

FOSTERING RECRUITMENT
BUSINESS RULES FOR THE
RECRUITMENT OF FOSTER CARERS

Effective from: Jan 2017
Reviewed: SMT Feb 2017
Review date: April 2018

POLICY ON DISCRETIONARY PAYMENTS AND CAPITAL LOANS TO FOSTER CARERS AND ADOPTERS

1. Purpose of the policy

- 1.1 Leicestershire County Council is responsible for an Adoption and Fostering Agency. The Council has a Fostering [Statement of Purpose](#). The aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose are child focused and show how the service will meet outcomes for children.
- 1.2 Leicestershire's Fostering Service works in partnership with children and young people, their families and carers to provide safe, caring homes which value the differences in children and young people and help them to achieve their full potential.

We aim to achieve this by providing:-

- Safe, warm and caring family environments
 - Comprehensive support for children, young people and carers
 - Encouragement for children and young people to meet their full potential and to mark and
 - celebrate their successes
 - Personal and group support for carers and their families
 - A flexible service which respects individual needs and values diversity
 - Measurable outcomes which strive to achieve, or exceed, National Standards
 - A professional service which is accountable, financially viable, and maximises partnership
 - Opportunities, and
 - Training opportunities.
- 1.3 This policy is to ensure that Leicestershire County Council complies with the sufficiency duty (recruitment of foster carers who are able to meet the needs of children and young people in our care) by being able to offer clear recruitment messages to prospective carers.

3. **Legal Framework includes**

- The Children Act 1989, Sec. 22G
- The Children Act 1989 [Sufficiency Regulations](#)
- The Care Planning and Fostering (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2015
- The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations, Volume 4: Fostering Services (2010)
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013.
- Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (2011).

4. **Business Rules for Recruitment / Assessment of Foster Carers**

4.1 Within Leicestershire County Council we have established business rules for the Fostering, Adoption and Placements Team to ensure all workers provide the same response to all potential applicants. There are situations where we cannot accept an application from a potential carer. These are highlighted below.

- Have a conviction for offences against children
- Have convictions for serious violent offences
- Have convictions for drug offences as an adult
- Are currently receiving support from a local authority in relation to the parenting of their own children
- Currently working as a child minder which would impact upon their registration as a child minder / the amount of child being cared for in the household.

4.2 For any potential applicants this is the guidance we would want to consider when receiving an expression of interest:

- Have a spare room - If the potential applicant is considering offering a short term placement for babies (up to 12 months) there is no need to have a spare room, the baby will sleep in a cot in the carer's bed room.

For children older than 12 months, if the potential foster carer does not have a current spare room, but there is potential within the next 12 months (moving to larger house / birth child going to university / seeking their own accommodation) we can consider them as potential foster carers and start the recruitment process with a view that they could offer day care initially e.g. be matched to short breaks or day respite for foster carers with children with complex needs or sibling groups with complex needs.

- Non-drivers - It is important that potential foster carers think and plan for the care of the child- both day to day arrangements like getting to school and activities; planning meetings such as LAC Reviews and emergency appointments.

Whilst those who do not drive should not be ruled out as a prospective carer, the plans to overcome related issues will need to be carefully explored during the assessment period and later down the line, when matching children to the particular carers. Questions to ask at the point of assessment:

- ✓ Is the carer learning / considering learning to drive? Can they evidence this?
- ✓ Discussion regarding how this will look / feel for our children getting to school especially primary school age children, what would the arrangements be?
- ✓ Does anyone in the proposed support network drive? Could they assist in taking child to school?
- ✓ Be available if there was an emergency requiring the use of a car?
- Health Issues - This would need an in depth discussion with the Team Manager of Assessing Team. We would need to consider how we could overcome these, the length of illness / impact on caring for children. Would be advised by their GP / Health professional.
- Single applicant - This should not be a deterrent and the broader circumstances and strengths of the potential carers should be considered at the point of assessment. Discussion should include use of their support network and community services.
- Matching against birth children - We recognise that for some of our young people they may struggle with the competing demands of birth children, and as many of our children have suffered neglectful parenting they may function emotionally at a younger age. Careful matching will be considered in the assessment process.
- Working arrangements - This should not be a deterrent and the broader circumstances and strengths of the potential carers should be considered at the point of assessment, including discussion about:
 - ✓ How do/would they manage working if they have birth children?
 - ✓ Can/do their support network help with child care?
 - ✓ How does this work in holiday times?
 - ✓ Have they considered reducing their working hours?

There would also need to be discussion about the types of children the potential carer may be better suited to providing care for, which may include those in need of respite, shared care with parents or another foster carer, respite (day or overnight provision).

- Live out of county boundaries - We have scope to assess carers within the borders of Derbyshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Warwickshire.

- Parent and Child Placements - Potential applicants would require a spare room, be prepared to undertake parent assessment training. We offer a competitive weekly rate of £650 per placement.
- Parallel Carers - Potential applicant must have extensive paid work experience of working with troubled teenagers/parents. These are time limited placements with a view to rehabilitate children home. Carers must be available to:
 - ✓ Work with parents regarding setting boundaries/accessing universal services
 - ✓ Be prepared to facilitate a high level of contact
 - ✓ Must be self employed
 - ✓ Agree to a fee payment : £550 plus fostering allowance (under annual review)
 - ✓ Agree to 20 days paid leave per year (under annual review).
 - ✓ Make themselves available for additional training, professional meets and consultations.
- One2One carers - Potential applicants must:
 - ✓ Have extensive paid experience of working with troubled teenagers
 - ✓ Complete an application form to apply to scheme
 - ✓ Be prepared to work with teenagers at risk of CSE, self-harm, low self-esteem and emotional regulation difficulties
 - ✓ Must be available to support home contact, education access, health appointments
 - ✓ Make themselves available for additional training, professional meets and consultations.
 - ✓ Must be self employed
 - ✓ Agree to a Fee Payment: £660 plus fostering allowance
 - ✓ Agree 20 days paid holiday per year and will receive regular respite.
- Potential applicant planning to move house - If carer has the skill set we would require we can assess on that basis whilst they prepare and subsequently move house.
- Transfer from another fostering agency - If they are considering transfer we offer a competitive fee base, regular placements, and a bespoke package of support, supervision and training based upon their skill set. We can match their payment subject to verification. We can progress their assessment quickly based upon undertaking Stage 1 and 2 concurrently.

- Length of relationship - Couples need to have been in a living together relationship for a minimum of 12 months. If the couple has been living together for 10 months, discuss taking the information so that the department can make contact at 12 months and schedule a visit.
- Previous partners - Applicants need to be aware that we will need to interview previous partners with whom they had a significant relationship. This will include partners with whom they had children or with whom they shared a parenting relationship (ex-partner had children that they shared parenting of). If the applicant has concerns about this, establish if they would consider having a discussion with the assessment manager to explore the issues