

Your guide to fostering


For
children
aged up
to 11




Fitzgerald Fostering
& Consultancy

Your guide to fostering

We want to make sure that we are looking after you well and helping you feel cared for and safe. This little book will tell you about fostering, what foster carers and Fitzgerald Fostering will do for you. We hope that you will help us by telling us how we are doing, what is good and what we can do better.

A young child with blonde hair, wearing a bright yellow raincoat with a hood, is playing in the rain. The child's arms are raised, and they have a joyful expression. Raindrops are visible in the air around them. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey, suggesting a rainy day. A large purple circle is overlaid on the bottom left of the image, containing white text.

This is your
booklet. You can
write in it, draw in
it and you can ask
your foster carer to
read it with you.

Who are foster carers?

Foster carers are people who look after children when they cannot live at home. They are adults and sometimes they have other children and pets. Foster carers know that children are very often scared and worried when they come to live with them and they will do their best to help you feel safe and settle into their family. They will show you around the house, show you your bedroom, where you can play, where you can find things and they will ask about things you like to eat and what you like to do.

Your foster carers work for Fitzgerald Fostering.

Your foster carers are called

Why do you have to live with foster carers?

There are many reasons why children like you cannot live at home. Each of you is different and each of you has a different reason why you cannot be at home.

You are not living with foster carers because of anything you have done.

Other people are involved in making sure you will be looked after well while you are with foster carers.

Your social worker

Your social worker will visit you and will spend time with you on your own. Your social worker will want to know whether you feel safe and that you are being well looked after, and it is really important that you tell your social worker if there are things you are unhappy about or don't understand.

Your social worker's name is

You can contact your social worker at

Sometimes children like to speak to somebody who does not work for social services or Fitzgerald Fostering. These people are called independent advocates. If you would like to talk to an independent advocate, you can ask your foster carer, your social worker, your Independent Reviewing Officer, or someone from Fitzgerald Fostering and we will arrange this for you.

The foster carers' social worker

Your foster carers will also have a social worker to discuss things with. The foster carers' supervising social worker comes from Fitzgerald Fostering and is there to help your foster carers look after you as best they can.

Your foster carers, supervising social worker is called


The social workers and foster carers will need to talk to each other to make sure that you are getting the care you need. They will ask what you want and what you think, when they make plans: that's why it is important that you tell people how you feel.

What sorts of things will your foster carer do while they are looking after you?

It is the foster carers' job to keep you safe, inside the house and outside.

- > The foster carers will make sure you have enough to eat, and that the food is healthy for you and takes account of any special foods you need to eat, or cannot eat.
- > The foster carers will make sure you see a doctor if you are unwell.
- > They will make sure you get to school and will encourage you with your school work.
- > Your foster carers will make sure that you can attend your church or place of worship if you wish to go.
- > If you are a member of a club (Brownies or Cubs for example) or want to take part in an activity (gym club for example) your foster carers will try to make sure you can attend.
- > They may take you on outings or for a holiday.





What will it be like at my foster carer's house?



The foster carers try to make their home welcoming and happy for you.

- > Their house will be clean and warm.
- > You will have a bed of your own to sleep in, and will usually have a bedroom of your own. There will be somewhere for you to keep your things.
- > There will be a table to sit at for meals.
- > You will have clean clothes to wear.
- > You will have baths or a shower and will be helped if you need any help.
- > You will be given some pocket money.

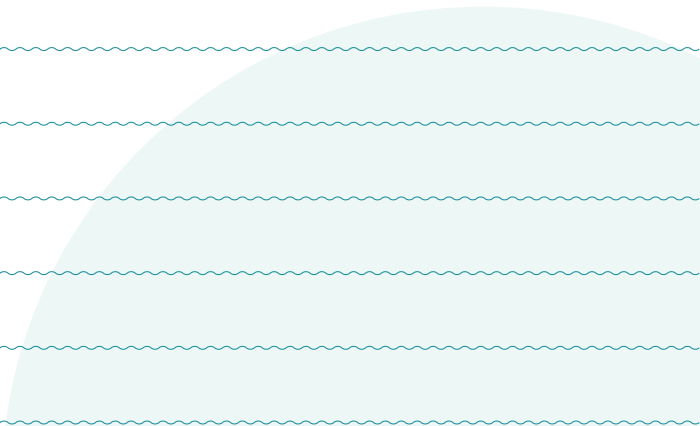
Your social worker will be able to tell you more about your foster carers, and will take you to your foster carer's house.

There are family rules in all foster homes – these are to make certain that everyone is kept safe, and that you are well looked after. The rules might be about not going out on your own, or about where you eat your meals, or words that you should not use or other things.

Your social worker and the foster carers will tell you what the rules are in your foster carers' home because it is important that you know what the house rules are.

We have left you some space below so that you can write the rules down together and look at them when you need to. You can ask your social worker to explain them again if you are not sure about any of them.

The rules in my foster carer's house are:



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There are some things that must happen while you are in foster care. These are called your rights, and your foster carers, your social worker and the foster carers' supervising social worker should ensure you are treated in this way.

### **You have the right**

- > To be kept safe and protected from harm, and to feel secure
- > To be asked what you think about things and be listened to
- > To be told what you can and may not do, and to have decisions explained to you
- > To be helped to keep in touch with people who are important to you, and if this can't happen you have the right to know the reason why
- > To be treated nicely
- > To continue any customs or way of life associated with your race and culture
- > To follow any religion you are used to following
- > To be helped to keep healthy and well
- > To have help with your school work
- > To have hobbies and activities that you enjoy and to try new ones
- > To be told what to do if things go wrong and be helped to make a complaint

**You should tell someone if your foster carers do not ensure that your rights are met.**



It is important that everyone works together to make sure that you are well looked after while you are in foster care so there will be meetings to talk about how things are going for you.

## **Your review meeting**

While you are living with foster carer's there must be meetings to make sure that everyone is working together and keeping to the plan for you. This will include you, your foster carer, your social worker and if it's okay your parents.

**It is your review meeting so if you want to go that would be really good but if you don't that is okay too. You can tell your social worker what you think about the plan for you. You can write a note to send to the review meeting or draw a picture about the plan for you if this would be easier for you to do.**

You will have an **Independent Reviewing Officer** who is in charge of your reviews and they will want to see you. You can talk to your Reviewing Officer about what you want to happen.

Your foster carer will have reviews too. Fitzgerald Fostering use reviews to make sure that foster carers are taking good care of you, keeping you safe and caring for you as if you are part of their family. They can also make sure your foster carer gets any help they need to do this

The supervising social worker for your foster carers will want to ask you about what you like about your foster carers and anything you don't like.

**It is OK to say what you don't like – it can be very important.**



Looking after you is really important and so the Government has set up an organisation which comes and checks that Fitzgerald Fostering is getting good foster carers to look after children well.

This is OfSTED (The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills). They come and talk to people at Fitzgerald Fostering to make sure that their foster carers are allowing you your rights and looking after you properly. They look at lots of papers and ask lots of questions to decide whether the people at Fitzgerald Fostering are doing their best for children in foster care.

**You can contact them if you want to tell them something about living with your foster carers.**

**OFSTED Chief Inspector  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD**

**Tel: 0300 123 1231  
E-mail: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)**

You might have some ideas that would help make foster care better. You can write them here and then tell them to someone at Fitzgerald Fostering, your social worker, or your foster carer.

**My ideas for making foster care better:**

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If you are worried or have a problem it is very important that you say so that we can try to make things better for you. Sometimes this is called a complaint. It is okay to make a complaint and when you do we must try to sort things out quickly.

**If anyone has harmed or hurt you in any way tell someone straight away.**

**If the complaint is to do with fostering in the beginning Fitzgerald Fostering would try to sort things out. That may be done by the supervising social worker.**

If we could not sort it out we would either get a manager from Fitzgerald Fostering to look at it or we would get someone who does not work for Fitzgerald Fostering to do it. They would listen to everyone and tell Fitzgerald Fostering what they found out and how things might be put right.

If it was still not okay we would get 3 people who do not work for Fitzgerald Fostering to look at everything that had happened so far and say if they think the right action had been taken or more could be done. Finally if you are still unhappy you can contact Ofsted.

### **Children's Commissioner for England**

The Children's Commissioner for England spends lots of time listening to what children and young people have to say about how they are looked after. You can contact them at:

#### **Children's Commissioner for England**

**Sanctuary Buildings  
20 Great Smith Street  
London SW1P 3BT**

**Tel: 0800 528 0731**

**E-mail: [help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](mailto:help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)  
[www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)**

You can also talk to the following people:

**Your social worker is:**

Tel:

E-mail:

**Your social worker's boss is:**

Tel:

E-mail:

**The bosses at Fitzgerald Fostering are  
Lesley Fitzgerald and James Townend**

Tel: 01753 550031 E-mail: [lesley@fitzgeraldfostering.com](mailto:lesley@fitzgeraldfostering.com)  
[james@fitzgeraldfostering.com](mailto:james@fitzgeraldfostering.com) [www.fitzgeraldfostering.co.uk](http://www.fitzgeraldfostering.co.uk)

**Your Independent Reviewing Officer is:**

Tel:

E-mail:

**Your foster carers' supervising social worker at  
Fitzgerald Fostering is:**

Tel:

E-mail:

**Child Line** This is the free  
24-hour helpline for children and  
young people in the UK. You can  
call the **Helpline on**  
**0800 1111** about any problem,  
at any time day or night.  
**[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)**



# NOTES

Please use this page to write anything else you want to remember or to tell somebody that isn't with you when you are looking through this booklet.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 15 horizontal wavy lines.



## Finally – our message to all children in foster care is that Fitzgerald Fostering will:

- > Find you a foster family who can provide the kind of care you need.
- > Help your foster carer to give you the best care available.
- > Talk to your social worker and your foster carer to make sure you get the help you need.
- > Work with any other people involved in your life, to ensure we all do what is best for you.
- > Talk with you and listen to what you have to say about what you want to happen in your life.
- > Deal with any complaint you have about your care quickly and thoroughly.





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