

Transferring Carers Brochure



*Your local not-for-profit
fostering agency*

Hello and welcome to Team Fostering

We're delighted you're thinking about transferring to Team Fostering. We appreciate making this change is a big decision and not one you'll be taking lightly.

Our whole team is here to make sure the transition is as smooth as possible, both for you and any children you might currently be looking after.

As a not-for-profit fostering agency, we put children at the heart of everything we do. When you become a foster carer with us, you're not just joining a team. You'll become part of a family which lives and breathes this ethos and works together to ensure the very best outcomes for our children and young people.

We also listen to what's important to you and consistently strive to act on your feedback in a meaningful way. We take your views seriously and make it a priority to act on your feedback in ways that truly make a difference.

For example, we recently increased the short break (respite) care allowance to 21 nights at the full carer-and-child rate, a change made directly in response to consultations with our carers. This recognises the vital importance that respite can provide in supporting the



wellbeing of both carers and children and young people, giving everyone the opportunity for rest and recharge.


In this brochure you'll find lots of information about what you can expect from Team Fostering – including how we'll give you all the support you need, so you can concentrate on giving a child everything they need.

If you've got any questions please get in touch with our friendly recruitment team who'll be happy to talk to you more. You can reach them on **0800 292 2003** or by emailing **info@teamfostering.co.uk**

Kathryn Hayes
CEO, Team Fostering

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“I can’t express enough what the support has been like compared to what we haven’t had in the past. What Team Fostering can offer with all the individual departments they have. It’s a breath of fresh air. We’ve been impressed by the amount of staff and carers who’ve been here for a long time.”

- Denise, Foster Carer

What is a not-for-profit fostering agency?

Team Fostering was born around a kitchen table in 2001 – out of the shared belief of our founding members Peter Richardson and Walter Young, that independent fostering agencies shouldn't make a profit from children and young people in care.

This belief has never changed and will never change.

Being not-for-profit means we have no shareholders taking a cut of the money. Instead, 100% of our surplus money goes directly into funding additional support and services for our children, young people and foster carers.

It also gives us the freedom to listen to and act upon things they would like to see.

The reality of this for foster carers means more support services, more activities, annual holidays, additional training and much more which you can read about later on.

Everyone at Team Fostering takes great pride in our not-for-profit status. If you pop over to our website and watch the videos we've made with some of the team you'll see how much it underpins their love of working here.





The Transfer Process

We'll support you through all stages of your transfer over to Team Fostering, from your initial enquiry right through to your approval and development as a foster carer with us.

During each stage you'll get the opportunity to meet different members of the team who'll all form part of your overall experience at Team Fostering.

Initial enquiry

After you've reached out to us, we'll have an initial, informal chat to find out more about you and your experience with fostering so far. This will progress to a more in depth conversation if you wish to get the ball rolling, where we'll also ask more about the financial package you're currently receiving. If you'd like to speak to one of our foster carers to get a view of what it's like to foster with us, we can arrange this for you.

Initial home visit

If we haven't discussed anything which would prevent you from fostering with us, we'll organise for an assessing social worker to come and visit your home. If you currently have foster children with you they will explore the needs of the children at this stage.

Application

We'll assess all the information gathered so far, and if we think you have everything needed to be a part of the Team Fostering family we'll invite you to apply. You'll then receive access to an online application form. If you complete this within 2 weeks you'll receive £250 upon your approval with us.

Assessment

This is the point at which you'll need to inform your agency of your intention to transfer as we'll be contacting them for references as well as arranging the transfer protocol if you currently have children with you.

We'll update your existing Form F and you may have fewer assessment sessions depending on when it was completed. You'll also attend an online Transferring Skills session as well as introductions to various teams across the agency. We expect you to attend panel around 16 weeks from receiving your application.



Transfer Protocol

At Team Fostering we adhere to the Transfer of Foster Carers Protocol, which prioritises the welfare of any children currently with you and enables a smooth transition for both them and you. If you have children with you, we'll do our absolute best to ensure they transfer to Team Fostering with you, working closely with their social worker and the Local Authority. We'll arrange a Transfer Protocol Meeting where our Team Manager and Family Finding team will meet with you and your current agency to understand in more detail about the children in your care and your support needs.

We'll match you to an experienced assessor who will explain each step and guide you through the process. This will be done alongside the assessment process to help avoid any disruption for the children and we can make appointments at times to suit you, including evenings and weekends.

Panel

At the end of your assessment you'll be invited to a Panel meeting, where your assessment will be discussed and we might ask any final questions.

Approval

After Panel, all information goes to our Agency Decision Maker who will then confirm your approval as a foster carer with Team Fostering.

"The transfer process was smooth and friendly, and the assessment was much more enjoyable than our previous experience."

The whole approach, from everyone at Team, from the moment we made the enquiry was so much more pleasant and confirmed we had made the right choice to change."

- Wayne, Foster Carer

How We'll Support You

Many of our children and young people have experienced trauma in their lives and supporting them through this can be extremely rewarding. However, it also comes with challenges, and we pride ourselves in the support we provide our foster carers, so we can overcome the tougher times together.

You'll have a dedicated Supervising Social Worker, based locally, as well as access to 24/7 support. Our joined up ways of working mean that even if your social worker isn't available, you'll be able to pick up the phone and speak to someone who knows your situation.

Some of our other support services include:

Education and Support Service

We have an outstanding Education and Support Service in each region who provide dedicated, bespoke support to our children, young people and foster carers.

This includes things like:

- One-to-one educational support
- Targeted support for improving wellbeing and stability
- Liaison with schools
- A jam packed schedule of activities and events
- An annual Team holiday
- A range of social groups tailored to different ages
- Providing opportunities for young people to develop their life skills
- Events to celebrate achievements

Psychology Support

We work with experienced psychologists who understand the impact childhood trauma can have on mental health. They provide therapeutic and psychological support to our foster families through workshops as well as tailored online and in-person support where needed.

Family Support Service

Our team of Family Support Workers are there to complement and enhance your training as a foster carer. They work closely with other teams to ensure a joined up, tailored approach and can build learning about therapeutic parenting, supporting children with additional needs and signposting to additional services as well as offering a safe space for foster carers to share any challenges they might be facing in our Carer Support meetings, held in person at our offices every month.

FosterTalk

As a foster carer with Team Fostering you'll get membership for FosterTalk which provides independent support. You'll have access to things like legal and financial advice, allegation support and insurance cover and a 24/7 counselling helpline.

“My Supervising Social Worker has been an incredible support throughout my journey. Her unwavering commitment and understanding nature create an environment where I feel truly valued.”

- Nazelko, Foster Carer



What else makes Team Fostering special?

Alongside our top notch support system, there are a host of other benefits you get as a foster carer with Team Fostering.



Competitive fees which vary depending on the age and needs of the child



21 nights short break care (otherwise known as respite care)



Life Assurance scheme



Car mileage and Christmas allowance



5 year loyalty bonus



A laptop to use during your time with us



Access to memorial funds for supporting young people with things like driving lessons or travelling adventures



Up to £1200 reward for Word of Mouth referrals

Training

At Team Fostering we're passionate about giving our foster carers the skills they need to be successful in their role.

This starts during the assessment process and continues throughout your time as a foster carer with us.

Pre-approval training

During your assessment process you'll attend an online Transferring Skills session, which is a condensed version of the Skills to Foster training that new foster carers do. You'll also have a one-day face-to-face introduction to some of our teams including Family Finding, Education and Support Service and some of our foster carers

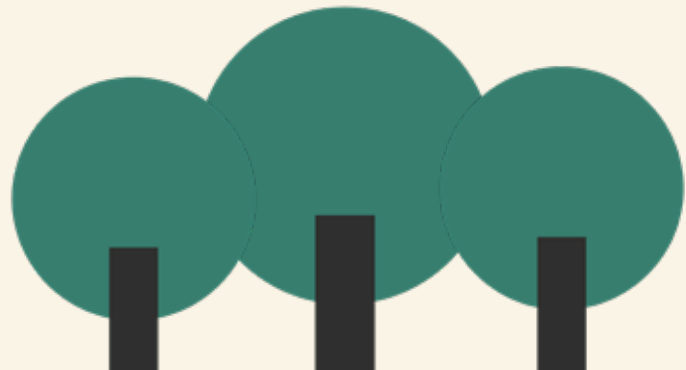
Induction training

When you join Team Fostering, we'll take into account any training you've already done with your current agency. There may be other mandatory training that you need to complete as part of

the Training Support and Development Standards for Foster Care. If you've already completed Skills to Foster and the TSDS Standards we'll ask you to provide your certificates.

Ongoing training

As a not-for-profit fostering agency, part of our reinvestment goes towards the continuous professional development of our foster carers. Ongoing training is essential so you will always have access to further learning. You'll have your own Personal Development Plan to highlight specific training needs and advanced training opportunities are available for those in more specialist areas of fostering or for those seeking higher level qualifications.





Our Matching Process

Matching the right child to the right foster carer is of the utmost importance to us and we know the positive impact it can have on the outcomes for our children and young people when we get this right.

Our locally based Family Finding teams invest time in getting to know you and your family so that we can make the best possible match for you, alongside your Supervising Social Worker. This personalised, in-depth approach takes into account your skills and abilities, location, any preferences you have, what you've been approved for, other household members including birth children or foster children already with you, regular visitors to the home and sleeping arrangements.

We work closely with the Local Authority and make recommendations for a match only when we firmly believe all of these aspects align. You'll always be given time to discuss and have the right to say no if you feel it's not suitable for you.

At Team Fostering the whole family is part of the journey and birth children are also welcomed at activities and other events, where you'll often find our staff and their own children too.

“Throughout the matching process we are listened to. Team Fostering take the time to get to know your profile and requirements when looking at potential matches and they always check in BEFORE any decisions or your name is put forward.”

- Melanie, Foster Carer



Sharon's Story

Sharon and her partner Adrian have been fostering for over a decade.

Through a career working in schools, from dinner duty to behavioural support work, Sharon knew that providing for young people was something she really wanted to do. And when Sharon and Adrian decided they wanted to do even more to support young people in need, they decided to become foster carers.

On starting out in fostering, they fostered with a local authority for a long time, and while they loved the experiences that being foster carers provided, their time with the local authority wasn't everything they wanted it to be.

So, after reflecting on it for some time, they decided to transfer to an independent fostering agency. They did their research, looked into their options and found out about Team Fostering – and around a year ago they were approved as carers with the agency.

“It's so different to what we're used to,” Sharon explains. “It's been a breath of fresh air coming to Team Fostering. We've

got nothing but positive feelings about everyone we've encountered – staff, other carers, the children – everyone has been really warm and welcoming and it's been a genuinely positive experience."

"We didn't know anybody's names where we were before, but now we're getting to know everyone at Team. You know that you're valued and respected here."

And it's not just Sharon and Adrian that the move has helped. The young people placed with the couple transferred across to Team Fostering with them when they moved.

She said: ***"The benefits to the children have been amazing. They've never been happier; they just get on with enjoying themselves. They feel that they belong, whereas in the past they've been quite shy, and they've found their connection with the other children here."***

Everyone at Team has been encouraging, friendly and approachable with them, especially at the activities and events. The kids have done everything – surfing, Laserquest, Masterchef sessions – and it's all provided by Team Fostering."



Our recruitment team

If you'd like to find out more about what transferring to Team Fostering looks like, our recruitment team are here to help. We're happy to have as many informal conversations with you as you need, without pressure or commitment to help you make the decision that's right for you.

You can contact them by calling **0800 292 2003** or emailing **info@teamfostering.co.uk** and you'll get to speak to one of our Recruitment and Engagement Officers, Emma and Carly.

Emma

Emma has been with Team Fostering for many years, having previously worked in our Family Finding Team. She's a fountain of knowledge and loves a chat so you'll be able to pick her brains about anything to do with Team Fostering or fostering in general.

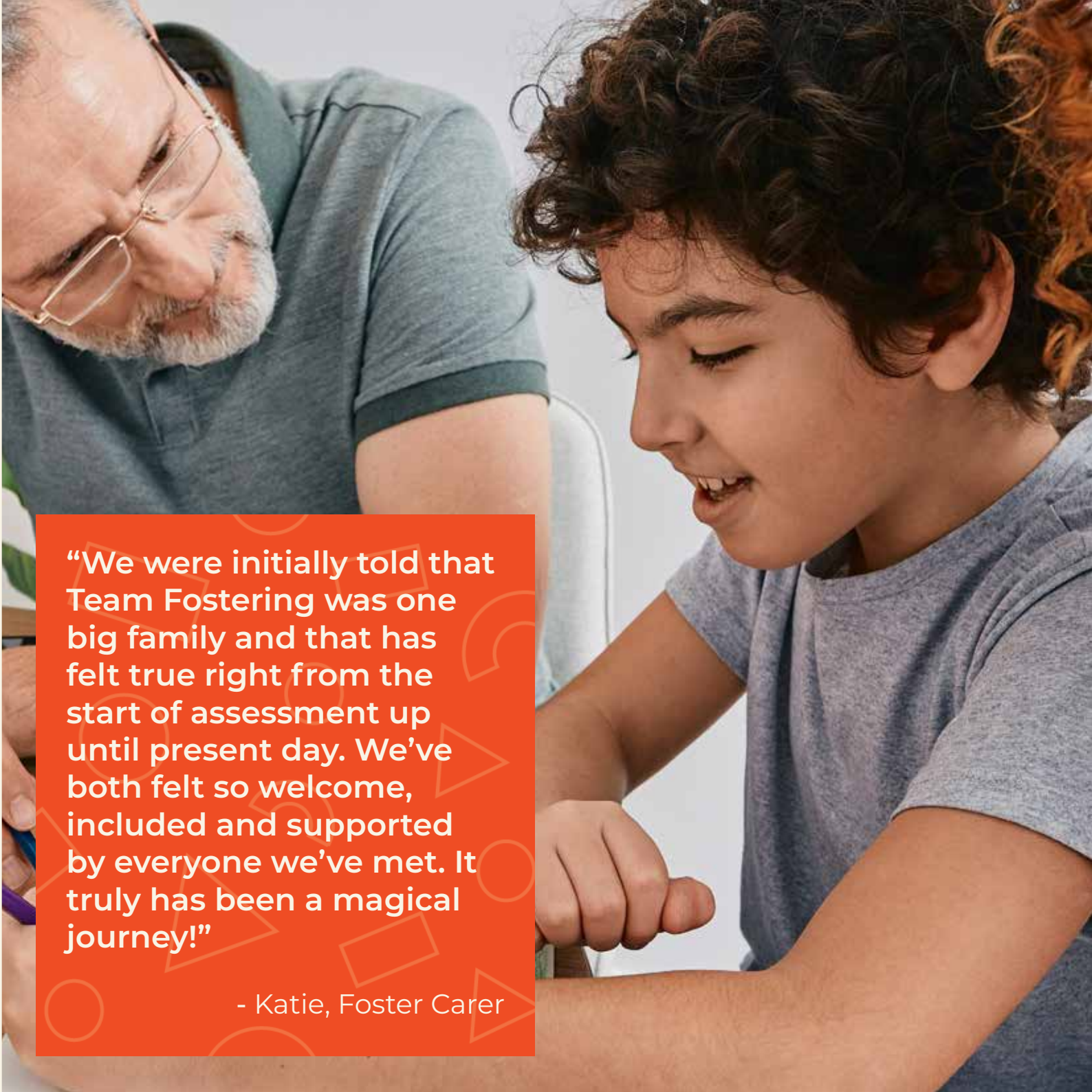


Carly

Carly is always a friendly and welcoming voice on the other end of the phone, who lives and breathes our not-for-profit status as this is what brought her here in the first place. She loves being out in the community and chatting to people at our recruitment events and is ready to answer any questions you might have.



You can watch videos of Emma and Carly talking about their role, as well as videos from other members of the team over on our website.



"We were initially told that Team Fostering was one big family and that has felt true right from the start of assessment up until present day. We've both felt so welcome, included and supported by everyone we've met. It truly has been a magical journey!"

- Katie, Foster Carer



FAQs

Will there be any breaks in my payments during the transfer?

No. We make sure there are no breaks in payment while you are transferring so you can continue to provide the same level of care.

Will I need to tell my current agency I'm transferring?

Yes, you'll need to tell them before you submit your formal application. Your agency will need to know you're leaving and we'll need to seek a reference from them. However we advise you don't resign from them until you have been approved by our Panel and we're happy to have initial conversations with you before you tell them.

Will I need to go through another full Form F assessment?

You'll still need to go through the same assessment process. However, we'll update your existing Form F and aim to get you to Panel within 16 weeks - but

this process can sometimes be quicker.

Will my pay match the fees paid at Team Fostering even if I'm currently paid less?

Yes. Even if you're currently paid less by your agency, your pay at Team Fostering will rise to match what all of our current carers are paid..



Contact us:

0800 292 2003

teamfostering.co.uk

Find us on social media:



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