



FOSTER CARE AGREEMENT

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL FOSTERING SERVICE

Terms of the foster carer's approval:

Agreement between:

Foster Carers:
Foster Carers Address:

And Bristol City Council Fostering Service

Address:
Tel No.
Contact person:

Date of Current Approval:
Category of Approval:
Number of Children:
Ages of Children:
Gender:
Any other conditions:

Note: This foster care agreement should be renewed whenever the approval criteria changes and at every review.

As a carer(s) I am /we are aware that it is my/our responsibility to:

a) Promote the welfare of children placed in my/our care.

- b) Allow social workers to have access to the child in my/our care at all reasonable times and for the child to be seen alone when requested.
- c) Ensure that children placed will have contact with their relatives and friends in accordance with their care plan.
- d) Care for children in a way that meet their emotional and psychological needs.
- e) That I/We would encourage child/ren to develop and pursue their skills, talents, interests and hobbies. They will be treated no less favourably than any other children within the fostering household;
- f) Maintain regular and appropriate contact with agencies involved with the children placed with me/us including education and health.
- g) That no corporal punishment (including slapping, pinching, squeezing, shaking and rough handling) will be administered to children placed;
- h) Respect children and young people's cultural and ethnic background including race, religion and sexual orientation and will assist disabled children to overcome barriers arising from impairment;

I am /we are also aware of my/our responsibility to work with Bristol City Council as follows:

Change in foster child's circumstances

- i) To keep the child's social worker informed about the child's progress, and notify the child's social worker immediately of any serious illness of the child, or of any other serious occurrence
- j) Inform my/our Supervising Social Worker of any major change in my/our circumstances, e.g:
 - a. Any intended change of address, including for holidays.
 - b. Any change in their personal circumstances likely to affect their capacity to care for any child placed in the household; *including anybody moving into the home and starting a new relationship.*
 - c. Any further request or application to foster or adopt, or to register as a provider of day care for children under the age of eight years.

Confidentiality

keep any information relating to children (or their families or other persons) given to or kept by me/us in confidence and not disclosed to any person without the consent of Bristol City Council.

Record keeping

- k) To record all appointments relating to the child and keep on-going records relating to the child's placement, significant events and, in particular observation of the child's reaction to contact.
- l) To store these information securely and share with supervising social worker and the child's social worker. And return all paperwork when placements end.

Other responsibilities

- m) Foster carer to ensure that all accommodation is appropriate and fit for purpose.
- n) that registered foster carers are automatically members of the Association of Foster Carers (AFCA), and are encouraged to be active members;
- o) Occasionally foster carers may be asked to assist another foster carer with child care arrangements to enable them to attend training, professional meetings, etc. On such occasions this arrangement will be deemed to be covered by their Fostering Registration.
- p) that if difficulties arise in a placement which it seems cannot be resolved, a meeting will be convened swiftly to consider the position; if it is agreed that the child shall move, this will normally take place in a planned manner over a period of at least 28 days (it being accepted that, in some circumstances, a much shorter period will be appropriate);
- q) that when a child moves from a foster home this will normally be with the agreement of the foster carers, but accept that in any case where it appears to the local authority that the placement is no longer in the child's interests, the foster carers will allow the child to be removed.
- r) Carers must undertake training to maintain their registration (including Training Development Standards Workbook within their first year of fostering) and any progression fee payments.
- s) Complete their contribution for their reviews in a timely way.

Bristol City Council's responsibilities to the carer(s):

Supervision & Support

- t) Provide supervision and individual support from a Supervising Social Worker and access to an alternative source of support if that worker is unavailable. Supervising Social Worker will keep monthly contact and visit on minimum every 3 months or more

frequently if needed. Supervising Social Worker will make a minimum of one unannounced visit each year.

- u) Support and encourage attendance of Foster Carers Support Groups
- v) Support Avon Foster Carers Association (AFCA), which represents foster carers locally. Approved foster carers are automatically members of AFCA and are encouraged to be active members.
- w) Bristol City Council Fostering Service Out of Hours support 5pm-0:00
- x) Emergency Duty Team (EDT) 5pm – 8.30 am

Training

- y) Provide training opportunities for all foster carers to increase their knowledge and skills in caring for children. Carers must undertake training to maintain their registration and any progression fee payments.
- z) Ensure that foster carers complete the Training Development Standards Workbook within their first year of fostering.

Foster carer reviews

- aa) The approval of foster carers will be reviewed annually. Reviews may also be held in the event of a change of circumstance, or a complaint/allegation.
- bb) The review provides an opportunity to discuss the foster carer's view of the service offered by Bristol City Council, their experiences in specific aspects of fostering, their training needs, skills and development and any grievances they may have. The views of the Social Workers of all the children placed, the children themselves, and also the views of the foster carer's Supervising Social Worker will be included in the review.
- cc) The review would be considered by either the Foster Panel, or the fostering team manager with the final approval of the agency decision maker. Decision will be notified to the foster carers in writing. The first review following approval and subsequently every 3 year review will be presented to the Fostering Panel.

Placements

- dd) Before and during all placements, foster carers will be given as much information as possible about the child/ren which is relevant to their care and the tasks involved in caring for them
- ee) The appropriate Children in Care forms will be completed as the law requires;
- ff) A placement agreement will be completed by the child's Social

Worker whenever a child is placed and Placement Planning Meetings would be held prior to placement being made or as soon as practicable ideally within 5 days of a child being placed.

- gg) Complaint procedures are available to foster carers for making complaints or representations to Bristol City Council about its policies or services, ***as outlined in the foster carer handbook.***

Visits by OFSTED

- hh) Foster carers are requested to co-operate as reasonably required with Ofsted, and in particular to allow a person authorised by Ofsted to interview them and visit their home at any reasonable time.

Finance:

To avoid under or overpayments please see below:

- ii) Fostering allowances are paid fortnightly to meet all the normal costs of the child's maintenance.
- jj) Allowance payments are made every two weeks into a bank or building society account by direct transfer. In exceptional circumstances payment can be made by cheque.
- kk) A remittance advice will be provided for each fortnightly payment detailing the allowances paid. These should be retained for eg: tax, tax credit and benefit purposes.
- ll) To ensure you receive your allowances on time you should contact the Fostering Service or the Fostering Payments Team as soon as a placement starts or ends to avoid under or overpayments occurring.

There are several ways to contact the teams:

- mm) **The Fostering Service on 0117 3534196**

- nn) **Payment Team:**

- oo) **On 0117 9037756 / 0117 3521468 or email:**
fostering.kinshippay@bristol.gov.uk

To notify a change of address or bank account details, please contact the Payments Team.

- pp) Foster carers will be informed every year about any changes to these payments.

Ending placements

If difficulties arise in a placement which cannot be resolved, a meeting will be convened swiftly to consider the position; if it is agreed that the child shall move, this will normally take place in a planned manner over a period of at least 28 days (it's being accepted that, in some circumstances, a much shorter period will be appropriate);

Termination of foster carer approval

- If concerns are raised about the standard of care provided by a foster carer, or if there are child protection issues, and these are established after the initial inquiry, approval status of the carers will be referred to the appropriate fostering panel for review.
- One option for the panel would be to recommend that Bristol City Council terminate the foster carer's approval. In such a case, the carer will be notified of Bristol City Council's decision in writing and made aware of their rights of appeal.
- A foster carer may give notice in writing to Bristol City Council at any time they no longer wish to act as a foster carer. Their approval will then be terminated twenty-eight days from the date on which the notice is received.

Declaration (and signature)

We the undersigned agree the terms and conditions of this Foster Carer Agreement

Signed:

(Supervising Social Worker)

Date:

Signed:

(Foster carer)

Date:

Signed:

(Foster carer)

Date:

NB: If there are two approved foster carers in the household, this agreement must be signed by both carers.