



Children's Welcome Guide

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Hi, my name is Rover and I am here to help you settle into your foster home. I will tell you about living with foster carers in this guide. Follow my footprints.

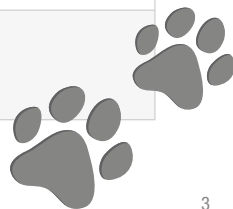


Information About Me

This guide is yours to keep and use when you like. If you want to know something look in here first.

You can use this page to write down all of your important information.

My Name, Address and Phone Number	
My Foster Carer's Name	
My Family's Address and Phone Number	
My Social Worker's Name and Phone Number	
Manager of Social Worker Name and Phone Number	
My Independent Reviewing Officer's Name and Phone Number	
My Childrens First Social Worker's Name and Phone Number	
Name and Phone Number of Children First Agency Manager:	
Name of my School and Teacher	





What is fostering?

Children sometimes need to live in a foster family when they are not able to live with their own family. There could be lots of different reasons for this, and you should be told why.

Foster families are ordinary people who have been trained to look after you. They are there for you at a time in your life when your own parents are unable to care for you.

All foster families are from different backgrounds with different types of homes and lifestyles. Children First work hard to find the best foster family for you.

Moving into a foster home for the first time

When you move into a foster home for the first time it can be scary because you are starting to live with people that you don't know. You might feel worried. You might want to be quiet or you may want to talk about how it's going.

It is important that your foster carers know something about you and your family so they can help you. Your social worker will tell them some things and it will be good if you tell them more as you get to know them.

It is also important that you and your own family know something about the foster family too – and your social worker and your foster carers will tell you and answer your questions.

Your foster family want to do their best for you and hope that you will enjoy living with them – they can be good people to talk to.

There will be rules to follow like times for meals, school, homework, getting home, going to bed. Most important is that everyone should have respect for each other and talk about things.

There might be other children or young people in the family that you can get to know and there might be pets that you can help look after.

You will have your own bedroom, except, if you are fostered with your brother or sister you might be able share a room with them.

Usually you will be able to have visits with your family and friends and talk to them on the phone. (Sometimes this is called contact) You will be told about visits. Sometimes it might not be okay to visit or talk to someone. You will be told about this and the reasons explained.

Remember if there is something you don't like or don't understand first talk to your foster carer or social worker.

Your Views

We would like to know how you are feeling. Feelings mean when you are happy or sad, frightened, upset or worried. You can talk to your foster carer, social worker or anyone else that you feel safe with.



We would also like to know what you want to happen or what you might like to do, these things are called wishes.

Your social worker will talk to you about your wishes and feelings and we will all listen to you and explain what can happen and what can't and why.

We also want to hear what works well and what doesn't and we will ask you sometimes for your views and how we can improve, which is called "consultation".

Your Social Worker

A social worker is someone who works with children to make sure they are safe and well cared for. You will have your own social worker who is someone that will help you. Your social worker will visit you regularly and explain things to you. You can talk to your social worker about anything that is worrying you.

The Supervising Social Worker

Your foster carer has their own social worker too. This person is called a supervising social worker and he/she visits your foster carer and will also talk to you to make sure you are being looked after well. You can talk to the supervising social worker about anything and they will listen to you.

Please write the contact details for your social worker and the CFFA supervising social worker on page 3.

Meetings

Different types of meetings will take place whilst you are living with your foster carer, this is so that everybody can share information and work together to help you. For example, you may have to attend a placement agreement meeting and a statutory review. At your review you will meet your Independent Reviewing Officer who will take time to listen to your views about living with your carers, school and seeing people who are important to you. You can contact your IRO at anytime – write their name and phone number on page 3. Your foster carer's will also have an annual review and you will be asked for your views.

Keeping in Touch

Your social worker will help you to keep in touch with your family and people who are important to you. It is important that you tell your social worker about the people you want to see. You may hear the word 'contact' and that means keeping in touch with members of your family and those people important to you, where it is safe and possible to do so. Different types of contact include:

- Face to face visits.
- Overnight stays.
- Outings or events.
- Telephone calls.
- Exchanging of photos, videos, emails or letters.



Feeling Safe, Happy and Well Cared For

Children First and our foster families want you to feel safe, happy and well cared for.

The government has worked very hard to understand the most important things for children and young people and have asked lots of children and young people for their views – these are the things they came up with:

- Staying safe
- Being healthy
- Enjoying life and learning
- Helping others
- Having enough money

These things are your rights and you and all children and young people have the right to be looked after, protected and well cared for.

The people looking after you must do these things:

- Keep you safe so you will not be harmed in any way, by anyone.
- Look after you and make certain you are well cared for, in every way.
- Give you support at home and at school to learn and have an education.

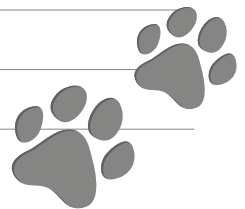
- Get you medical help, good food and good advice so you can be healthy.
- Allow you privacy and confidentiality when you need it.
- Make sure you have pocket money and savings.
- Help you see your family and friends - if this is safe and okay for you.
- Make sure you can follow your religion, culture and promote your identity.
- Encourage you to talk about your wishes and we must all listen to you and respect your views.
- Consult you and involve you in decisions made about you.
- You must be allowed to complain and ask for things to change.

Children First promise you that we will look after you properly, we will protect you and stand up for your rights.

If anything goes wrong even a small thing let us know – you can complain to us and we will put things right

I hope you're still
following me!







Bullying

Cyberbullying

The Internet can be great but there can be dangers – read this and keep safe!

If someone you talk to on the internet is not being nice to you and this makes you to feel unhappy. This is called Cyberbullying and your carers will help you with this. You must tell them. They will know what to do.

Bullying

Bullying can happen to anyone at any age. You might be bullied at school, home or online and it can be really bad and make you feel sad and scared

You could be bullied by, an adult or a child or young person – or someone younger than you. Bullying can mean different things and include these:

- People calling you names.
- Being teased.
- People taking your things or damaging them.
- People taking your money.
- People spreading rumours about you.
- Being ignored and left out.
- People hitting, kicking, pushing or pulling you or physically hurting you in any way.
- Being threatened or intimidated.
- People taking your friends away.
- People making things up to get you into trouble.

Bullying can also be part of other forms of abuse, including neglect, emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

No one has the right to hurt you or make you feel horrible or stop you from joining in. If you are being bullied you don't have to put up with it.

If you are being bullied it isn't your fault and it can be stopped – but you must tell someone.

Who can I tell?

- Talk to your foster carer.
- Talk to your teacher.
- Talk to your social worker.
- Talk to your Independent Reviewing Officer.

Helpful Organisations

- Call Childline: 0800 1111 (24 hours).
- Call The Children's Commissioner: 0844 800 9113.
- Call Ofsted: 0300 123 1231.
- National Bullying Helpline Freephone: 0845 225 5787 (Mon to Fri, 10 to 4pm; Sat 10 to 2pm).
- Samaritans: 08457 909090 (24 hours).
- The Who Cares Trust: www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Anti-bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Bullying UK: www.bullying.co.uk
- National Youth Advisory Service Freephone: 0808 808 1001 www.nyas.net



School, Health and Money

School

Going to school is really important for you. You can learn about lots of new things and play with friends. There will be activities and sports at school that you can join in on.

Your foster carer will help you with your homework and will attend meetings at school with you.

Your teacher and some other people at school will know you are living with your foster carer but it is up to you who else knows. If you have any problems at school you can talk to your teacher, your foster carer and/or your social worker.

Health

Your foster carer will help you to take part in activities that keep you healthy and will provide yummy healthy food for you. Your foster carer will make sure you're registered with a new doctor and a new dentist if you live too far away from your family home.

Your eyesight is one of the most important things to you and you need to have regular checks. Your foster carer will make appointments with an optician and attend with you. If you have to wear glasses you will be able to pick a pair that you like.

Pocket Money

While you live with your foster carer they will give you some pocket money to buy things that you would like. Your foster carer will also help you to save your money to buy bigger things or to use when they take you on holiday.





Help and Advice

How to Make a Complaint

At Children First we will always try to do our best for you – but we know that sometimes things can go wrong.

We have told you about some of the things we promise to do – if Children First social workers or foster carers do not keep these promises - we want you to complain – so that we can put things right.

There might be other things that you are worried about or that you would like to change – these might be quite small things or big things – we want to hear about them all so we can put things right.

If you think it will help - you can start by talking to your foster carer or your social worker.

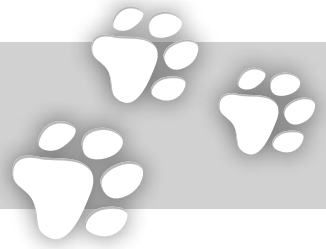
If this does not help or if you prefer, you can use our complaints procedure start by phoning Children First: 01268 567 330 (9.00am to 5.30pm) or 07880 556 617 (all other times).

Ask to speak to the person in charge: we will find out from you what the problem is and explain how we are going to start to deal with it.

Write down what is worrying you and speak to someone:



If someone has hurt or bullied you or if you have a complaint, you must tell someone.



Your Foster Carer

They can give good advice and will help you.

Your Social Worker

They are responsible for your care and protection and have the power to help you and change things.

Children First

Responsible for your foster carers and we will help with your complaints anytime.

Tel: 01268 567 330 (9.00am to 5.30pm)

Mobile: 07880 556 617 (all other times)

Ofsted

Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) inspects all fostering agencies every three years. Ofsted ensures all fostering agencies meet the National Minimum Standards of Care. Ofsted are responsible for inspecting schools and fostering; they have the power to change things.

- Ofsted, Picadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD
- General Enquiries: 0300 123 1231
- About Concerns: 0300 123 4666
- Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Childline

They will help any child or young person being bullied or harmed – they will understand.

Tel: 0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

The Children's Commissioner for England – Anne Longfield

The Children's Commissioner, Anne Longfield, stands up for all children and young people and is on your side.

- Telephone: 0800 582 0731
- www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Voice of the Child in Care:

They help with any issue affecting children and young people living away from home.

Tel: 0808 800 5792

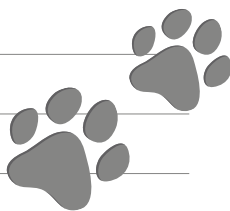
www.voiceyp.org.uk



I am so glad you have read to the end of this guide as there is just one more thing I want to tell you. I like to get about with the children that live with our foster carers. Sometimes the children take me out for the day or on holiday with their foster family. I really like doing this and would like to spend the day with you. All I ask is that you take my photo when we are out so that it can go on my roving wall at the Children First office.

You could even win the 'Roving with Rover' picture of the Year!

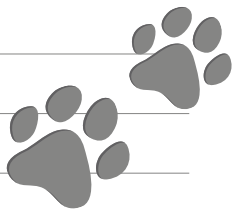
Hope to see you see you soon!

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