

An information guide for
children and young people aged
between eleven and eighteen



Young Person's Guide

Age 11 to 18

Introduction

This guide has been written for young people who are being looked after by foster parents who work with Child Care Bureau. It contains lots of things that you might need to know about foster care.

This guide, along with the other things in your welcome pack, are yours to keep.

If you have any questions about anything you read in this guide you can discuss these with your foster parent or your social worker.

What's in this guide?

It's all about me!	3
Who are Child Care Bureau and what do they do?	4
Information About Me	5
Where Will You Live	6
Foster Parents	7
Health and Safety Matters	8
Your education	10
Your rights and who you can talk to	11
Race, Equality and Diversity	13
Who to talk to if you have a complaint	14
Notes	15



It's all about me!

My name:

My address:

My age and birthday:

My important family members are:

My school is:

My Careers Advisor is:

Phone no:

My Foster Parents are:

Phone no:

My Social Worker is:

Phone no:

My Children's Rights Officer is:

Phone no:

My Independent Review Officer is:

Phone no:

My emergency contact is:

Phone no:





Who are child Care Bureau and what do they do?

Child Care Bureau have lots of foster parents in England. They look after children and young people like you, to make sure you are happy and safe. Child Care Bureau are part of National Fostering Agency Group. You will see this name on the magazines you receive, as these go to all the children and young people NFA Group care for.

Your Local Authority social worker will still visit you at your new foster home and will speak to your foster parents and Child Care Bureau's social worker to make sure you are ok.

How can I contact Child Care Bureau?

- Call: 01905 640022
- Freephone 0800 917 1622
- Email: fosterteam@childcarebureau.co.uk
- Address: Child Care Bureau, Unit 11-13 Elgar Business Centre, Hallow, Worcestershire, WR2 6NJ

You can contact us anytime and someone will always be available to listen or help you with any worries or problems. If you want to know anything else about Child Care Bureau, you can ask your foster parents or Child Care Bureau, or take a look on our website:

- www.childcarebureau.co.uk

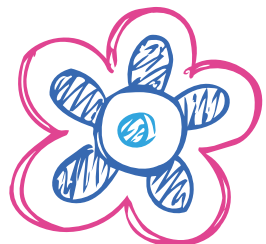
Your Social Worker

Your social worker is someone that has been specially trained to work with children and their families. They will visit you regularly and keep in touch with your family and your foster parents. YOUR social worker is there to help YOU and YOUR family.

Child Care Bureau Social Worker

A Child Care Bureau social worker is someone that looks after the foster parents and makes sure that they are looking after you properly and that you are OK. They will talk to you and YOUR social worker. If you have any problems you can ask to speak to them.

You can call Child Care Bureau any time on 01905 640022 or 0800 917 1622.





Information About Me

My File

Child Care Bureau have to keep some information about you to make sure that you are looked after properly. If you want to see any of the information we hold about you, please ask your foster parents or social worker and we will arrange this for you.

Your social worker will also have information about you, and you can ask to see these files as well. You are also allowed to write notes in your file if you want to.

Being 'Looked After' by Your Local Authority

You may hear people use the term 'looked after' when they are talking about you. All this means is that Your Local Authority are looking after you whilst you are unable to live at home, and that they are involved in the decisions about your future.

Whilst you are being 'looked after' by your Local Authority, your social worker will keep in contact by visiting and telephoning your family regularly.

Meetings and Reviews

Throughout your stay with your foster parents, regular meetings are held by your Local Authority, (which they have to do by law). Your social worker will arrange these meetings about and for you.

Your parents, social worker, teacher and foster family will be some of the people who may be invited to attend these

meetings – as well as anyone else you would like to invite. You can also attend yourself if you wish. These meetings and reviews are to check that things are going okay and to plan for your future.

You do not have to go to them if you don't want to – but it is important that the people who do go to these meetings understand and know what YOU want. Speak to your social worker about attending these meetings or having your views heard at the meetings.

Whilst being 'looked after' there are also other types of meetings that discuss things like your school, health, diet and religion. These are held to make sure you are settled in your foster home and discuss how long you will live with your foster parents. Your social worker will talk to you and explain a bit more about these meetings. You can also ask any questions about them at any time.

Contact with your Family

In most cases, all young people will be encouraged and helped to see their families as often as possible, but sometimes there may be reasons why this is not possible, and these reasons should be explained to you.

You can discuss with your social worker about contact with your family and how you will see and talk to them.



Where Will You Live

House Rules and Safer Caring

Every fostering household has what's known as a Safer Caring Policy which may also detail household rules.

These could include getting up times, bed times, meal times, playing with pets, and going out/coming in times.

Ask your foster parents to explain to you about their household and Safer Caring rules.

Bedrooms

Everyone has a right to space and privacy and as such you will have your own bedroom whilst you are staying with your foster parents.

Generally, members of the household will knock before entering anyone's bedroom and we shouldn't touch each other's things unless we have permission.

We appreciate that having your own space is important but sometimes there may be occasions where your foster parents may need to enter your bedroom i.e. to clean/tidy your room or to change your bed sheets.

Sometimes there may be occasions where a foster parent may have to ask to search your bedroom, but generally this would only occur if they have concerns about your welfare or safety. They will seek your permission wherever possible before any search occurs (the foster parents will also talk to your social worker about this).

If you want to share a bedroom (with your brother or sister) then you will need to talk to your foster parent who will listen to you, but they will need to talk to your social worker social worker to make sure this is ok. This means you might not get an answer straight away so try and be a little patient. Your foster parents will do their best to get an answer as soon as possible.

Privacy and Confidentiality

It is really important that you can get some privacy when you need it. This might be time on your own to think or a place to sit quietly to do your homework or play your kind of music.

It's also important that you have the right to privacy when for example, using the telephone or the bathroom.

Using the Telephone

You should be able to use the telephone in private especially if you need to talk to your social worker or the Children's Rights Officer.

Clearly, using the telephone can be expensive so talk to your parent about when you can and cannot use the phone.

As long as it has been agreed by your social worker you should be able to phone and receive calls from your family.



Foster Parents

When things aren't going well

The thing to remember is that whatever you've done nobody should ever smack, hit or hurt you. At Child Care Bureau we believe that everybody, whether you're a young person or an adult, needs boundaries and when we do something wrong we need to have this explained to us so we can learn to do the 'right' thing next time.

This might mean that, for example, you might not be able to go out with your friends for a while (grounded).

Your foster parents must never:

- Smack you or physically hurt you
- Stop you from seeing your parents because of your behaviour
- Lock you in a room
- Stop you from having food or drink
- Take all your pocket money, (but you may have to pay part of it if, for example, you're paying for something that you have broken)
- Humiliate you

Food

It is important that you like the food that's on offer to you so talk to your parents. They will make sure that they give you food that you like, but they will also need to give you a healthy balanced diet as well.

You should never be made to eat food you dislike or are allergic to and your religious dietary needs should always be respected.

It could be helpful to go shopping with your foster parents so you can look at the different foods you might not have tried before as well as the food you like.

If you are having problems that prevent you from eating, or are worried about food in other ways, there is help on offer. Talk to someone you trust so that they can support you.

Pocket Money

The amount of pocket money you receive from your foster parents usually depends on how old you are. It's up to you how you want to spend or save your pocket money. If you want to save your pocket money, speak to your foster parents about opening your own bank or savings account.

How much pocket money I'll receive each week:

Religion and Culture

If you would like to go to church, a mosque, a synagogue or any other place of worship to practice your faith, talk to your foster parent about arranging this.





Health and Safety Matters

Health

When you come to live with your foster parent they will register you at a Doctors, Dentists and Opticians. They will support you when you need to go for medicals but will also respect your privacy as you get older. If you feel uncomfortable in any way about being accompanied for appointments by your foster parent you should talk to someone you feel you can trust either your parent, social worker or maybe your teacher at school.

Regular exercise and healthy food such as fruit, vegetables and salad are all good for you. It is important that you get a choice of food including the things that you like but remember that foster parents have a responsibility to make sure you get a healthy diet too. You can expect to be supported by your foster parents if you are ill and they will know what to do or who to ask to support you.

Hygiene and Beauty

Your foster parents will provide you with any items that you need to keep yourself clean. If you require other essential items discuss this with your foster parent and they should purchase them for you. Make-up can be purchased with your pocket money. You may require specific products for hair and skin care and your foster parent will be responsible for purchasing these items for you.

Your cultural background and religion may influence what you do with your hair, eg your religion may require you leave your hair uncut. This will always be respected. You may need to make your foster parent aware of these things so they can support you.

Medical Card

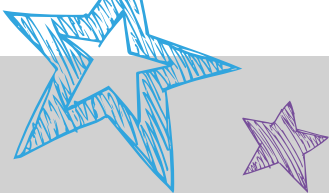
Your medical card is an important document with your full name, date of birth, NHS number and your doctor's details on it. You need it to get medical and dental treatment on the NHS. Your foster parent will look after it for you.

Running Away

There may be times when you feel like running away because of something that is happening or because you feel unhappy. It's important you talk to someone you trust about your feelings.

If you do run away, lots of people will be worried about you and your safety.

Please telephone or text someone you trust to let them know that you are safe. Your foster parents would be really happy to know that you are safe and will always welcome you back. If you come back home to them then they can help you with whatever is concerning you.



Feelings

It's important that you are able to share what makes you happy, or sad, and any worries that you may have. Your foster parents, social workers and legal guardians all want to help and protect you, so if there's anything e.g. bullying or being hurt by someone or maybe you need help with homework, do talk to someone. If you don't find it easy to talk, you could write it down and pass it on to someone you trust.

It is also important to talk to someone you trust (i.e. your foster parent, your social worker, a teacher etc) if someone (this can be someone you know or someone you don't really know) does something that makes you feel uncomfortable or makes you feel unsafe.





Your Education

All children and young people are legally required to attend school every day.

Whilst living with your foster parents, you will be involved in making plans to ensure that you receive an education. This will help to give you better opportunities in the future so you can have a good job when you grow up.

If you are living near to your home, you may be able to carry on going to your current school, but if you have to move further away, your foster parents and social worker will try to organise a new school as quickly as possible.

If there is any delay in a school being found or if you are excluded from school, you will be expected to complete schoolwork and follow an educational routine at home.

If you are out of school for a long period of time, an Education Welfare Officer may work with you to help you get back into education.

Your foster parents will encourage you to do homework and offer any help you might need. They will also attend consultation evenings in school and keep in regular contact with your school.

If you are of school leaving age, speak to your foster parent and social worker about support with further education or job opportunities.





Your rights and who you can talk to

Whilst you are living with your foster family it is important for you to know that you have rights and there are certain things that your foster family should support you with. We have given some examples below to help you understand your rights.

You have the right to:

- Be listened to and consulted with
- Follow your chosen culture & religion
- Have contact with your family and friends (if safe do to so – talk to your social worker about this)
- Telephone your social worker if you need to
- Eat a special diet/food that are part of your culture/religion
- See your social worker if you need to – and in private
- Have pocket money
- See a dentist and doctor when you need to
- Go to school and have a state education
- Have suitable clothing to wear
- Private time (privacy)
- Your own bedroom
- Complain
- Share your views

Talking to me

You have the right to be “consulted” about decisions that are made about you. This means people will ask you for your views and listen to what you say. It doesn’t mean you will always get what you want, but you will be told the reasons why.

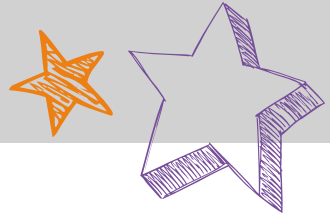
If you have a complaint or need to talk to someone...

If you are not happy with the way you are being looked after you must tell someone. You should tell us how you feel so we can try and sort it out.

If you do have a complaint, Child Care Bureau will deal with it quickly, thoroughly, positively, in confidence and treat everything you have to say seriously. The contact details for the Registered Manager who will deal with your complaint are at the back of this guide.

The complaints system does work, and we have changed the way we do things by listening to children and young people and taking on board suggestions for improvement.

You can also tell your foster parents, social worker, or your parents if you have any problems.



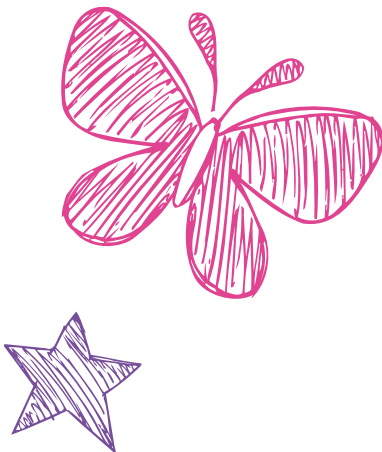
Independent Reviewing Officers

Independent reviewing officers (usually shortened to 'IROs') are professionals working with children & young people in foster care. Each young person in care should have an IRO. The IRO's job is to check that the Local Authority is doing what it should be doing for the young person while they are in care, to go to all the young person's reviews and to make sure they are done properly, to check on the young person's care plan, and to make sure the Local Authority takes proper notice of the young person's wishes and feelings.

If you want to speak to your Independent Reviewing Officer, ask your social worker how you can contact them.

Children's Rights Officer (Local Authority)

The Children's Rights Officer can help with your problems, show you how to sort out any complaints and explain your rights. Your social worker will give you information about how to contact the Children's Rights Officer (because they also work with the Local Authority) from the area that you used to live in. Their advice is completely independent. The Officer won't talk to anyone else about the things you tell them (unless you ask them to, or unless you or someone else would be in danger if they said nothing). Remember: You have the right to access a Children's Rights Officer.



Q: What does “British” mean to you?

A: The word “British” simply means anyone who is born in Britain. It doesn’t matter what colour.

Race Equality means that all people; white, black, red and yellow, have the right to be treated fairly and that everyone should have the same chance.

EQUAL RIGHTS NO MATTER WHAT!

There are many different religions celebrated in Britain. For example, Hindu, Catholic, Muslim, Protestant, Sikh, Jehovah’s Witness, Judaism and Buddhism.

If you would like to find out more about race, equality and diversity, you could:

- Ask your teacher
- Find books on race and diversity in the library
- Look at the contacts list at the back of this book

Bullying happens when people don’t understand why someone is different from them. But we all have something in common, we are all human! We should treat each other how we would like to be treated and remember we are all part of the same race it doesn’t matter about the colour of our skin or how we speak.

The word “customs” is used to describe how people from different countries and backgrounds do things.

It’s really interesting to find out how other people live, what they believe, what they eat and what they wear.

When children come to Britain from other countries they sometimes feel frightened, uncomfortable, sad and lonely. Everything is new to them. You could make them feel better by welcoming them and making them feel happy to be here. You could play with them, talk to them, make friends and invite them to tea.

Find out about them and tell them about you.





Making a Complaint

To submit a complaint please contact the Registered Manager.

- Registered Manager: Howard Verran
- Telephone: 07525 071 822
- Email: howard@childcarebureau.co.uk
- Address: Child Care Bureau, Unit 11-13 Elgar Business Centre, Hallow, Worcestershire, WR2 6NJ

Besides Child Care Bureau you can also send a complaint to:

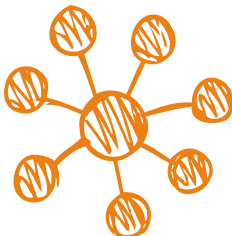
Children's Commissioner for England – Anne Longfield

- Telephone: 0800 528 0731
- Email: help.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk
- Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Ofsted (England)

- Telephone: 0300 123 1231
- Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
- Website: www.gov.uk/ofsted

These teams are there to help and advise children who live away from home.



Three hand-drawn teardrop shapes are shown on lined paper. The top shape is orange with diagonal hatching. The bottom-left shape is blue with a thick outline. The bottom-right shape is green with a thick outline.

If you require this document in another language
please contact Child Care Bureau (English)

Haddii aad u baahan tahay dukumentigan oo luqad kale ku qoran
fadlan la soo xiriir hey'adda Child Care Bureau ee xal u helidda
ilmo korinta qaabilsan (Somali)

Os ydych angen y ddogfen hon mewn iaith arall,
cysylltwch â Child Care Bureau (Welsh)

Jeśli chcesz sobie otrzymać ten dokument w innym języku,
prosimy o kontakt z Child Care Bureau (Polish)

Pour avoir ce document dans une autre langue,
veuillez contacter Child Care Bureau (French)