



Foster carers

What is a peer mentor?

Peer Mentoring refers to approved foster carers in a structured one-to-one relationship with other approved foster carers. Peer mentoring is delivered by a more experienced foster carer (the mentor) to a less experienced foster carer (the mentee), outside of any line management relationship. Mentors can offer emotional and practical support and advice from a position of understanding as foster carers themselves (Fostering Network).

Peer mentoring is a method for guiding and supporting and not managing or directing. It is a method to motivate and empower mentees to identify issues and goals and to resolve or reach them.



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Benefits of peer mentoring

- Help adapting to a new role and/or Fostering Service
- Assistance with familiarisation with the organisation
- Gaining a greater understanding of role and tasks of a foster carer
- Feeling less isolated
- Receiving feedback on performance
- Receiving trusted advice and guidance
- Developing new ideas, skills and knowledge
- Gaining better communication links with the Fostering Service
- Meeting training or development targets identified in their Personal Development Plan

Who the scheme is for?

- Prospective foster carers within the assessment process to help enhance their knowledge of fostering and to help prepare them for panel.
- For newly approved foster carers to be supported through their induction and with their first placement, for a period of at least 6 months following approval.
- To provide support to foster carers when placements become challenging, for a planned period of up to six months.
- To provide support to foster carers when an allegation has been made against them.

Contact you can expect

A peer mentoring agreement between mentor and mentee will be completed at the start of the peer mentoring relationship. The agreement will clarify the basic expectations and agreed support that the mentor will provide, practical arrangements for contact and proposed duration of mentoring relationship and frequency of contact. The agreement also outlines how you can resolve any difficulties that might arise with your mentor.

Matching

The assessor undertaking the fostering assessment or your allocated Supervising Social Worker will help to identify who your mentor will be. A matching assessment is completed to support this process.

Confidentiality

A mentoring relationship requires trust and an understanding around the issues of confidentiality between mentor and mentee. You will need to feel confident that they can explore your true thoughts and feelings and that your mentor is sensitive to you and respect boundaries. At the start of the mentor relationship you will both be required to sign a confidentiality statement, which is based upon how you should respect confidentiality.

Scheme Co-ordinator details

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