

Caritas Fostering *...Open your heart*

Introduction to Caritas

Caritas Diocese of Salford is a registered charity that incorporates the Catholic Children's Rescue Society (CCRS) and Catholic Welfare Society. The Catholic Children's Rescue Society was founded in the 1880's in response to the poverty and deprivation experienced by children at the time of the Industrial Revolution in the urban communities of Manchester and the mill towns – an area which covers most of Greater Manchester and South Lancashire. Over a century ago the role of the Society was one of “rescuing” children from the streets and Institutions.

The role of CCRS has changed over the decades but its ethos remains the same – the needs of the child are central to all decision making processes. The Catholic Children's Rescue Society (CCRS) changed its name on 6th April 2010 to Caritas Diocese of Salford. Caritas provides services to children and families of all religions, of no religion and of all cultural backgrounds.



Who Can Foster?

Caritas has no fixed ideas of what constitutes a family; you could be a couple, single, from a minority cultural community... We welcome enquiries from all potential carers.

You do need

- To have a spare room available
- To have the whole family committed to the Fostering Assessment
- To have the time, space, capacity, motivation and enthusiasm
- To have a good network of family and friends who can offer emotional and practical support
- To be financially viable
- To have an understanding that difficult previous early life experiences will impact on children's behaviour
- To have an understanding that parenting children who are 'looked after' will be different from parenting your own children

If you have any questions or queries regarding fostering with Caritas, please contact us at: duty@caritasfostering.org.uk or Tel no: 0161 817 2250 and we will be happy to answer your questions.



Who are the children?

Fostering is a wide term which covers the full range of caring for 'Looked After Children'. These children for a number of various reasons cannot remain with their families and are subsequently placed in the care of the local authority.

To support these children we provide the following different types of fostering service.

Short Term

Children who are being separated from their family for the first time need skilled and sensitive care. The future is usually uncertain at this stage and placements can last from a few weeks to several months until the plan for a child to return either to their birth family or to a permanent alternative family is completed.

Long Term

Children who cannot return to their birth family and for whom adoption is not the right option need the security of a long term foster family. While the legal responsibility remains with the local authority, the children and young people benefit from the security of knowing they will remain in this family until they are able to be independent. Children who live in foster families are helped to maintain the important link with their birth family while growing up in the safe and secure environment of a long term foster family.

Parent and Child

Local Authorities are requesting parent and child placements. Dependent on the Care Planning, either Mum and Baby may be classed as 'Looked After' or in some cases only the baby is classed as 'Looked After' You may be asked to complete comprehensive assessment report logs, these type of recordings may be used for the purpose of the court process. You will be supported by your Supervising Social Worker if there is a requirement for assessment logs to be completed.



Becoming a Foster Carer

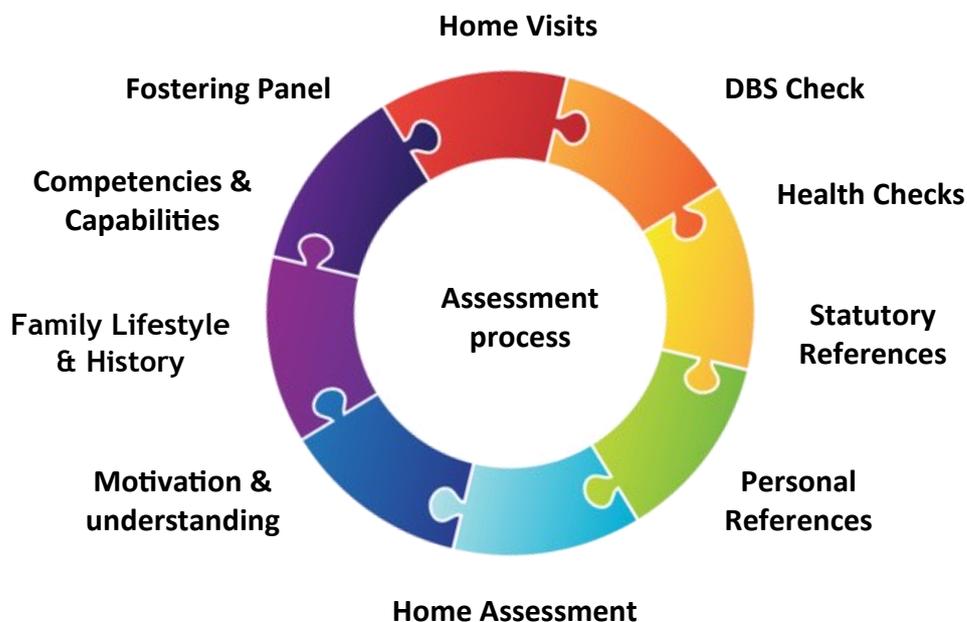
Following your initial contact with us, this Information Pack contains an **Expression of Interest Form**. Once the form has been completed and returned you will be offered a home visit or invited to an **Information Meeting** (presentation) whichever is more convenient to you.

This initial contact will cover

Assessment process

- What do foster carers do?
- Why children and young people are fostered
- Working with parents and other family members
- Fostering and your family
- Moving On

A Caritas social worker will arrange a home visit at a time convenient for you. Applicants who wish to proceed will be invited to attend Preparation Training (usually held over a weekend or two Saturdays and a half day).



Foster Carer Support

All foster carers receive the following support

- A designated supervising social worker
- Regular supervision and support visits and telephone contact from your supervising social worker.
- Access to regular monthly training and foster carer support groups.
- Support to complete TSDS (within first year of approval)
- Representation at all child care reviews, case conferences and placement planning meetings
- Invitations to Social events with other foster carers, which Caritas provides
- Access to a social worker 24 hour on call emergency service from Caritas Diocese of Salford
- Access to “Fosterline” run by Fostering Network which offers free advice and information.
- Membership of Fostering Network including quarterly magazine.
- Regular payment, direct to your bank.



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Foster Carer Allowances

Foster Care Allowances are paid into your bank or building society account monthly in arrears. The level of payments depend on the child's age (see below) and are reviewed each year in April.

| Basic Weekly Allowances/Fees | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| <u>AGE</u> | <u>MONEY</u> |
| 0-4 | £286.74 |
| 5-10 | £319.60 |
| 11-18 | £362.52 |
| Parent and child | £551.24 |

| Additional Annual Allowances | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <u>BIRTHDAY</u> | <u>CHRISTMAS</u> | <u>HOLIDAY</u> |
| £103.22 | £137.62 | £275.24 |
| £127.14 | £169.52 | £339.04 |
| £206.44 | £275.60 | £556.60 |

In addition to the weekly amount a holiday allowance is usually paid at the end of each year for carers who are taking the child on holiday. Christmas allowance is available in November. If a child arrives in placement later than May and goes on holiday with a family, a one-off agreed payment maybe made on approval by the manager and agreed by the Local Authority. The birthday allowance is automatically triggered by the child's date of birth.

Savings for children and young people :

In addition to children and young people receiving weekly pocket monies. Carers are expected to save after the child's first review a minimum of £5:00 weekly, which equates to £20:00 per month. Carers are expected to ensure that a child's savings account is open. These savings will periodically checked by the carers Supervising Social Worker. These savings will be where appropriate given to the Child or Young Persons Social worker at the point of the placement ending.

Carers mandatory training: Completing the Training Support & Development Standards (TSDS), is a compulsory requirement which all carers have to undertake within their first twelve months of approval and in doing so the fees reflect the skills carers have developed. An ongoing training and development plan will be agreed annually with carers. Carers will be expected to attend both mandatory training and developmental sessions. These carers will also be expected to pro-actively meet all Local Authority expectations in terms of contact, transport and attending Looked After Child Care Reviews.

Initial Clothing Grant: When a child or young person is placed within our fostering service and in agreement with the Registered Manager a one off payment to the maximum of £108.12 will be paid to the carer.

School Uniform: When a child starts or changes school due to a placement change, an additional maximum finance of up to £108.12 for primary school children and £216.24 for secondary school young people will be provided. Replacement school uniform is included in the basic allowance.

Initial Equipment: The agency may supply carers with extra equipment that will be needed for the child. e.g. specific bedding, car seats etc. This must be returned to the agency at the end of the placement unless it will be needed for future placements.

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Get in Touch...

Telephone: 0161 817 2250

Email: duty@caritasfostering.org.uk

Visit: www.caritasfostering.org.uk

Address: Caritas Fostering
Caritas Diocese of Salford
Cathedral Centre
3 Ford Street
Salford
M3 6DP

Choosing to foster is a big decision and you may wish to talk through any questions relevant to you and your family with a social worker from the fostering team or complete and return the expression of interest form and we will contact you.

