

PARAMOUNT
FOSTER CARE

Children's Guide to Fostering – 11 years +



This guide belongs to:

Name:

Age:

Hello and welcome...

Paramount Foster Care is an Independent Fostering Agency - which means that we help to find foster families for children and young people who need them. Our job is to make sure you: are well looked after, have everything you need to grow and learn, are happy and are kept safe. We listen to all the children and young people that we care for and we use your feedback to improve our agency.

We hope this guide will help you find out more about Paramount Foster Care and the people who want to help you while you are in care. This guide also lists contact numbers of people/organisations that you can contact if you are unhappy or want to complain.

If you want to know about anything that is not in this book you can ask your foster carer(s), your social worker, and the foster carers' Supervising Social Worker or anyone from the Paramount Foster Care team. More information of this is provided within this guide.

This guide can also be available in different ways, for example in another language or in Makaton, tape recording or pictures. Please speak to Paramount Foster Care team – their contact details are found at the back of this guide.



Information about me-Part 1



Feel free to write or draw your likes and dislikes here...

Information about me-Part 2

People who are important to me:

Address of my home and my school

What are my hopes and dreams..

What is Foster Care?

Sometimes your parents can't look after you and your social worker will decide that it is better for you not to live at home. They will see if you have other relatives (family like grandmother or uncle) or friends who can look after you, if this is not possible than foster carer(s) will look after you and keep you safe.

Who are foster carers'?

These are chosen adults who will look after children and young people that are not able to live with their family. Foster carers make sure you are healthy, happy and safe.

These carers sometimes have their own children or other children/young people that they care for, who are living at the house.

There are three main types of foster carer placements at Paramount Foster Care:

1. **Emergency** –This placement provides shorter-term care for children and young people who may need somewhere to stay and at short notice.
2. **Short term** – This placement provides a child or young person with a place to stay until they can return to their own family, or until it becomes evident that they need a more permanent foster placement or possibly adoptive parents.
3. **Long term**- Sometimes it will be necessary to stay with foster carer(s) for a long period of time until the child becomes a young person and leaves care as an independent adult.



Social worker's role



My Social Worker contact details

Your social worker:

Your social worker is another adult who wants the best for you. It is their job to support children/young people and their families through difficult problems.

Your social worker will see you on your own and will answer your questions about living away from home; they will also explain what will happen next.

Your foster carer(s) also has/have a Supervising Social Worker from Paramount Foster Care. You will be able to talk to him or her too.

Remember: you can always talk to your social worker if there is something you are not happy about.

How will Paramount Foster Care, with the support of my social worker find the right foster carer(s) for me?

Paramount Foster Care will have foster carers' who live in your area and will look for the one who most closely matches your needs. If you are not happy at any time, it is really important that you tell your social worker so they can try to do something about it.



Will I see my family?

It is ok for you to miss your family and your social worker will be making arrangements for you to see them as much as is safe and appropriate for you. In fact, if you, your social worker and your family plan that you will be going back home quite soon, it is likely that you will be seeing them more frequently.

This is called 'contact' and it can happen at the foster home, in your family's home, or somewhere else. It may be best for you to keep in touch by phone as well as (or instead of) seeing your family face-to-face.

If there is someone you do not feel it would be safe for you to see, let your social worker know. You can talk to your social worker about any feelings you have about seeing your family. Your social worker will help decide what will be best for everyone involved.

Will I see my friends?

Your foster carer(s) will do their best to help you stay in touch with your friends, and make new ones. It will be important for you to agree with your foster carer(s) when you are going to see them.

They will want to talk to their parents if you are thinking of staying overnight with a friend. If your foster carer(s) and social worker agree that it is ok, your friend's parents will want to talk to your foster carer(s) if you invite the friend to stay overnight with you.



When you live with a foster carer:

- You will live in a clean, warm and safe home. You will have your own bed to sleep in and somewhere to keep your belongings.
- You will have enough clothes to wear and you will be given pocket money. It is up to you if you spend all your money at once or if you want to save a little to spend on special treats.
- You will have healthy meals. Your foster carer(s) will want to know what your favourite food is.
- Sometimes you may need to visit the doctor or dentist. Your foster carer(s) will take you or arrange for you to go (dependent on your age)
- Your foster carer(s) will make sure you have fun and have time to enjoy yourself by doing things you enjoy like swimming, playing sports or seeing your friends. Your foster carer(s) will also help you to try out new hobbies you may not have tried before.
- Your foster carer(s) will help you to go to school, college or work. They will also help you with your homework if they can. If you need more support in school/college, they will contact people who can help.

HOUSE RULES

Like all families, foster carers' have some rules that you will be asked to follow; the rules will be fair. Your foster carer(s) and your social worker will explain the rules. Most of the rules will be about keeping you safe or making sure that everybody gets on together.

Foster carers' expectations

Foster Carers'...



Will try and keep you safe, so it is important that we know where you are at all times.



Make you feel welcomed and be part of the family.



Will listen to you and hear what is concerning you.



Will help you celebrate religious holidays and your birthday.



Will make sure that you are going to school and support you be the best that you can be.



Will develop your life skills.

About my school



Most children/young people will go to the same school. If you are going to live with a family for a while and your school is far away, you may be able to change to a school that is nearer and easier for you to get to.

School is very important for the future life of every person. It is important that you go to school every day and arrive on time. If you are having trouble with your homework, work at school or anything else surrounding your school life, then speak to your foster carer(s) or social worker; they are there to help you.

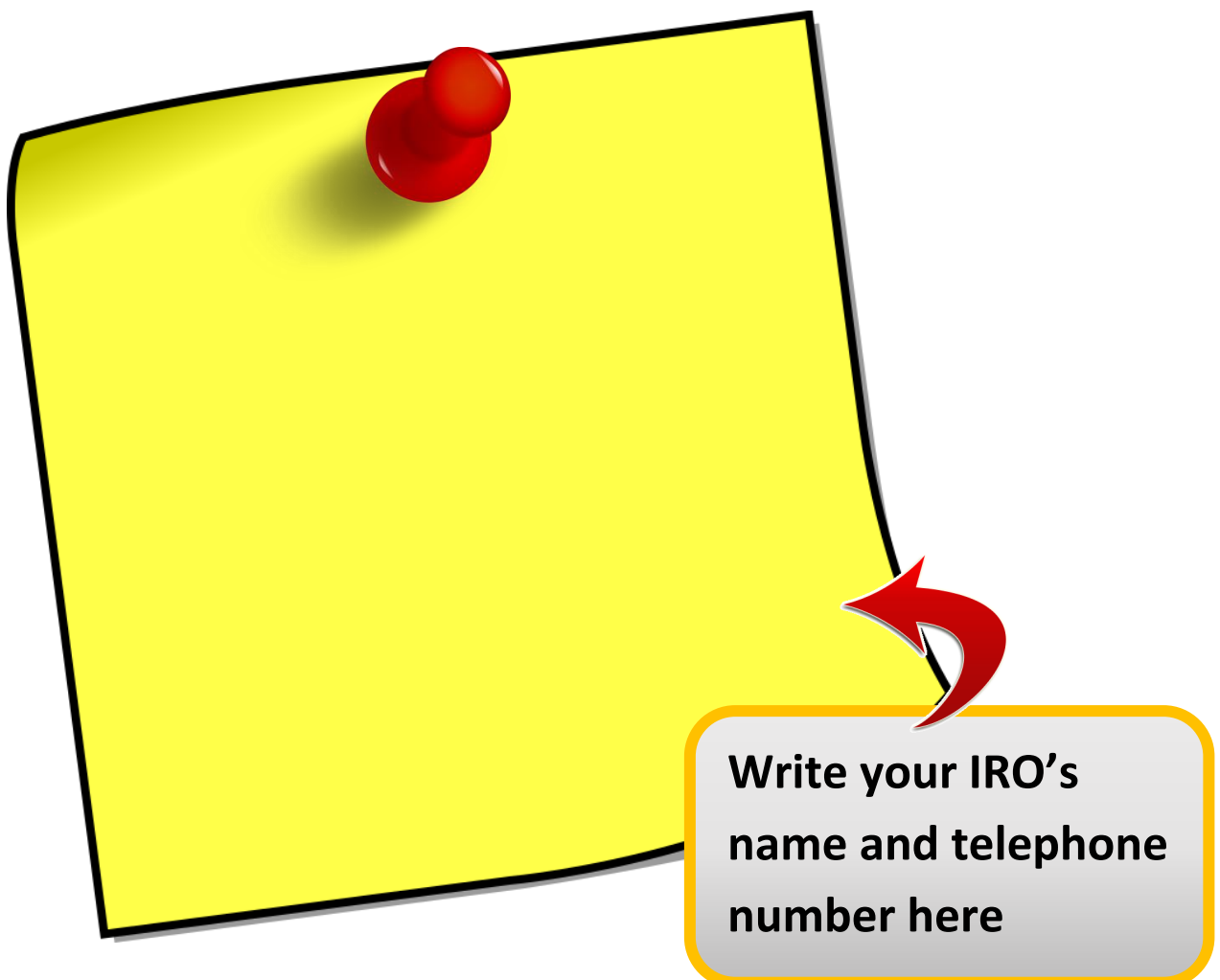
You will take part in meetings at school to discuss your 'Personal Education Plan (PEP)'. Your PEP will list out all the actions that are needed to make sure you can achieve your best at school.

My Care Plan

When you first move into care all the adults in your life will get together and make a care plan for you. It is really important that you say what you want to happen and how you are feeling at this meeting. You may be asked to write this down, tell your social worker and you may take part in the meeting.

These meetings are called 'reviews'. They are held regularly to make sure you are being cared for and have the support you need while you are in care. At every review, you should be asked what you think and what your views are. If you have any worries in between these meetings, you can talk to your social worker or the person who oversees the review. This person is called the Independent Reviewing Officer.

The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) will chair the review meeting and will discuss the plans for how long you will stay at the foster home.



Moving On

When you are older, it is possible for you to move to a place where you have greater independence and have the opportunity to be supported to further develop your life skills; this is called 'semi-independence'.

Your foster carer(s) will work with you to learn the skills you need to live on your own. This will be written down in your 'Pathway Plan'.

Eventually, a looked after young person will be considered for independent accommodation, but this will not be given until everyone is convinced that the young person will be able to cope alone.

My rights

I have the right to:

- be protected from harm and feel secure
- be listened to
- be helped to keep in touch with people who are important to me - if this can't happen then my social worker will explain why
- be told clearly what I can do and what I am not allowed to
- be treated well and equally for who I am
- follow the same religion I have been used to
- healthcare that meets my needs including my emotional needs
- have support with school work
- develop my interests
- be helped to complain if things go wrong and for someone to represent me
- be helped to see a solicitor about my care order, or any other legal order affecting me - such as contact with certain people in my life

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes:

- name calling
- hitting
- pushing
- spreading rumours
- threatening or
- undermining someone.

It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

If you feel that you are being bullied at school or somewhere else, you can talk to some of the people/organisations mentioned on the next page

If something is wrong - overview

If something is wrong, you can speak to anyone you can trust.
Below are some people you can talk to:



If something is wrong and I want to complain

What to do if you are unhappy or have a problem?

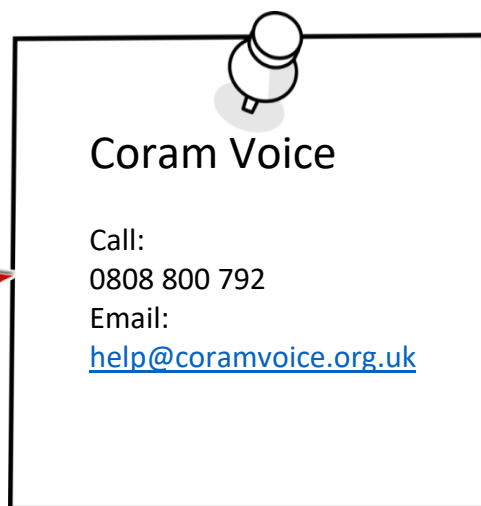
It is normal to feel unhappy sometimes, particularly when living away from family and friends.

Paramount Foster Care will always try to put you with a family that they think you will be happy with. Sometimes things do not go smoothly; however, there may be times when you feel unhappy.

If you are not happy, you should first try to speak to your foster carer(s) about what is making you sad. If you cannot do this, then you can talk to your social worker, support worker or anyone else from the Paramount Foster Care team.

If you are worried or want to make a complaint and can't tell your social worker, supervising social worker, foster carer(s) or your teacher, you may want an advocate. This is someone independent who you can talk to, to get your views across, for example in a meeting or to make a complaint about how you are being cared for.

Contact details for an organisation that **advocate** for you



Coram Voice

Call:
0808 800 792

Email:
help@coramvoice.org.uk

You can also speak to your IRO or you also have the right to talk directly to Ofsted. This is an organisation that checks the work of fostering agencies in England and Wales. You will find their number and those of other organisations who you can call to get help or advice on the next page. The outcome of your complaint will be shared with you in your preferred way.

Helpful numbers

Paramount Foster Care

SMA House

172 Birmingham Road

West Bromwich

B70 6QG

Call: 0121 582 4005

Email:

info@paramountfostercare.co.uk

Children's Commissioner for England

Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Call: 020 7783 8330

Email:

help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Who can i call?

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate,
Store Street,
Manchester M1 2WD

Call: 0300 123 1231

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

ChildLine

24 hour helpline for children in distress.

Call: 0800 1111 (freephone)

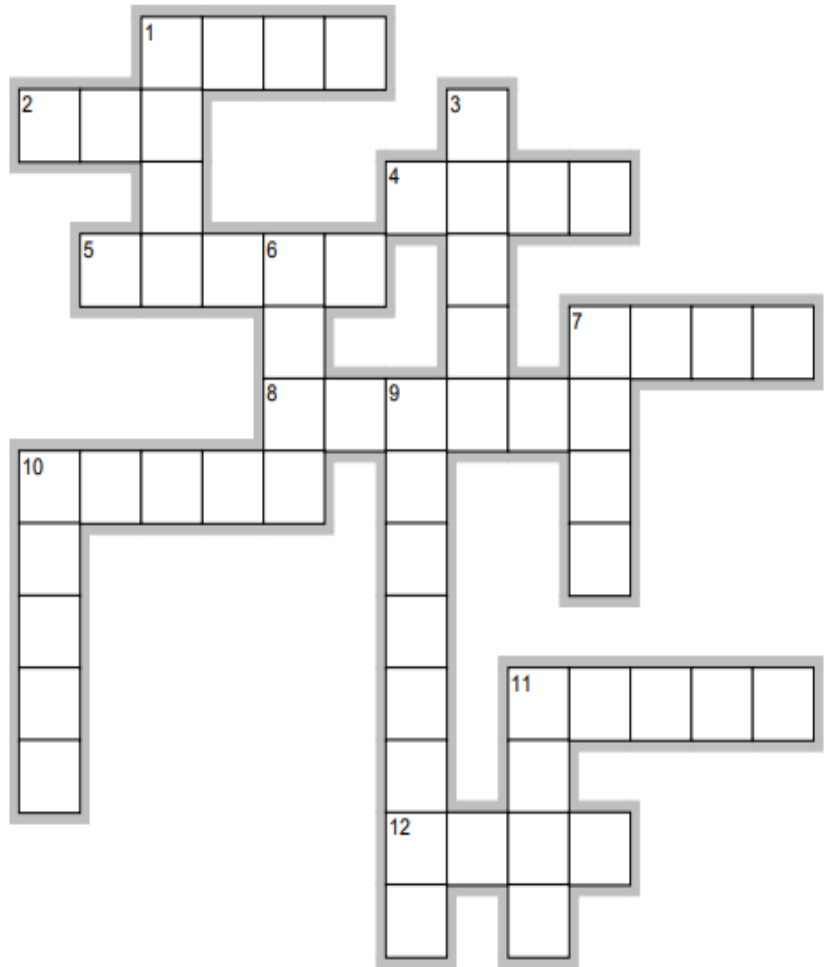
Email: www.childline.org.uk

You can also speak to your IRO, before or after your review meeting.

Their contact details you have recorded under 'My Care Plan' section.



Silence, Please!



Read each clue. Write the missing silent letter in the blank in each clue. Then write the entire word in the puzzle.

Across

1. I ate only one ha_f of my apple.
2. I will invite t_o friends to my party.
4. A stop si_n is red.
5. I like to _rite letters to my uncle.
7. I cut my _nee when I fell on the ground.
8. If you lis_en carefully, you can hear the rain.
10. I like to draw on the board with colored cha_k.
11. How far up the tree can you clim_?
12. The young lam_ stayed close to the rest of the sheep.

Down

1. We will to the park in one _our.
3. We need to turn ri__ t at the corner.
6. I want to ta_k to you after school.
7. I am glad that I _now you!
9. The sidewa_k was covered with snow.
10. Cou_d you come over to my house today?
11. I will wash my brush and com__.

Address:
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172 Birmingham Road
West Bromwich
West Midlands
B70 6QG

Telephone:
0121 582 4005

Email: info@paramountfostercare.co.uk



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FOSTER CARE

“In pursuit of Excellence in
Care”

