

people like you

# Fostercare

# Welcome

## Induction Pack



**Hampshire**  
County Council

[www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk)

## Welcome

Congratulations on being approved to foster with Hampshire County Council and welcome to the Family Placement Team.

This guide aims to highlight the most important things you will need to know in the earliest days of being a foster carer.

It will point you in the right direction for finding more information and help you understand when, how and from where you can seek support, in your caring role.

Your supporting Family Placement Social Worker (FPSW) will work through this pack with you and we hope you will find this a helpful way to settle into your role within fostering.

We look forward to working with you to support vulnerable children and young people.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for the Induction checklist. All areas of the checklist must be covered and signed off by you and your FPSW.

A copy of this checklist will be held on your records as evidence that you have completed your induction.

This is an internal publication of Hampshire County Council's Fostering (Family Placement) Team. Copies and further information are available from the service.

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# Section 1

# About us

## Key contacts


We are here to help you. Please do contact us with any query, no matter how small. We expect all new foster carers to have lots of questions as you learn how the system works.

<b>Your FPSW:</b>	
<b>FPSW phone:</b>	
<b>FPSW email:</b>	
<b>Team office phone:</b>	
<b>Area Manager name:</b>	
<b>Placement Commissioning Team phone:</b>	01489 58 70 47
<b>Out of hours phone:</b>	08456 00 45 55

Area office hours	Out of hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monday - Thursday 08:30 – 17:00</li> <li>Friday 08:30 – 16:30</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nightly 17:00 – 08:30</li> <li>Friday - Monday 16:30 – 08:30</li> <li>Bank holidays all day</li> </ul>

## Foster carer out of hours duty support

Where to find in Foster e-Comms

	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Out of hours and duty support</li> </ul>

<b>Your peer supporter:</b>	
<b>Phone:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	



## The role of the Family Placement Social Worker

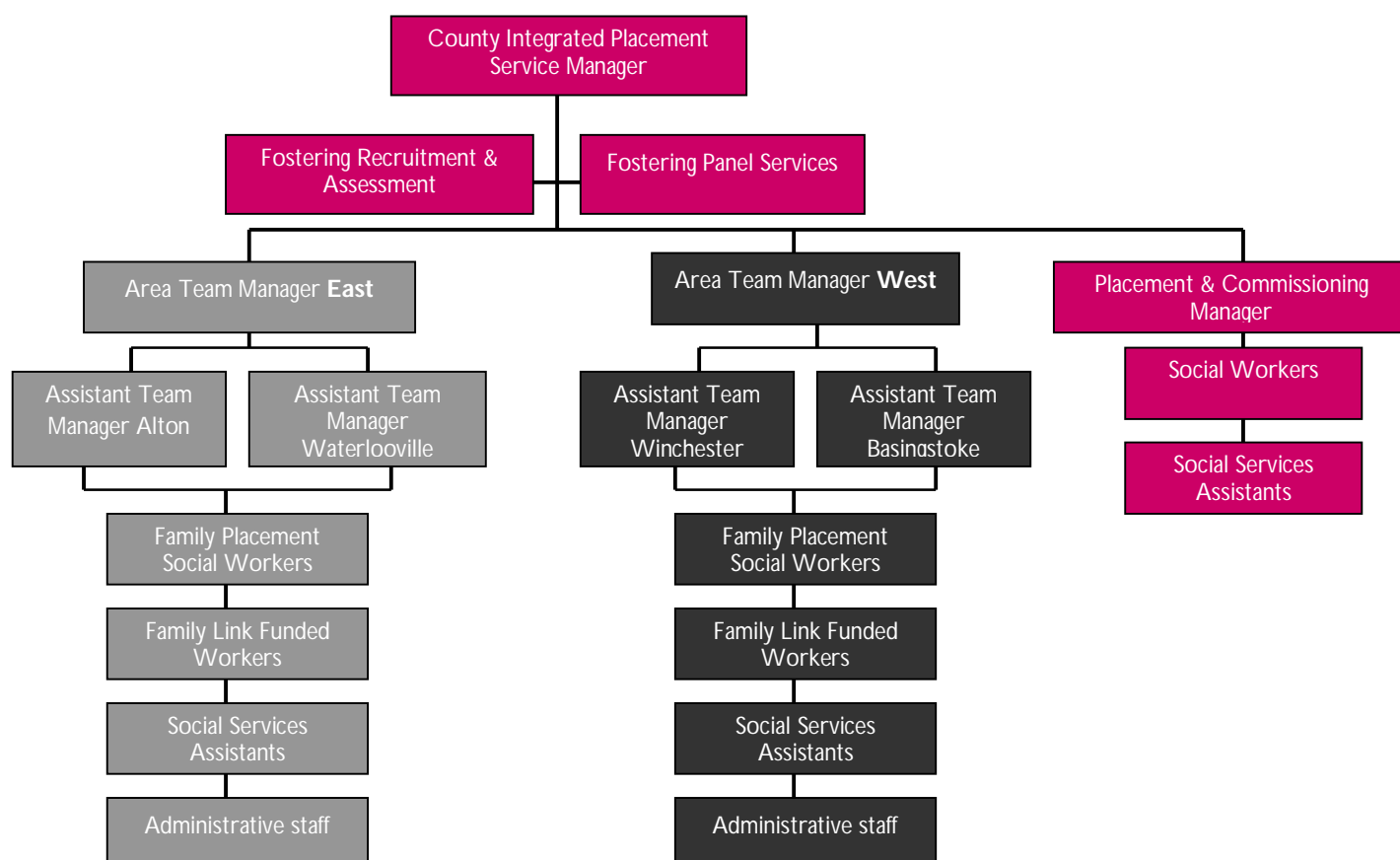
Your Family Placement Social Worker (FPSW, and sometimes referred to as a supervising Social Worker) and the team they work in are here to help foster carers by:

- Providing consistent support, supervision and advice.
- Meet with you, at a minimum every six weeks, and offer extra visits if appropriate.
- Keep in touch with you by phone, or email/secure messaging.
- Help you to work effectively with other professionals and with the birth families of children you care for.
- Develop and review your Personal Development Plan.

Just as the children have a social worker the FPSW is **your** social worker.

Experienced and skilled foster carers work as peer supporters to help you to settle into your role as foster carer and introduce you support groups held in your area, as well as helping you with your Dept for Education: Training, Support & Development Standards workbook.

## The Family Placement Service



Your FPSW works as part of a team. The team will also be able to help you if your FPSW is unavailable. Outside of office hours, a dedicated team of social workers who work across a range of children's services teams provide an out of hours service.



FPSW's are supported in their work by Social Services Assistants (SSA's) or Children's Services Assistants (CSA's). Some SSA's or CSA's work directly with carers and children's families.

## The team as part of a wider department

The family placement service is part of Hampshire County Council's Children's Services Directorate. The role, aims and objectives of the department as well as its core activities are set out in the Statement of Purpose for the fostering service - an annual publication, which is a requirement of the national Regulations and Minimum Standards that the service operates to.

Senior management responsibility for the fostering is held with the Head of County Services. Day to day operational management of the service is the responsibility of the County Service Manager, Integrated Placements and team managers appointed to cover each area.

Team managers lead the work of qualified social workers, social services assistants and the administration services to support foster carers within their geographic area of responsibility.

**Read more online:** <http://www.hants.gov.uk/fostering-statement-of-purpose-2011-12.pdf>

### Where to find in Foster e-Comms

Foster e-Comms	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy, Procedure and Practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing the Family Placement Service</li> <li>• About foster carers</li> </ul>

## Supporting foster carers

### People

- Family Placement Social Worker and team.
- Out of hours team.
- Peer support (Buddy).
- Local foster care support rota - as well as your nominated peer support, experienced foster carers can offer informal support during the evenings and at weekends.

### Where to find in Foster e-Comms

Foster e-Comms	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placements</li> <li>• Policy, Procedure and Practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of hours duty and support</li> <li>• About foster carers</li> </ul>

### Online

Foster e-Comms (often referred to as e-Comms) is an online secure site for carers which includes information about all aspects of fostering, as well as enabling you to communicate with other carers and communicate securely with your FPSW. It is the central communication



point for all things fostering and contains everything you need to know from policies, procedures and best practice, to advice on accepting placements, training information, calendars, social events and support groups. It also provides information about special offers and activities for foster carers, their children and the children they look after.

**Foster e-Comms** is a secure site which requires log in and password access, which is only available to registered foster carers. If you haven't already, please give your email address to your FPSW so they can arrange for you to be given access to the site. If you do not have internet access or are worried about your online skills, don't worry - your FPSW will discuss this with you.

You should be able to find the answers to most questions about fostering in Hampshire via **e-Comms**.

**Log in via:** <https://fostercare.hants.gov.uk>


Fostering recruitment information is available for the public to see via Hantsweb. Hantsweb is the Hampshire County Council website. The site contains information about the full range of council services, and includes information about social care, the care process, and services to support children and young people which may be of interest to foster carers.

**Read more online:** [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk) & [www.hants.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.hants.gov.uk/fostering)

### Hampshire Fostering Network (HFN)

HFN is the Foster Care Association for all approved foster carers of Hampshire County Council. A welcome letter from this group can be found on page 36. Further information can be found on **e-Comms**.


### Where to find in Foster e-Comms

	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get Involved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HFN</li> </ul>

### Foster carer support groups

Across Hampshire, support groups meet regularly to provide group supervision, discuss a range of fostering issues, learn from guest speakers plus more.

### Where to find in Foster e-Comms

	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training &amp; Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Groups</li> </ul>

### Training

Hampshire offers its carers a comprehensive package of training and support, from induction through to specialist training and personal development. Find out more about the training pathway by discussing this with your FPSW or looking on **e-Comms**.



### Where to find in Foster e-Comms

Foster e-Comms	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training &amp; Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All tabs</li> </ul>

**Read more online:** <http://cas.hants.gov.uk/courses/provhome.asp?p=FOST>

### Social and leisure benefits

A range of social and leisure benefits are offered to foster carers. This includes a **free** 'Culture-all Passport'. The Culture-all Passport gives up to two adults and two children, or one adult and three children, unlimited access to a range of Hampshire County Council's paid-entry museums, attractions and countryside sites for one year, plus unlimited free parking at Hampshire County Council car parks. Passport holders also have exclusive access to discounts, advance tickets, special offers and two-for-one deals via the Culture-all Passport website.

As a Hampshire County Council foster carer you will also have access to 'KAARP' - offering exclusive discounts on a range of products and services from dining out deals, fantastic discounted tickets to the UK's favourite attractions or a few nights away on a short break!

One-off offers or activities are also extended to carers. All are promoted via e-Comms, or you can ask your FPSW for details.

### Where to find in Foster e-Comms

Foster e-Comms	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social &amp; Fun</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All tabs</li> </ul>

**Read more online:** <http://www.kaarp.co.uk> (user name: HANTSFC password: BENEFITS)

### Independent advice and specialist support

A number of organisations offer advice to foster carers - the most valuable of these resources is:

Fosterline 0800 040 7675 or email: [fosterline@fostering.net](mailto:fosterline@fostering.net)

Opening Hours: 09:00 – 17:00 Monday – Thursday, Wednesday 09:00 – 20:00 (except bank holidays).

Your FPSW can signpost you to specialist support and services if needed. Extensive information is also available via e-Comms.

### Where to find in Foster e-Comms

Foster e-Comms	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placement support directory</li> </ul>

**Read more online:** [www.fostering.net](http://www.fostering.net)



## Section 2

# How we work

## Meetings relating to foster carers

### Supervision

- At least every 6 weeks, contact with your FPSW.
- Supervision contract.
- Supervision record forms.
- Looking at how you are caring for the child/ren, you, your needs, your family etc.

### Household reviews (HHR)

- An independent overview of your fostering year and the views of everyone involved in fostering with you.
- Annual, or more frequent following a change in circumstances or complaint/allegation.
- Contributed to, in writing, by all parties involved in the placement /supporting the child.
- Your last year's work is summarised and plans for the next year made at a meeting chaired by a panel meeting chair, who does not usually work with you.

### Skills appraisal

- If you want to have your extra skills as a carer recognised financially, you must be able to demonstrate that you can fulfil the criteria for that payment.
- A panel of managers decide on this at the end of a lengthy process of report writing and evidence building by you and your FPSW - the panel chair recommends whether or not you receive an enhanced skills payment.
- Please talk to your FPSW about this process and the extra expectations and commitments required of carers in receipt of skills fee payments.

## Meetings relating to children placed with you

### Placement meetings

- Child's social worker, you, and your FPSW, and sometimes the child and their parent, all meet to ensure that all the written information is complete and available to you. This includes information such as the care plan, placement planning documents, delegation of authority form, medical permissions etc.
- The meeting will then discuss all day to day arrangements e.g. contact with birth family, pocket money, as well as doctor, dentist etc.

### Statutory visits (by the child's social worker)

- The law dictates the minimum number of visits that a child must receive from their social worker.
- These visits often take place at home and the worker making the visit will want to see you and the child alone, although some visits could happen while the child is at school and you will not be seen.
- The child's social worker may visit the child at other times too.

### Child's statutory review

- These meetings are chaired by an independent reviewing officer (IRO), they are held every few months throughout a child's placement, more frequently at the start of a placement.

- All those involved in the child's life, including the child themselves, are invited to these as a way of checking on how plans are progressing, and whether any actions are needed etc.
- These meetings are sometimes referred to as a "child looked after review" or CLA.

### **Personal education planning**

- Co-ordinated by school these meetings review how education is progressing, how the extra money available to children in care is being used and makes plans for the future.
- Nationally, children in care tend to achieve less well in school than others and there is great effort being put into increasing their educational opportunities.
- The child may also have other schemes in place to help them within school such as an individual education plan (IEP).

### **Legal meetings**

- Where court proceedings are involved there may be legal meetings either within the department or including solicitors for parents and children being looked after, you will not necessarily be invited to these but should be told if they are happening.
- These meetings will be used to review and discuss the legal situation the child and their family, and look at possible ways forward.

## **Some abbreviations you may come across**

**ATM** = *Assistant Team Manager.*

**CAMHS** = *Child and Adolescents Mental Health Service.*

Many children in care have contact with this service which provides mental health assessment, support, therapy and counselling. Access is gained via a referral from the child's social worker.

**CIC Team** = *Children in Care Team.*

**CIN Team** = *Children in Need Team.*

**CRB** = *Criminal Records Bureau check.*

needed by all carers & household members over the age of 18.

**e-Comms** = Foster e-Comms

**FP** = *Family Placement.*

Hampshire is split into 2 districts – East district & West district. There is a manager for each team but as the areas covered are so big there are also 2 ATMs in each district, who deal with the everyday management of the teams work. These are the managers you are most likely to come across.

**Hantsweb** = *The Hampshire County Council's website.*

**HFN** = *Hampshire Fostering Network.*

An open group for carers. They meet regularly to discuss issues affecting fostering in Hampshire. They liaise with the department and the Fostering Network - a charity who work in all areas of fostering. You will find details on e-Comms under "Get Involved"

**NMS** = *National Minimum Standards.*

The fostering service is regulated by legislation - Regulations and National Minimum Standards. They are inspected by OFSTED.


**PDP** = *Personal Development Plan.*

all carers are offered training etc in line with their needs and those of the children they care for. It is reviewed each year.

**R&A Team** = *Referral and Assessment Team.*

Your child's social worker will be one of these teams.

Where to find in **Foster** e-Comms

	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy, procedure &amp; practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About family</li> </ul>

## Beginning a placement

### Initial information

Your first knowledge of a possible new placement will usually be a telephone call from the Placement Commissioning team, who will contact you if they feel that they have identified a child whose needs match with the care that you can offer.

You will be given as much information about the child/ren as is available to the placement team. This will enable you to make an informed decision about agreeing to take the placement. In the case of emergency placements, the information may be minimal but will be added to later as it becomes available.

The information you will need to have includes:

- Name, age, gender of the child.
- When the placement is due to begin and how long the child is likely to stay with you.
- Contact arrangements with birth family (you do not have to agree to birth family coming to your home, ever, for any reason).
- The children's routines, likes, dislikes, interests and activities etc.
- Any risks or behaviour issues.
- Any special needs including diet, medication etc.
- Any equipment needed.
- School information and education issues - including transport to school. If you are unable to take a child to school, you can discuss this with the duty worker.
- The child's social worker name and contact details.





If any of the above areas are not covered, please ask the worker who contacts you if they have the information available, or ask them to find out.

You can ask to be given time to consider whether you can help with this child. You may want to consult other family members, for example and discuss with your FPSW.

### Personal considerations

When considering accepting a placement, you also need to consider your family. You might find it helpful to think about the following issues:

- What do you need to tell any members of your household about the child who will join you?
- How will the child interact with others living in the household?
- What can we do to make the child feel welcome?
- What safer caring considerations need to be made?

### Initial preparations

Please ensure, through discussion with the child's social worker and your FPSW that you have all the appropriate equipment that you need. This could include car seats, appropriate beds or cots etc.

One of these social workers will normally arrange to get this from existing resources or buy new. Please **do not** buy something yourself unless you have a team managers authorisation, otherwise reimbursement cannot be guaranteed.

Most children arrive with items from home. Depending on how long a child is staying, carers will gradually replace or add to the child's clothing etc using the weekly allowance. In an emergency a social worker may need to collect belongings from home later for the child and bring them to you.

For guidance it is suggested that within the first 24 hours a child should have a full basic set of clothing, appropriate for the season.

Baby milk, nappies etc are paid for from the weekly allowance but if a large initial outlay is needed please discuss with your FPSW.

If basic clothing needs to be bought please remember to discuss with the child's social worker before purchase. You will need to keep all receipts in order to be able to claim back the monies.

The child's bed room should be appropriate to the age and the need of the child. Whenever possible that should be sorted out before the child arrives. This may not be possible in an emergency-but necessary improvements should be made as soon as possible.

Where to find in **Foster** e-Comms

Foster e-Comms	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	• Policy, procedure & practice	• Looking after the child



## Initial meeting (planned placements)

If the child does not come to you in an emergency and the move to your care has been planned, then it is possible that there will be time for one or more introductory visits to you, your home and your family.

The child may even stay overnight. This will enable all of you to get to know each other a little bit and the experience of coming to live with you should be less overwhelming for the child - and for you.

This a time when a carer can ask about likes and dislikes, routines and also consult with the existing principle carer for the child to find out more about any other needs or important things to know.

Where to find in **Foster** e-Comms

Foster e-Comms	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy, procedure &amp; practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looking after the child</li> </ul>

## Paperwork on arrival

The carer must have the following paperwork on arrival or before a child arrives:

- Family Placement Referral Information.
- Placement paperwork - (which includes essential information).
- Medical consent card.
- Delegation of Authority-Decision Tool.

These are provided by the child's social worker.

In emergency situations, some of this may not be available but you should ask that they be provided as soon as possible after the child comes to live with you.

Where to find in **Foster** e-Comms

Foster e-Comms	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy, procedure &amp; practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looking after the child</li> </ul>

## The child's arrival

A child would usually be brought to your home by their social worker or another member of their team. In some cases, the child may have met you already, or have seen your family profile so know a little about who lives in your home and what to expect.

We all feel nervous in new situations, and children even in the happiest of circumstances can feel wary of those they don't know. For a child under stress, meeting a new carer may

be very overwhelming – the material conditions of your home may be very different from their own, routines, ways of life and “house rules” also different.

Remember there is a lot for everyone to take in, and that can take time. You and your family have to get to know a child and his/her family and they have to get to know you.

As a guideline, you can help the settling in process by trying not to make dramatic changes to eating and sleeping routines and make sure the child is given personal space from the outset - somewhere they can call their own. Note that although on the face of it, their bedroom will provide this space, some children will feel isolated there and will seek somewhere a little closer to the rest of the family.

If there are certain rules or expectations that the child needs to follow, e.g. always closing the door so the dog doesn't get out, please spell them out so that the child understands. Reasonable storage needs to be provided for the child's possessions. You may find it helpful to make a discreet note of significant personal belongings so the child does not lose anything precious to them or forget things when they move on. Do not throw away anything belonging to the child without checking with their social worker first.

## Keeping memories

Memories of child-hood are very important. When children are or have been in Care, they often have gaps in their recollection & helping them to keep small reminders of good times can be of immense help to them both now & in the future. It aids them as they try to make sense of their past & work out who they are, as they mature.

When a child comes to stay with you please ask (if they have come from another foster carer) whether they have a memory box/photo album. If they don't, or if this is their first placement, please arrange to get a box & album for them as soon as possible (perhaps go out & choose them together).

Please help the child or young person to store mementoes, tickets from days out, shells, small souvenirs etc & ensure that you regularly take photos of them, for them to keep.

Please discuss what to keep with your FPSW if you need some guidance & please note that there is a training course on this subject on the 'Foster Carers Training Programme'.

If the child or young person moves on from your care, please make sure that they take an up-to-date memory box & photo album away with them.

Where to find in **Foster e-Comms**

Foster e-Comms	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy, procedure &amp; practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looking after the child</li> </ul>



## What should a child call you?

Most children you care for will have parents. Its very rare for a child not to have a known mum or dad, or both. So if a child calls you by these names it can be confusing and hurtful to parents having contact to hear names used which naturally belong to them.

It is important to encourage a child to call you by your first name and discourage the use of mummy and daddy.

## Comments, complaints and compliments

### Compliments & Comments

Knowing when we get it right for you can help us get it right for others too. If you have a compliment you can tell a member of staff directly or let their manager know. Alternatively you can send an e –mail to Children's Services Enquiries (childrens.services@hants.gov.uk).

### Complaints

Feedback is vital to our growth and development. Complaints are dealt with professionally and where possible are treated in confidence. However, in order to investigate complaints thoroughly, it may be necessary to share details of what you say. Informal concerns can be addressed to your FPSW or their team manager. If you wish to complain formally, address your complaint in writing to the team manager, or through Hampshire County Council's complaints process. Details of how to do this can be found online at [www.hants.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.hants.gov.uk/complaints) and also via e-Comms.

## Complaints and allegations about foster carers


For foster carers the thought that they may be accused of poor care or deliberate abuse is the most difficult aspect of fostering. However, the safety and welfare of children is everyone's priority and we have a responsibility to ensure that all complaints and allegations are investigated properly, and with respect and fairness to the foster carers involved.

The complaints procedures ensure that any complaints or allegations about foster carers are properly investigated and explain, what will happen, who will investigate, what help you can expect and the possible outcomes.

The Family Placement service employs Barnardo's Independent Fostering Support Service to aid foster carers who are subject to investigation following a Level 2 or Level 3 complaint.

If you have any concerns or would like to know more about the complaints procedures, please ask your FPSW.

Where to find in **Foster** e-Comms

	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy, procedure &amp; practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints &amp; Allegations</li> </ul>

**Read more online:** [www.hants.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.hants.gov.uk/complaints)




## The Foster Placement Agreement

For each child you will receive a Foster Placement Agreement as set out in The Fostering Services Regulations 2002 Regulation 28. The agreement outlines Hampshire County Councils obligation to you and your obligation as a foster carer to Hampshire County Council. You will receive the agreement either before placement or within 14 days. Your FPSW will sign this with you and give you a copy to keep.

Full details of the Foster Placement Agreement can be found on *e-Comms*.

Where to find in **Foster** *e-Comms*

	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy, procedure &amp; practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About foster carers</li> </ul>





## Section 3

# Working as a member of the Family Placement service

## Working as a member of the Family Placement Team

### Supervision

- Introduction to the supervision format.
- Signing a supervision contract.

### Modular file

- Introduction/explanation of the modular file.
- Introduction to the modular file online (e-Comms: child sites).

### Recording and reporting

- Expectations.
- e-Comms child sites.

### Confidentiality

- To include discussion on secure messaging.

### If relevant

- Skills level contract.

## Supervision Contract and Supervision Record form

It is the policy of Hampshire County Council Fostering Service to provide supervision support for Foster Carers and Family Link Carers in line with legal requirements as outlined in The Fostering Services National Minimum standards 2011.

Your FPSW will show you a Supervision Record (yellow) sheet and explain how it works. They will also sign a Supervision Contract with you and you will keep a copy. For more information please speak to your FPSW or visit e-Comms.

Where to find in Foster e-Comms

Foster e-Comms	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy, procedure &amp; practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About Foster Carers</li> </ul>

## Recording and reporting


You will need to record and report a range of things about the child in your care. These records form an important part of a person's life and time away from home. They are important evidence of everything you have achieved with the child or young person and what you are doing to support their development and welfare. They also form part of a child's formal record, which is kept for a large number of years (e.g. up to 75 years), according to statutory timescales.

Records are kept in a 'modular file' which is given to you at the start of any placement. It is divided into sections, which include information about the plans in place or their care, sheets to record significant events in a child's life, etc. On rare occasions carers are asked to give details of their recordings in Court cases - please discuss this with your FPSW.

Your FPSW will give you a modular file and go through with you how to use it. They will also look at it regularly throughout a child's stay and advise you about keeping it up to date.

When a placement ends, you need to return the modular file to your FPSW.

Where to find in Foster e-Comms

	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy, procedure &amp; practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About foster carers</li> <li>• Confidentiality</li> </ul>

## Confidentiality

You will be keeping records and information of a personal and sensitive nature which can include:

- Information about a child.
- Safer caring policies and risk assessments.
- Placement plans, care plans and placement end plans.
- Day to day record forms, and records of significant events.
- Five outcomes forms.
- Legal documents and correspondence.
- Minutes of meetings.
- Confidential info you are unlikely to share with a child.
- Education attainment and essential health information.

## Sharing information

- All files should be kept securely in a lockable drawer, cabinet or container.
- Information should not be left out in the house .
- Take care if transporting information - do not leave documents overnight in the car, for example.
- Only share with those who need to know.
- Check with your social worker what you may share with the child.



## Section 4

# Training, support & development

## Training, support and development standards for foster carers

The training, support and development standards for foster carers were introduced through the Children's Workforce Development Council. In April 2012 this was absorbed into the Department for Education. They were introduced as part of a national strategy to:

- Raise the profile of foster carers
- Improve and standardise service provision
- Provide a national minimum benchmark for all carers.

The aim is to provide foster carers with:

- A clearer understanding of their role.
- Greater confidence and clarity.
- An outline of essential knowledge and skills.
- Recognition of their developing professionalism.
- A pathway for further learning and development.

To ensure your development your FPSW will discuss:

- Workbooks.
- Collecting evidence.
- Completing the evidence workbook.

Where to find in Foster e-Comms

Foster e-Comms	Pink tab:	Grey tab:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training &amp; Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training, support &amp; development standards</li> </ul>

**Read more online:** [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

## Personal Development Plan

Your FPSW will work with you to develop your personal development plan and discuss the foster care training pathway with you. You can access more information via e-Comms. This will be reviewed annually as part of your Foster Carers Review of Approval. *Please see Appendix 1 for a Personal Development Plan.*

**Read more online:** <http://cas.hants.gov.uk/courses/provhome.asp?p=FOST>

## Peer support

The purpose of the system is to contribute to the fostering services programme of support to foster carers, through a managed scheme that offers one-to-one supportive relationships between newly registered foster carers and more experienced carers.

It will aid new foster carers by:

- Providing one-to-one advice and personal support to attend support groups and initial training during the first three months of registration.



- Enabling and encouraging new carers to develop their network of support within the service and being their training pathway.
- Helping newly registered carers in adapting to their role and the fostering service, and becoming more familiar with the service.
- Helping new carers feel less isolated.
- Gaining a greater understanding of the role and tasks of a foster carer.
- Offering support with the training, support and development standards evidence workbook.
- Helping new foster carers feel more confident.

### **Contact arrangements**

Your buddy will call you regularly - at least once a week at first - but you are free to call them if you need their support or need information.

Record your buddy contact details at the front of this pack.



# Section 5

# Appendices

## Induction checklist for foster carers

A. How we work				
Welcome	✓	FPSW Sign	Carer Sign	Date
Role of your Family Placement Social Worker				
Out of hours contacts – Hantsdirect & foster carers				
Support groups / networks				
Glossary / acronyms / abbreviations				
Meetings				
Foster carer agreement				
Comments, compliments & complaints				
About the peer mentor scheme				
B. Working as a member of the Family Placement Service				
Recording & reporting				
Requirements – what to record & how to record it				
Confidentiality				
Information sharing				
Modular file*				
Supervision				
Requirements – when & where				
Supervision agreement				
Set date for first supervision				
E-mail address for e-Comms				
ID card				
Culture-all Passport				
C. Training & development				
Training	✓	FPSW Sign	Carer Sign	Date
Requirements – essential courses				
Continuous professional development				

Further professional development				
How to access training				
Personal development plan				
Purpose of the personal development plan				
Completion of plan				
Reviewing the plan – how often & when				
e-Comms				
Password				
How to log on				
Blue, pink and green sections				
Sending and receiving messages				
Policies, procedures & practice				
Recording forms				
Expenses claims				
<b>D. Dept for Education: Training, Support &amp; Development Standards</b>				
Training, support and development standards	✓	FPSW Sign	Carer Sign	Date
Requirements - timescales				
Workbook / on-line workbook - standards				
Gathering evidence				
Signing off the standards				
Personal development portfolio				
Training record				
Peer mentor				
Introductions				
The role of the peer mentor				
Contact details				

When complete please scan to foster carers file

## Personal Development Plan

Foster Carer Name		FPSW Name	
Date Completed		Date to be Reviewed	

What learning and development has taken place for you over the last year/since last review? (e.g. work experiences, coaching, courses etc)

What can you now do better and how has this helped you contribute to the outcomes for children and young people you support and the fostering service?



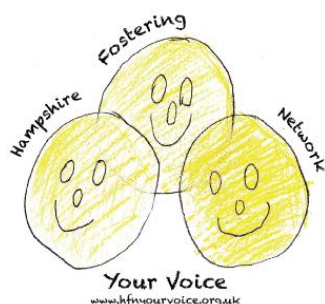
Essential training courses (mandatory)
Child Development: Awareness
Attachment Theory: Introduction
Understanding Behaviour: Introduction
Education: Module 1
Education: Module 2 PEP's
Safeguarding Children: Basic Awareness
Allegations & Safer Care
Equality & Diversity: Introduction
Promoting the Health & Well-Being of Looked After Children
Promoting Contact with Families
St Johns Early Years / Paediatric First Aid
Moving & Handling People (if appropriate to role)
Supporting Care Leavers (for Foster Carers who work with teenagers)

Date attended:

What needs to be the focus of your learning for the year ahead?	How will this help you achieve more for the children and young people you support and for your continuous personal development (e.g. CPD)?	How and when will the learning be achieved? (e.g. project, new task, course, e-learning etc)?	Indicate any direct cost or support you require	Person Responsible

Carer Signature:	Date:
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FPSW Signature:	Date:
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## Welcome to Hampshire Fostering Network (HFN)... **Your Voice**

This letter has been written by the Hampshire Fostering Network (HFN) to help you find out more about your association. We are the Foster Care Association for all approved foster carers of Hampshire County Council, so, once approved as a foster carer, you automatically become a member.

HFN is a member of the South Central Regional Forum of Foster Care Associations and is an Affiliate Member of the national Fostering Network and we complement the support you will receive from HCC Children's Services. Our aim is to help support carers in a variety of ways:

- To act as a focal point for raising problems that affect carers, then working in association with Children's Services to help find solutions.
- To support local Support Groups for carers and "sons' & daughters' groups", which are social event groups run exclusively to benefit and involve your own, or birth, children.
- Highlight information about changes that affect foster carers, covering areas such as Regulations, the Law, Income Tax etc.
- Work with other associations to share and learn best practice and contribute to national issues and campaigns.
- By enabling carers to work together more effectively, helping you to improve and enhance the lives of looked after children.
- We are your voice when talking to senior managers and County Councillors of HCC, local MPs and, finally, the Government, through the Fostering Network.

HFN meet on the second Thursday of every month at Four Chimneys, Winton Road, Winchester, SO22 6AB from 7.30 until 9.00 pm so it's easy to remember the date and venue.

Once approved at Panel, you are encouraged to attend Open meetings which alternate with Closed Committee meetings; this allows the Committee time to discuss specific issues in greater detail before putting them forward to Children's Services management for action. One example of this is the re-designing of payslips, which HFN instigated following comments from carers. January is an Open meeting, February a Closed meeting and so on.

Our contact details are available on the e-Comms website; please feel free to contact any of the Committee members if you have an issue you would like discussed but, above all, remember that it's **your** Fostering Association, so if you think you can help to make positive improvements for Hampshire's carers then please come and add your voice.

John Lewis (HFN Chair)

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**Name:**

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**Address:**

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**Email:**

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**Contact Number:**

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(Please email this to [membership@hfnyourvoice.org.uk](mailto:membership@hfnyourvoice.org.uk) upon approval as a foster carer at Panel if you would like to be included on our mailing list for HFN updates and notifications)

To all Foster Carers

*Enquiries  
to*

Cathi Hadley

*My  
Reference*

*Direct  
Line*

01489 587040  
PA: Marion Andrews 07595 214802

*Your  
reference*

*E-mail* Cathi.Hadley@hants.gov.uk

Dear Foster Carer

I am writing to you because the Hampshire Fostering Network have requested details of Foster Carers' email addresses, to enable them to contact you and inform you of events and issues that the HFN are managing or dealing with on your behalf.

If you are happy for your email address to be passed on to the HFN, please complete the details below and return this letter to your social worker.

Yours sincerely



Cathi Hadley  
County Service Manager  
Integrated Placements

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Name

.....  
.....

Address.....  
.....

.....  
.....

Email address

.....

I agree that my details above may be forwarded to the HFN.

Signed ..... Date .....



people like you  
**Fostercare**  
0845 6035620  
[www.hants.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.hants.gov.uk/fostering)

This information is available in  
alternative formats on request.

Produced by Hampshire County Council

Children's Services Department

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All photographs posed by models to protect confidentiality.

For further information please contact 01489 587017