From Essex Foster carers hand book

Useful questions when considering a new placement It is really useful when considering a new placement, to have a list of questions available to ask the local authority about the child or young person you are being asked to take. Information you need will be dependent upon the age and gender of the child being placed and your questions need to reflect this. Below is a list which tries to reflect many of the questions foster carers may need to consider asking before accepting a child or would need to know as soon as the information is available. This list may also include questions you would want to ask at the placement planning meeting.

**Child’s profile**

1. Physical description of the child

2. How is the child’s personality described?

3. What is their racial background; white, mixed race. Religion and if practicing support needed with diet attendance at religious services.

4. What is the child or young person’s favourite activities? Are they currently involved with any clubs or activities?

5. Are there any specific likes and dislikes expressed by the child?

6. How does the child present? For example, introverted, extroverted, shy, verbal, aggressive, withdrawn, scared

7. Does child like animals? Are they safe with animals?

8. Any there any known phobias?

9. Does child have a history of absconding?

10. Is the child using social networks? Do they have a mobile phone?

11. Are there any sexualised behaviours? What are these?

12. Are there any police interventions, convictions or on-going court proceedings?

13. Any information regarding the child or young person’s behaviour and how they respond to other children and young people.

**Family make-up**

1. What is the family makeup? For example is it a one or two parent family

2. Are there any siblings (including half and step siblings)?

3. What is child’s position in family? i.e. first-born 36

4. Who are the significant others in the child’s family?

5. What does the child see as the most important relationship for them in their family?

6. Who are the child’s close friends?

7. Are there any friendships to be avoided / promoted?

8. For babies; what was the pregnancy like? Any issues during pregnancy, i.e. substance abuse; drug and alcohol issues

9. How does the baby/child manage separation from family or main carer?

**Health**

1. Is the child/young person registered with a GP? Name, address, contact details

2. Is the child/young person registered with a dentist? Name, address, contact details

3. Are there any known allergies?

4. Is child on medication? If so what medication, how is this administered?

5. Does the child/young person have any health issues for example, hearing difficulties, wears glasses, wears braces etc

6. What immunisations has the child or young person had and are there any outstanding?

7. Are there any medical conditions? Any there any appointments pending or treatments needed? 8. When was the last health assessment?

9. What is the name, contact details for health visitor or school nurse? Does baby or child have their health monitoring book available?

10. Are there any mental health issues? Contact details for health professionals caring for the child or young person.

11. Are there any issues regarding diet; formula feed for babies, milk intolerances etc?

12. Are there any physical disabilities? Any special needs or learning difficulties?

13. Are there any hygiene issues? Can child/young person wash, bathe without assistance or do they require assistance?

**Education**

1. Name, address and contact details of school? Name of the Designated Teacher for looked after children if known

2. How does the child/young person get to school? What expectations are there for foster carers to transport them to school? Is school transport involved? If so what are the contact details and the arrangements?

3. What is the school routine, timetable, uniforms etc? Are there any current exclusions or do they attend any after school clubs etc?

4. Does child/young person have a learning mentor? If so, name and contact details?

5. Does the child/young person have a statement of educational need?

6. Does the child or young person have school lunches or packed lunches for school?

**Routines**

1. What routines does child/young person normally have going to bed and getting up?
2. What are the child or young person’s usual bedtimes and getting up times?
3. Are there any special routines for bedtime, for example, drinks, toys, stories?
4. Has the child/young person been used to sharing a bedroom at home?
5. Are there any issues re: bedwetting, soiling?
6. Is a nightlight required or not?
7. Does child/young person sleep walk?
8. Does child/young person have any nightmares / night terrors? If so what soothes them?
9. Can the child/young person dress themselves? What help is required?
10. Can the child/young person manage going to the toilet themselves? What help is required to support them?
11. Is child or young person menstruating? Are they able to manage this? Are any interventions needed?

Use of Foster carer profile card Children and young people tell us that when they move into a new foster placement it can be scary and having information reduces anxiety.