



Foster Carers' Charter

The fostering service's role

The fostering service aims to provide stable and first rate foster care for children who are valued, supported and encouraged to grow and develop as individuals. To achieve this aim, we recruit, train and approve foster carers and deliver ongoing support to them.

The foster carer's role

Foster carers are at the heart of the foster care service. We are assessed, trained and supported to look after children and young people in a family environment, providing them with stability, care and an opportunity to grow and develop and to reach their potential.

Our working relationships are based on mutual trust and respect. This charter explains what we expect from each other.

The foster carers' association's role

Hackney Foster Carers' Council (HFCC) is an independent organisation which aims to ensure that all foster families are well supported by sharing information, providing guidance and offering friendship.

Fostering service's commitment

You can expect from us:

- 1 working in partnership
- 2 information
- 3 clarity about decisions
- 4 support
- 5 learning and development
- 6 fair treatment
- 7 communication and consultation.

Foster carers' commitment

You can expect from us:

- 1 working in partnership
- 2 respect for the child
- 3 information
- 4 learning, development and support
- 5 communication and consultation.

Fostering Service's Commitment

Roles and commitment

1 Working in partnership

We recognise that foster carers have skills and expertise and make the biggest difference to the everyday lives of children in care.

We will:

- listen to and consult with the Hackney Foster Carers' Council as the voice of local foster carers

- ensure that a Group Manager in the Corporate Parenting Service consults with HFCC 6 times per year
- ensure that the Head of Corporate Parenting meets with HFCC twice annually
- value your skills and expertise equally to those of other professionals
- recognise that you are the people who live with children every day and know them best
- include you in all meetings that affect you and the children you care for
- ensure that our fostering service will meet the standards set out in fostering regulations and guidance
- treat you without discrimination and respect you as part of the professional team
- respect confidentiality
- aim to resolve any disputes or differences of opinions informally wherever possible

- the service will support and promote HFCC's voice at Corporate Parenting Board level.

2 Information

We know that information is vital in order for foster carers to provide care that meets the child's need.

We will:

- provide a placement information record, placement plan and a profile of the child within 5 days of arriving at the foster carers' home. Except in emergencies this should be provided prior to placement
- give you all the information you need in order to care safely for the child
- provide you with information on all financial matters including tax, allowances and additional entitlements and transparency in access to financial entitlements
- provide you with full details of all relevant departmental policies and procedures and updates
- to actively signpost foster carers to other organisations

and resources that can provide relevant advice.

3 Clarity about decisions

We recognise that in order for children to live a full family life foster carers must be able to make decisions regarding the children they foster.

We will:

- ensure that, wherever possible, you are able to make everyday decisions that mean that your fostered child is not treated differently to their peers and can feel part of your family
- provide clarity about any decision you cannot take at the outset so that everyone understands who is responsible for what
- provide further clarity on the issue of delegated authority.

4 Support

We recognise that fostering is an isolating and challenging task and appropriate and timely support makes all the difference to the fostering family and to the child in your care.

We will:

- deliver the Hackney Social Work Unit model of support to all in-house and friends/family carers
- respond positively to requests for additional support
- provide you with monthly supervision and other contact as needed within the placement
- give you honest and open feedback
- provide you with access to 24-hour support from people with fostering expertise
- pay you allowances, expenses and fees in a timely manner
- pay fees that reflect the task, skills and experience and have a well-publicised and clear fee structure that is comparable with other inner-London boroughs
- have a commitment to financially support HFCC based on the agreed work plan
- ensure that the HFCC is continually recognised by the London Borough of Hackney as the forum where foster carers and their families can find

support and share experiences with other fostering families.

- provide business planning and support to the HFCC as agreed jointly.

What foster carers can expect from the fostering service

5 Learning and development

We believe that foster carers must be enabled to access learning and development opportunities throughout their fostering career. This will ensure they have the skills and knowledge they need, and allow them to develop their practice in order that they can help transform the lives of the children they foster.

We will:

- provide you and your family with appropriate and relevant training by trainers who understand the fostering task
- deliver ongoing training within placements through the support of the Social Work Unit model



- provide you with other development opportunities which make the best use of your skills and expertise, such as mentoring or providing training or support.

6 Fair treatment

We recognise that foster carers have a right to be treated fairly, no matter what the circumstances.

We will:

- consult with you before changing terms and conditions
- ensure openness in all of our discussions and communications with you
- ensure that you are treated with respect, kept informed and provided with emotional support from your Social Work Unit, should you be subject to an allegation
- provide a framework for dealing with allegations and complaints and adhere to our agreed timescales
- ensure that you know the arrangements for the payment of fees and allowances in the

event that you are not able to foster while the subject of an allegation

- provide prompt communication to carers following investigations, allegations and complaints
- store information on you in a secure manner and provide you with access to your own records and the opportunity to comment on the information held. Any disagreements will be dealt with in a fair manner.

7 Communication and consultation

We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship.

We will:

- have regular communication between you, councillors and the Director of Children's Services
- ensure that carers are represented on key planning groups
- ensure that we consult with you in a meaningful way on matters that affect you

- give you timely feedback from consultations.

Foster Carers' Commitment

What fostering services can expect from foster carers

1 Working in partnership

We will demonstrate a high standard of care and conduct.

We will:

- demonstrate our expertise and make use of our skills to the best of our ability
- provide foster children with a positive experience of family life
- attend meetings about the children and young people we care for
- work with the agencies involved with the child such as school, health and religious establishments
- show a willingness to work with birthparents, wider family and people significant in a child's life, where it can be demonstrated to be in the child's best interest.

- meet the standards set out in fostering regulations and guidance and follow departmental policies and procedures
- respect confidentiality.

2 Respect for the child

Every child and young person should be respected as an individual and be supported in meeting their needs and achieving their aspirations and potential.

We will:

- respect and promote a child's religious, linguistic and cultural heritage
- afford the same level of protection, care and support to a child as we would our own child in accordance with the national minimum standards
- ensure the child has the right to make decisions regarding their own lives, as appropriate to their age and understanding.

3 Information

We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship

We will:

- inform Social Work Unit about changes in our household
- inform Social Work Unit about any difficulties that arise for us.

4 Learning, development and support

We must be enabled to access learning and development opportunities throughout our fostering career. This will ensure we have the skills and knowledge we need, and allow us to develop our practice in order that we can help transform the lives of the children we foster.

We will:

- be prepared to develop our skills throughout our fostering career
- attend relevant training, and let you know of any we are unable to attend

- take up relevant opportunities offered to us
- show willingness to attend and contribute to support groups
- play a role in identifying our own work related training needs

5 Communication and consultation

We believe that open and honest dialogue is the key to a good relationship.

We will:

- respond to local consultations and discussion in order to inform the development of the service
- meet with councillors, service managers and others in order to promote dialogue and a good working relationship
- engage carers' in meetings at least 6 times per year.

If you would like to find out what this document says please tick the appropriate box, put your name, address and phone number at the bottom of this page and return it to the address below.

Bengali

এই দলিলে কি লেখা আছে সে সম্পর্কে যদি আপনি জানতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে উপযুক্ত বাসে টিক দিন, এই পাতার নিচে আপনার নাম, ঠিকানা ও ফোন নম্বর লিখুন এবং এটি নীচের ঠিকানায় ফেরত পাঠান।

French

Si vous désirez connaître le contenu de ce document, veuillez cocher la case appropriée et indiquer votre nom, adresse et numéro de téléphone au bas de cette page et la renvoyer à l'adresse indiquée ci-dessous.

Kurdish

Ger hun dixwazin bizanibin ku ev dokument çî dibêje, ji kerema xwe qutika minasib îşaret bikin, nav, navnîşan û hejmara telefona xwe li jêrê rûpel binivîsin û wê ji navnîşana jêrîn re bişînin.

Polish

Jeśli chcesz dowiedzieć się, jaka jest treść tego dokumentu, zaznacz odpowiednie pole, wpisz swoje nazwisko, adres i nr telefonu w dolnej części niniejszej strony i przeslij na poniższy adres.

Urdu

اگر آپ یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ دستاویز میں کیا لکھا ہے تو ازراہ کرم مناسب باکس میں صحیح کا نشان لگائے اور اپنا نام، پتہ اور فون نمبر اس صفحہ کے نیچے لکھئے اور اسے نیچے دیئے گئے پتہ پر واپس بھیج دیجئے۔

Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad ogaato waxa dokumeentigani sheegayo fadlan calaamadi godka ku haboon, ku qor magacaaga, cinwaanka iyo telefoon lambarkaaga boggan dhankiisa hoose ka dibna ku celi cinwaanka hoose.

Spanish

Si desea saber de lo que trata este documento, marque la casilla correspondiente, escriba su nombre, dirección y número de teléfono al final de esta página y envíela a la siguiente dirección.

Turkish

Bu dökümanda ne anlatıldığını öğrenmek istiyorsanız, lütfen uygun kutuyu işaretleyerek, adınızı, adresinizi ve telefon numaranızı bu sayfanın alt kısmına yazıp, aşağıdaki adrese gönderin.

Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn biết tài liệu này nói gì hãy đánh dấu vào hộp thích hợp, điền tên, địa chỉ và số điện thoại của bạn vào cuối trang này và gửi lại theo địa chỉ dưới đây.

Chinese

如果你想知道這分文件的詳細內容，請在方框內打鉤，在本頁下面寫下你的名字、地址和電話號碼並寄到下面的地址。

If you would like this document in any of the following formats or in another language not listed above, please complete and send the form to the address below.

In large print

In Braille

On Disk

On audio tape

In another language, please state:

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Return to:

Placement Commissioning and Support Service, Children & Young People's Service, London Borough of Hackney, 1 Hillman Street, London E8 1DY.

What happens next?

If you would like to find out more about fostering or you have queries about your eligibility and the sort of children who currently need families, contact us now and we will be happy to give you more information.



Freephone

08000 730 418

fostering@hackney.gov.uk



Stonewall
DIVERSITY CHAMPION



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**