



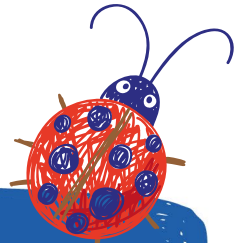
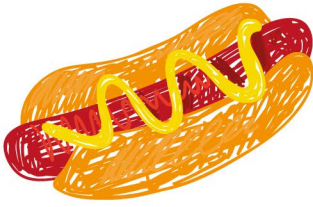
A guide to living with another family

* For ages 3-10

www.warringtonfostering.co.uk

WARRINGTON
Borough Council

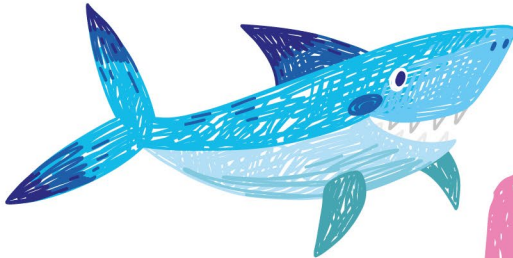
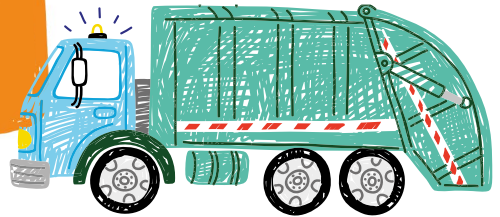




When I first came into foster care it was scary, but then it was ok.



When I first came into foster care it was weird at first, but now it is fun.



My grandmother is very nice by helping people find a home and making people happy.

Hello and Welcome

We hope this booklet will help to answer some of your questions about living in foster care.

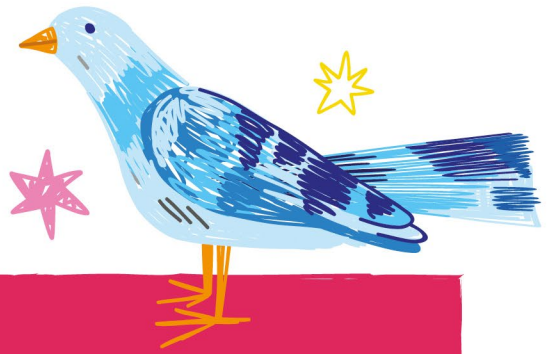
So, what is foster care?

Sometimes, when you can't live with your family, you go to live with foster carers, where you will be safe. Your foster carers could be someone who you know, like a friend or people in your family, or you may live with a family who you do not know. You might live in foster care for a short time, or sometimes a little longer. Some children remain living with their foster family.

Foster families come in many shapes and sizes and whilst some foster carers live on their own, others live in large families. There may be other children living in the home, who could be foster carer's own children or other children who are fostered ...or the foster carers may have a pet, like a dog or a cat.

Children live with foster families for lots of different reasons, but it is not because of anything you have done.





Mockingbird

In Warrington we have some foster carers who will be part of the Mockingbird Family model. These foster carers and the children they care for will have support from a main hub home foster carer. This group of foster carers is called a constellation.

Foster carers and the children who live with them will take part in lots of group activities together. This will help children in care make new friends with other children who also live with foster carers.

There may be times when things are not going well. During these difficult times you may spend time with the hub home foster carer and even have a sleep over at their house.

The hub home foster carer will organise activities and events for all the children living in the constellation. Activities may include days out, meeting up to play with your friends or going swimming, bowling and jungle gym.





Fostering Service



Living together

At first, it may feel strange living with a different family. Your foster carers know this and will do everything possible to help you to settle in. You will have your own bed to sleep in and somewhere to keep things that are important to you. Your foster carers will take you to nursery or school and to any activities or appointments that you attend. They will provide you with healthy meals and clean clothes to wear and you will have toys and games to play with. They will support you to see and talk to people who are important to you.

You can also help by letting your foster carers know of your likes and dislikes. For example, there might be certain foods that you don't like, or you might not like the bedroom light switched off.



It's fun living
with my foster carer
because we went to
the seaside.



What might be different?

All families have different ways they do things, these may be called the house rules. These may be different from those you have had before and your foster carer will explain these to you. As you get to know your foster carers you should feel able to talk to them about any worries or problems you have.



You get to have your
own bedroom and
are given
food to eat.



I have been given the opportunity to meet new people.

My plan

It's important that everyone who is involved in your life knows what is happening and what plans you have for the future. This is called your care plan.



Who will be part of your care plan?

✓ My foster carer

Your foster carer will look after you, they will listen to you and help you tell others if there is something making you feel unhappy.

✓ My Social Worker

Your social worker will visit you because they want to hear what you have got to say. They will talk to you about your care plan and answer any questions you may have.

✓ My Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

Your IRO will make sure you have your say about what you want to happen and will talk to you about how you can give your views. They will also make sure that all the grown-ups involved with your care plan work together to make the plan happen.

✓ Warrington Fostering Service

Your foster carers will have a social worker who will visit them regularly. They will work with your carers to assist them in keeping you safe and providing care for you. They like to hear about how things are going for you as part of your fostering family.

✓ Health visitors, doctors, dentist and nurses

Your foster carers will take you all health appointments with these people. All children who live with foster families have something called a health assessment, to make sure you are well and healthy. They will support your foster carers to ensure that you are as healthy as can be.

✓ My nursery or school

Your teacher will be told that you are living with a foster family. It is up to you if you tell other people. If you have any problems at school you must tell your teacher, foster carer or social worker, so that they can help to sort them out.



Poem

It is hard being in foster care but
you will be safe,

if you have horrible feelings
foster care is the place.

It's hard meeting new people it's
hard meeting a new family,

but when you get used to it,
you will live happily.

It's ok if your sad or your feelings do fall,
but the way to fix that is to use a worry wall.

But as you grow older you will get
more clever, your **memories**
will stay forever.

The life you have is getting more
thrilling for new things to try,

but you know **your happiness**
is going to fly.

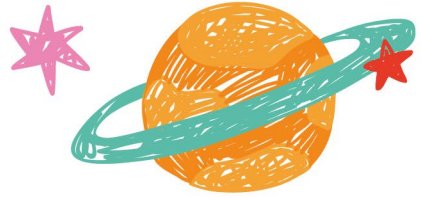
Fostering is like a flower a rose,
what is to you mind what is attached,

or a brand new gate that
never becomes unlatched.

REMEMBER ALWAYS BE

HAPPY!





My rights

To see my family and friends

Most children who live with foster families will still see their family and this will need to be arranged by your social worker. They will let you know when and where this is going to happen, and how often. Usually, the only time this doesn't happen is if your social worker or court think it wouldn't be safe for you.

Sometimes you may not want to see your family or there may be other reasons, and your social worker should talk to you about these.

We know that your friends are important to you and you should also be able to keep in touch with them too.

To use the telephone

We want you to be able to keep in touch with your family and friends, but it's important that this is done in a safe way. Your foster carer and social worker will talk to you about this.

I was sad coming into foster care because I missed my mum, but glad I still get to see her.



To receive pocket money

When you are living with your foster carers you will get pocket money every week. The amount you get will depend on how old you are. Some of this can be savings and some to spend.

To be kept safe and treated with respect

Your foster carer will never smack or hit you, or call you names. They should be there to listen to you and to help you if you're unhappy or when something is not OK.

Remember we always want you to feel safe and not frightened in your foster home, if you don't feel safe you should talk to someone you trust about this, such as your teacher, head teacher or social worker to help you sort it out.





Tell someone, your feelings matter.

People who can help or share your views with:



✓ **Foster carers**

They should help you and listen to your views.

✓ **Your foster carers social worker**

When they visit.

✓ **Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)**

They will meet with you before your review to obtain your views.

✓ **Independent person (NYAS)**

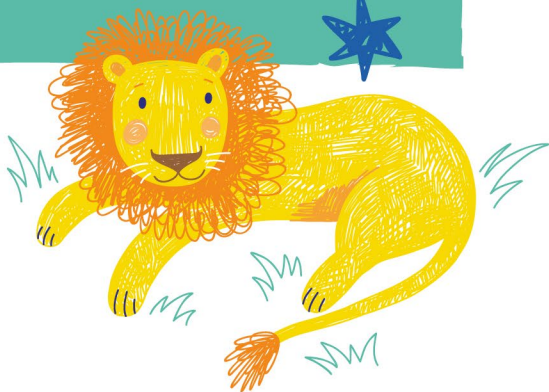
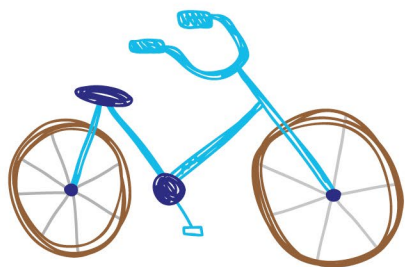
Offers advice and support to ensure your voice is heard when decisions are being made about you. They can help you to make a complaint.

✓ **Social worker/ their manager**

You can talk to them if you are unhappy, you need some help, or do not like or agree with the plans being made for you.

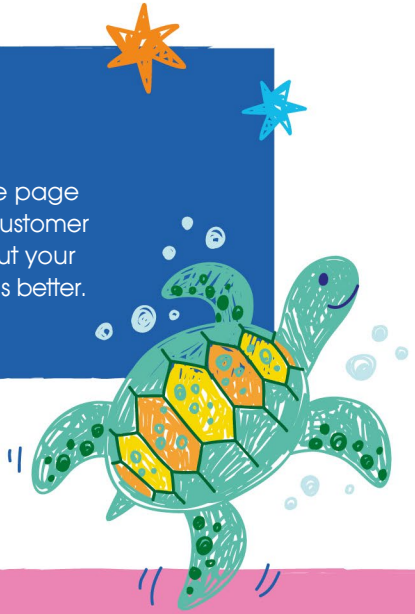
✓ **A trusted adult**

Like your teacher or a family member.



Making a complaint

Any of the people listed on the opposite page can help you make a complaint to the Customer Service team. They will chat to you about your problem, and will help to try to make things better.



Our support to you when making a complaint

- ✓ You feel listened to
- ✓ Your opinion is respected
- ✓ You are kept up to date
- ✓ We explain our decision to you
- ✓ It is finished as quickly as possible
- ✓ Only people who need to know are told about your complaint and what is happening
- ✓ We ask someone to help if you would like them to



My Social Worker

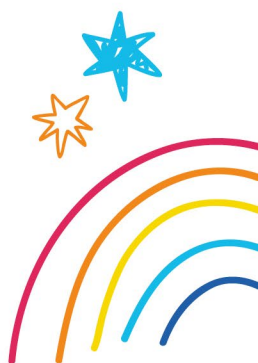
Name

Number

My IRO

Name

Number



Warrington Customer Services Team

Tel: 01925 443111

Email: fw-customerservice@warrington.gov.uk

Children in Care Council

A group for children and young people to help shape the care they receive in Warrington.

Tel: 01925 443064

Email: haveyoursay@warrington.gov.uk

Web: warrington.gov.uk/children-care-council

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)

Listen to your problems and try to help

Tel: 0808 808 1001

Web: www.nyas.net



Childline

If you are worried about something big or small, you can talk to someone confidentially.

Tel: 0800 1111

Web: www.childline.org.uk

Ofsted

Tel: 03000 123 1231

Web: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Children's Commissioner

Tel: 0800 528 0731

Web: childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand

The Fostering Network

Tel: 020 7620 6400

Web: thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/mockingbird