

# COULD YOU FOSTER FOR TAMESIDE COUNCIL?

KEY INFORMATION & FOSTERING MYTHS DEBUNKED



## What is Fostering?

Fostering is a challenging, fun, flexible and unique role. Foster carers provide safe, secure and loving homes for children and young people who cannot live with their parents. By choosing to foster with us, you will be helping to keep children and young people in their local communities and close to existing support systems in some of the most unsettling times in their lives.

As a local authority foster carer, you'll be working directly with the children's services of the council who are responsible for cared for children in Tameside. Our fostering service is not for profit, and our priority is the welfare of our children and young people.

There are lots of reasons why children can't live with their parents, but is never through any fault of their own and they deserve the love, care and support that foster carers can offer, whether this is on a short or long-term basis.

These children simply are in need of carers who can offer them stability and routine, and help them achieve their goals and make a positive impact on their lives. training

## Who can Foster?

There is no typical foster carer, and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds, nationalities, religions, genders and ages. The most important thing is that you care about the welfare of children and young people and want to help them achieve stability in unsettling times.

You don't need any special qualifications, although it would be beneficial if you have prior experience looking after children. This doesn't have to be your own children, it can be experience with the children of family and friends.

To apply we ask that you:

- Are over 21
- Have a spare room
- Can provide a safe and loving home for a child or young person

On average, it takes around 8 months to become a foster carer, during which time you will be assessed and required to complete checks and pre-approval training. Our dedicated team will support you every step of the way.

All foster carers receive an allowance per child and access to our full training & support programme.

# FOSTERING MYTHS



## I AM TOO OLD/YOUNG TO FOSTER

If you are over 21 you can enquire about fostering, and there is no upper age limit. As long as you are fit and healthy enough to care for a child, that is the most important thing. We have carers in their 20s and 30s, and also in their 60s and 70s who bring some great experience to their foster care roles, so don't count yourself out.

## I AM GAY SO I CAN'T FOSTER

It does not matter whether you are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT+) single, in a relationship, civil partnership, married, divorced or widowed, There are no barriers to fostering based on sexuality, gender or relationship status.

## I WORK SO I CAN'T FOSTER

While we encourage the main carer to take on fostering full-time, there may be chance for you to work part-time or in a flexible role, it would depend on your individual situation. If you are fostering with a partner, again we would encourage the main carer to give up work to foster, but carers each have individual circumstances that we would be happy to discuss with you, if you feel you have the time to care for a child or young

## I AM SINGLE SO I CAN'T FOSTER

It makes no difference whether you are single, in a relationship or married, you can still foster. Many children benefit from the 1-1 support that a single foster carer can offer, so please don't be put off if you are single and want to enquire.

## I HAVE PETS SO I CAN'T FOSTER

You can still foster if you have pets. Many children benefit from having an animal to look after. Pets can be a real source of comfort for children and can also teach responsibility. Don't see this as a barrier to fostering, we actively welcome applicants who have pets.

## I DON'T HAVE MY OWN CHILDREN SO I CAN'T FOSTER

When anyone becomes a parent for the first time, there is a big adjustment period, with every child having individual needs that require different types of care. This is the case for both birth parents and foster parents, and both take time to adjust to their new role. It may be that you have valuable experience caring for friends' and family's children, or through work e.g. if you have been a nursery nurse or a midwife.