

**Kent County Council Fostering Policy for a Short Break Foster Carer being approved concurrently as a Shared Lives Carer**

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Contents

[1 Approval process 2](#_Toc468871178)

[2 Contract & payments 3](#_Toc468871179)

[3 Monitoring and support 3](#_Toc468871180)

[4 Referrals and Matching 4](#_Toc468871181)

[5 Communication between teams 4](#_Toc468871182)

[Appendix A Approval from Short Break Foster Carer to Shared Lives Scheme Process 5](#_Toc468871183)

[Appendix B Shared Lives Scheme to Short Break Foster Carer Process 6](#_Toc468871184)

**Summary/Overview**

It has been recognised for some time that Short Break Foster Carers may consider becoming carers under the Shared Lives Scheme when the young people they have been caring for turn 18 and it has been decided that it is appropriate for them to continue to offer support into adulthood.

It was felt that some Short Break Foster Carers may like to be able to offer respite style placements to young adults who may not be known to them. In light of this work was undertaken to explore how this may be supported whilst ensuring no child placed with a Short Break Foster Carer could be placed alongside an adult who was not known. The following policy has been devised on order to ensure the safety of both children and adults being placed within a family environment that can meet their needs, whilst supporting the flexibility and full utilisation of the skill base of families who would want to offer such services.

If a Short Break Foster Carer chooses to be approved by the Shared Lives service, they will hold two positions for Kent county council:

* KCC Foster carer
* KCC Shared Lives host

For each role they will be required to follow the related services policies, procedures and processes whilst carrying out the role to the individual they support.

# Approval process

The Short Break Foster Carer will be required to complete the shortened assessment completed by Fosters carers coming over to the Shared Lives service with children transitioning to adults.

The **form F** will be used during the assessment and the Shared Lives **knowledge and skills** sections of the assessment will need completing with the Shared Lives assessing officer along with a risk assessment.

The applicant will need to complete the required training if not already completed with the Fostering service:

* **Safeguarding Adults**
* **Mental Capacity Act**
* **First Aid**
* **Introduction to the Care Act**
* **Equality and Diversity**
* **Medication awareness**
* **Allegations (Fostering)**

They will also need to complete the **Care certificate workbook** if they do not hold an NVQ level 2 qualification of equivalent in adult social care.

One **reference** will be requested from the Fostering Supervising Social Worker (endorsed by Fostering Team Manager) and two personal references. These references will be required as they will relate to views on working with adults as opposed to children.

**Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)** – the check will be completed by the Fostering team, the results of this will be provided to the Shared Lives Service. The DBS check will be an enhanced check for both Children and Adults.

**Health and Safety**

Fostering will provide copy of **Health and Safety check list**. Shared Lives will complete own **health and safety check** and **fire plan** during assessment.

Room décor – if the room is being used for both Adults and Children, this needs to be decorated in a neutral way to ensure appropriate for both groups. Additional items can be placed in the room during each stay if required.

**Insurances**

Under the Shared Lives service the following insurances are required:

* Buildings and contents insurance
* Business user or confirmation from Car insurance company they are covered to support Shared Lives placements.
* Public liability insurance is covered by KCC.
* Gas certificate

# Contract & payments

The Short Break Foster Carer will be required to sign up to the Shared Lives Host agreements terms and conditions. This will also mean they follow the Shared Lives payment process and have individual contract with adult social services (SWIFT).

Payment to the Short Break Foster Carer will be made via SWIFT payment processes and carers will aim to be paid within 28 days of notifying Shared Lives of the Short Break. The fee paid will be assessed using the Shared Lives costing model.

**Registration**

Short Break Foster Carer will not be registered with the Care quality commission (CQC) however the Shared Lives service will still be required to report relevant incidents to CQC. Short Break Foster Carer will be registered with KCC Fostering and inspected under Ofsted.

If a Short Breaks Foster Carer was to take a Shared Lives placement without going through the agreed process, this could lead to deregistration.

# Monitoring and support

Short Break Foster Carer will be assigned a Shared Lives team member.

They will carry out appropriate monitoring visits to the carer depending on the amount of adults they provide short breaks to. The assigned worker will communicate any information or concerns to the Fostering team via the Shared Lives mailbox [sharedlives@kent.gov.uk](mailto:sharedlives@kent.gov.uk) and the main Disability Fostering Duty mailbox [DCFDuty01@kent.gov.uk](mailto:DCFDuty01@kent.gov.uk)

Once a year a joint visit will take place with the Short Break Foster Carer’s social worker and the Shared Lives worker.

**Forms**

Short Break Foster Carer will need to use Shared Lives forms and follow policies, procedures and guidance when supporting an adult under the Shared Lives service. This information will be provided to the Foster carer during the assessment process.

# Referrals and Matching

The main role will be placing Children with the Short Break Foster Carer. This means that these carers will not take emergency placements for Shared Lives adults and only planned stays will be arranged via the Shared Lives service.

Shared Lives will be responsible for advertising the Short Break Foster Carer vacant bed to adult social care staff. The Shared Lives team will provide information on the person being referred and take responsibility for the matching process.

If **one spare room** – priority to Children’s team

If **more than one spare room** – any adult staying whilst a Child is present will need a DBS completed by the Fostering team. Under the Mental Capacity Act the adult is required to understand the request of an enhanced check, any adult not willing or unable to complete the DBS check will not be able to stay with a Foster carer at the same time as a child.

# Communication between teams

A shared Lives representative will attend Fostering team meeting where appropriate to ensure good communication is maintained. The Shared Lives mailbox and Fostering team mailbox will be the main email contact points.

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Application form or Fostering Application form received

**Request from Fostering**

* Form F
* Health & Safety check
* Fire plan
* Fostering reference
* Enhanced DBS (Children and Adults
* Knowledge & Skills (Adults)
* References
* Training, including
  + Safeguarding
  + Mental Capacity
* Care Certificate
* Inform of responsibility for duel role

Shared Lives to inform Fostering team

Joint annual visit with Fostering and Shared Lives

Agree level of support and monitoring

Allocate Shared Lives Worker for monitoring and support

Approved

Present to panel

Allocate Shared Lives Assessing Officer

Complete Assessment – to start with Pre-assessment form.

# C:\Documents and Settings\colclt01\Local Settings\Temporary Internet Files\Content.Word\KCC_Logo_New_2012_Framed copy 2.jpgAppendix B Shared Lives Scheme to Short Break Foster Carer Process

Adult provided information on Short Break Foster Carer

Short Break Foster Carer to inform Shared Lives of Short Break stays

Successful match

Shared Lives to inform Fostering team

Shared Lives support with matching

Shared Lives to inform Fostering team

DBS check to be completed – Fostering team

Yes

Will Children to be present when Adult stays?

Agreed to match

Shared Lives team consider suitable matches

Adult Referral received by Shared Lives

Short Break Foster Carer identified as match. Referral information sent to Short Break Foster Carer

Shared Lives arrange payment

Short Break Foster Carer informs Shared Lives of completed Short Break