

## Living in foster care

New faces, new places and a new home,  
All these people fussing around you,  
Yet you're still feeling all alone!  
All these questions plaguing me,  
Will they like me? Are they nice?  
Is this what I call home?  
Feeling wanted by complete strangers  
Has changed my point of view,  
No longer being judged by my past  
And what I've been through,  
It's no longer the house I live in  
But the family I come home too!

Poem by Kerrie (care leaver, aged 19)

If you have difficulty understanding this in English, please contact:  
Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 English

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यदि इसे अंग्रेजी में समझने में समस्या हो तो कृपया Wandsworth Interpreting Service का (020) 8672 1043/3649 पर संपर्क करें। Hindi

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اگر آپ کو انگریزی میں اسے سمجھنے میں دشواری کا سامنا ہو تو براہ کرم رابطہ کریں: Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8672 1043/3649 Urdu

Wandsworth Children's Service  
Wandsworth Council

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being looked after...  
**Living in  
foster care**



number one for  
service and value





## What is foster care?

Foster care is where a young person who is looked after, goes to live with another family because they are unable to live with their own family. Living in foster care can mean living away from your family for a short while or a long amount of time.

When you first go into foster care, it might be a really confusing time meeting so many new people, but all the people who you meet will try and make you feel comfortable and safe.

## What are foster carers like?

Foster carers are ordinary people who are able to offer their home to children and young people who can't live with their own family. Some are married, some are single. Some have children, some don't and some have grown up children who have left home. All have been trained and will be supported to care for children looked after.

## What will it be like to live there?

We like young people and their parents to meet carers before they go and live with them. All families will have their own way of doing things and this will be explained to you before you arrive. It is important that you join in with the regular family activities and although it may feel strange at first, the families will understand and will try and make you feel welcome.

### Foster carers will:

- Welcome you into a safe home
- Not try to take the place of your mum or your dad
- Do their very best to give you the care you need
- Help support you with your education
- Encourage and support your hobbies and interests
- Support your contact arrangements with family and friends
- Be there if you need to talk or need some support

## What changes will there be?

We will try to keep things that are important to you like school and hobbies the same, unless you and your social worker feel it would not be safe or easy for this to happen.

If you have any worries, talk to your social worker.

## What about pocket money, bedtimes etc?

Things that might happen, day to day like bedtimes, pocket money etc will get talked about with you by your social worker and your foster carer just before you move in or just after. This will happen in a meeting and a placement agreement will be written up.

## Do I get my own room?

Yes, you will have your own room. Occasionally there might be reasons why sharing has to happen. This will be explained at the start of the placement or if sharing happens.

## What about my family and friends?

We think it is very important for you to stay in touch with your family. So, if we think it is safe and in your best interests, we will help you to have contact with your family. This might be through visits, letters and phone calls.

## What do I do if I'm unhappy?

If you are unhappy, you should first talk to your social worker about the things you are unhappy with or don't agree with. Or you may choose to talk to your foster carer or someone that you trust.

If you are still unhappy, we can arrange for someone from Voice charity to contact you to help you. This service is independent and confidential and if necessary, they will help you make a complaint to the Children's Service department.

Ask your social worker for a leaflet that explains how you can do this or talk directly to the children's complaints officer on freephone 0800 587 7787 or email [childrenscomplaints@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:childrenscomplaints@wandsworth.gov.uk).

If you would like more information about living in foster care, please visit our website exclusively for Wandsworth looked after children at [www.itsallaboutus.info](http://www.itsallaboutus.info)