

FAMILY

AND FRIENDS

FOSTERING



Information about the assessment of Kinship Carers

03000 419106

**f Kentfostering
kentfostering.co.uk**



Kent County Council has a responsibility to make sure all children in its care live in a safe and caring environment.

Kinship foster carers have to be approved to the same standard as all foster carers. If you are considering looking after a child who is deemed to be a Child in Care, you will need to agree to be fully assessed and approved as a kinship foster carer. We must make sure important checks are carried out before a child can be placed with you and you will need to commit to a detailed and thorough assessment process.

The child's social worker and the Kinship Fostering team are both responsible for completing an assessment. Part of the assessment is to interview you and your family members during a number of home visits.

Temporary approval

In an emergency situation where a child needs to be placed quickly, temporary approval can be given by a senior manager in exceptional circumstances only, following a short assessment by a fostering social worker within the Kinship Fostering team. This includes having a police and health check. Once this is done, you can request a copy of the assessment.

Temporary approval can last up to 16 weeks and the full assessment will be completed during that time. In exceptional circumstances this can be extended for a maximum of 8 weeks.



About the full assessment

- This includes gathering in-depth information about your background, childhood and exploring your ability to parent the child and manage time/contact with the wider family networks.
- It will be carried out over several visits.
- If you and your spouse/partner are applying jointly, you will be seen together and separately.
- All household members will be seen and spoken to as part of the assessment process depending on their age and understanding.

The following checks will also need to be carried out:

- Local authority checks
- DBS (Police checks)
- Full medical – from a GP/ family doctor
- Health visitor
- School (including your own children's schools)
- 6 personal references (including up to 2 family members)
- Ex-partner adult/children references
- Visits to other family members
- Health and safety check of your home
- Pet assessment
- Current/previous employer reference
- Landlord reference
- Financial assessment

Fostering panel

When your assessment has been completed, you will be invited to attend a panel with your fostering social worker and the child's social worker, where the assessment report will be presented to the panel to consider approval as a kinship foster carer. This recommendation will go to a decision maker who will make the final decision.

If you are not approved, the social worker will discuss with you future plans for any child/ren placed with you.

What is expected of a Kinship Foster Carer?

- Full co-operation with the assessment process
- Working openly and honestly with fostering and childcare services
- Flexibility and availability for social worker visits
- Working with the Fostering Service as part of a wider team to achieve the right results for the children in line with their care plans
- Attending relevant training and support groups
- Completing a training support and development workbook within 18 months of approval, as required by legislation, to demonstrate the skills developed as a foster carer



Caring for the child of a family member or friend is a major decision. The situation you find yourself in may be completely unexpected and there are going to be many questions and adjustments you and your family need to make. Our teams can listen to you, offer guidance and support and be there for you at what can be a very difficult time.

When looking after someone else's child or children, you will need to think about how you and your family or support network will be able to meet all of the child's needs, while keeping them safe. You will need the support of your family and local network and you will need to have the energy to meet the child's needs.

Where a child cannot return to live with their parents, it may be many years before they can live independently and they will need your support and ongoing commitment.

Supporting you

As a team, we will guide you through all stages of the process, explaining how things are going to work and answering your questions. We shall be able to direct you to useful resources and support you through the assessment and Fostering Panel processes.

Key areas of support

- As an approved foster carer, you will receive a weekly fostering maintenance payment to meet the child's needs once placed with you. A professional fee is payable upon successful completion of the skills to foster training and ongoing commitment to the completion of all required and additional training.
- You may be eligible for some but not all benefits (i.e. not child benefit, but disability living allowance may apply for some children).

- Post approval training including practical support from the fostering team.
- Free Foster Talk membership with access to support, advice, ideas and events about fostering.
- Opportunities to discuss plans for permanence for the child/children.
- Regular supervision meetings with your fostering social worker.
- The young person may eventually be entitled to care leavers support services.

Long term plans for the children

Permanent care arrangements are believed to be the best option for children and young people, making sure that they have a stable long-term home. This is called Permanency and we will discuss it with you.

Possible legal options are for:

- Children to return to live with birth parents
- Child Arrangements Order
- Special Guardianship Order
- Adoption

For further information regarding the above options please contact your fostering social worker or use the website below.



Useful numbers/websites

Kent Fostering

kentfostering.co.uk

KCC Kinship Fostering Team

Telephone Number: 03000 419106 or

Email: KinshipAssessment@kent.gov.uk

CoramBAAF Adoption and Fostering

Academy corambaaf.org.uk

FosterTalk

fostertalk.org

0121 758 5013

Family Rights Group

frg.org.uk 0808 801 0366

Kinship Care Charity

kinship.org.uk 0300 123 7015

Grandparents Plus

grandparentsplus.org.uk

This leaflet is available in alternative formats and languages. Please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or telephone 03000 42 15 53. Text relay: 18001 03000 421553

This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

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