

A Foster Carer's Guide to Child Care Reviews

If you would like this information in
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Illustration by Kellie Craig

- **What is a child care review?**

A review is a meeting to talk about a child's progress whilst they are being looked after. People who are involved in the child's life get together to discuss the child's day to day care and plans for the future (the child's Care Plan).

- **How often are these reviews held?**

The first review must be within 28 days of the child being looked after, the second review must be within the next three months, then reviews must be held at least every six months - more often if necessary.

- **Who will usually be at the review?**

- The child - if they are old enough.
- The child's parents.
- The child's social worker.
- You and your fostering worker.

We try to keep the meeting small so that children can feel free to talk openly, but sometimes other people are asked to come to help when there is a problem to sort out.

An Independent Reviewing Officer will be there to see that everyone is treated fairly, and that all the important issues are talked about, and to take an independent look at what is happening for the child.

- **Can anyone be excluded from the review?**

In exceptional cases parents and their supporters can be excluded from their child's review.

- **Before the meeting**

You will receive a booklet to write your views in and post back to the Independent Reviewing Officer before the meeting.

This booklet may be seen by those at the meeting and will be kept on the child's file for the future.

If you will need help to attend the meeting, such as child care or transport, please ask your fostering worker well before.

- **What is the foster carer's role at the meeting?**

You have a unique experience of the child and so have an important part to play at the review. The meeting needs to hear from you about how the child is progressing - about their health, development and interests, how they manage contact with their family and relatives and something of their daily life. Your understanding of the child will help ensure that the Care Plan is arranged around the child's particular needs. It is always helpful to discuss the review beforehand with your fostering worker to sort out any concerns you may have.

- **What about issues sensitive to the child?**

If there are sensitive issues for the child that are likely to be discussed in the review please let the Independent Reviewing Officer know beforehand. You can indicate this in the booklet or tell your fostering worker so that this can be managed well on the day.

- **After the meeting**

The Independent Reviewing Officer will write a short, clear report, recording the decisions made and stating who will do what and the agreed time scales for action. Everyone at the meeting should then follow what has been agreed.