rent
- whatever your age, race, or religion

You also don't need any formal qualifications or training as we provide this. However, we need foster carers who are professional in their approach to their role. More and more, fostering is being seen as a career and part of the childcare work force.

QUESTIONS

Here are some questions you might like to ask yourself:

- Is this a good time in your life for a new challenge?
- Do you have a spare room in a warm and welcoming home?
- Is your home presentable?
- If you're in a relationship, is it strong enough to cope with another person in your lives?
- Do other family members want to welcome a child into their home?
- If you're single, could you cope with the lifestyle changes and loss of privacy?
- Would you be able to cope when a much-loved child has to move on?
- How would you manage if a child or young person placed in your home had difficult or unsociable behaviour?
- Would you be willing to oversee family time with the child or young person's biological family?



REWARDS AND BENEFITS?

Our fees reflect and reward the nature of being a therapeutic foster carer.

- As an Ascent foster carer you will receive a weekly fee
- Foster carers in the UK enjoy extra tax benefits which we can discuss with you
- Each foster carer is given 3 weeks of Stay Over Breaks (pro-rated which is paid)
- Each child that is fostered by you receives a holiday allowance
- We pay an incentive to carers who recommend friends who become foster carers
- Foster carers will benefit from a company incentive scheme and earn a bonus

Ascent will also arrange a number of fun events for our carers and children across the year.

STEPS TO BECOMING A FOSTER CARER

All applicants are assessed to see whether they have the right skills and abilities to foster. The assessment process takes up to four months from start to finish and all your questions and concerns will be discussed in depth.

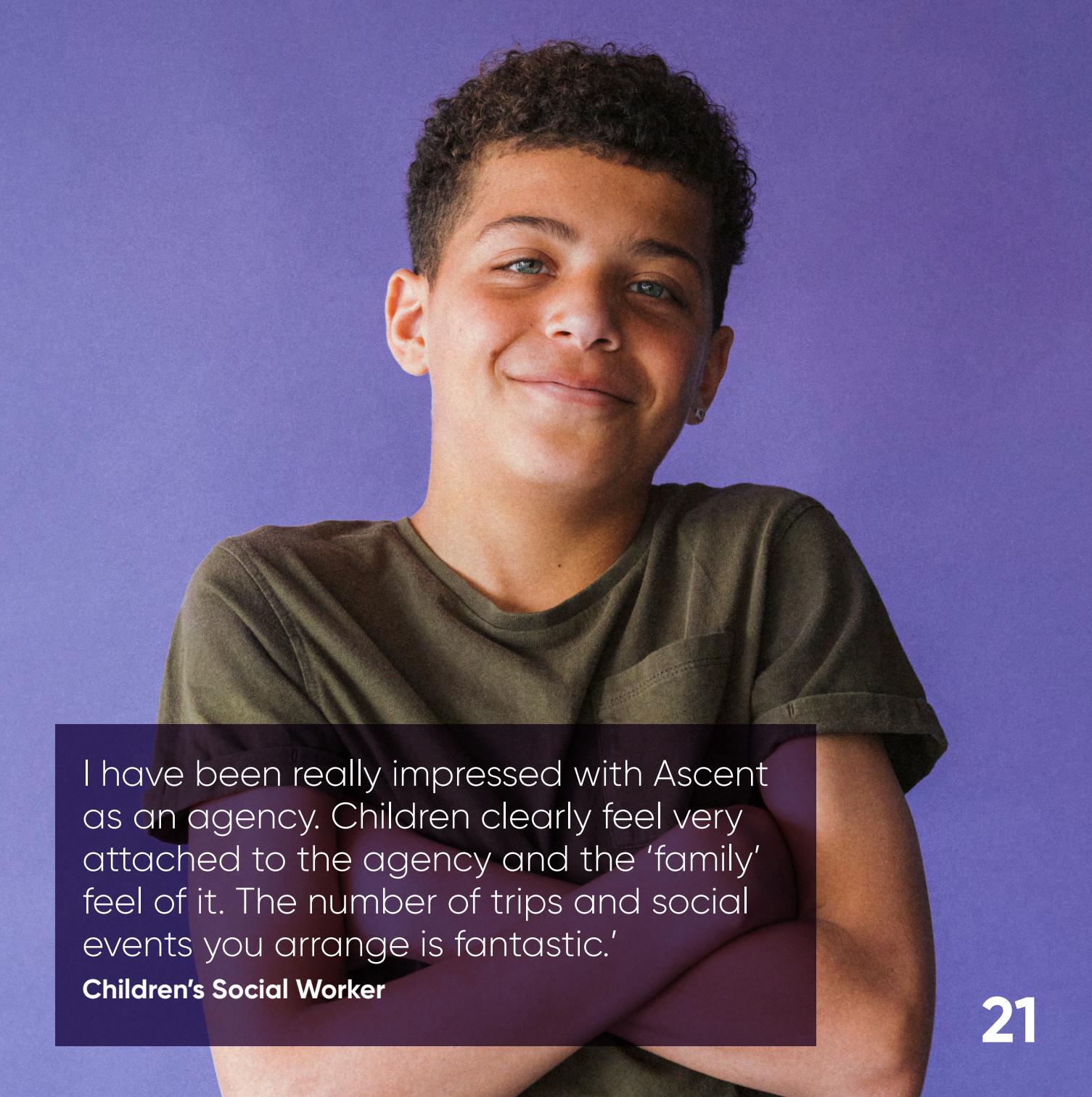
- 1** After an initial discussion over the phone we gather some basic information to help start assessing your suitability and what type of fostering might best suit you.
- 2** A member of the team will visit you at home to discuss fostering in more detail, and look at the space you have available for a foster child. We can also answer any questions you may have.
- 3** You will then get to meet the directors to learn more about Ascent's values, therapeutic approach and support we provide foster carers and children.

- 4** If we both agree that the assessment should proceed, the social worker will complete an application and you will embark on a comprehensive assessment. The assessment explores your background, experiences, parenting skills and the qualities you will bring to fostering.

Together with the social worker you will provide evidence of your ability to care for children or young people. The assessment will also involve talking to your children, any adult children who have left home and ex-partners where applicable. We will complete reference checks via your local authority, and ask you to provide three personal referees

- 5** You will also be invited to attend a three-day preparation course for prospective foster carers which is part of the assessment. This training will cover a variety of topics in order to prepare you for the fostering task. Other checks, such as DBS (Disclosure and barring service) and health assessments will also be undertaken.

- 6** The Fostering Panel is a group of professionals within the Social Care field who will consider the assessment and make a recommendation on your suitability to foster. This will then be ratified by the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) within ten working days. Once you are an approved foster carer, we will work with you to find the best possible match for you, your family and the child/ren you foster.



I have been really impressed with Ascent as an agency. Children clearly feel very attached to the agency and the 'family' feel of it. The number of trips and social events you arrange is fantastic.'

Children's Social Worker

EXISTING FOSTER CARERS

If you are already an approved foster carer who wants to join an agency that will support you and your development as a carer, please contact us. If you have children in placement you will still be able to join and you should still be able to transfer with your children.

If you'd like to take the next step please call:

020 3757 0070

One of our team can discuss your interest with you, or email us at

hello@ascentfostering.com

Or visit our website at **www.ascentfostering.com** to complete an online enquiry form.

We hope you will join us on the journey and foster for Ascent!

ascent fostering agency

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We invest in people Platinum


Ofsted
Outstanding
Provider



ascent
children services

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