



# Information for Prospective Foster Carers

**SCOTTISH**  
*adoption  
& fostering*

# Contents

01

Who can  
foster?

02

Who are the  
children?

03

What is the  
process?

04

Finances

05

Services  
provided by  
Scottish  
Adoption and  
Fostering

# Who Can Foster?

**Scottish Adoption and Fostering welcomes applications from people who are considering fostering and meet the following criteria:**

- Individuals who live within a 60-mile radius of Edinburgh. This is linked with our commitment to ensuring we can deliver a range of support services to families.
- Families who reside permanently in the UK and have a right to remain here.
- Over the age of 21. There is no upper age limit and more important than age is the ability of foster carers to provide a loving and secure home for children for the duration of their placement.
- Single people or couples, with or without children can apply. We are particularly keen to hear from LGBTQ+ people and/or people from ethnic minority backgrounds and/or disabled people as these groups are underrepresented as foster carers.
- Applicants will need to be in good general physical and emotional health. As part of the recruitment process applicants will need to undergo a medical.
- Applicants should be able to offer a suitable spare bedroom if you are caring for a child over the age of two years.

**Some other factors to consider:**

- Couples need to have been in a relationship for at least two years.
- For applicants with children the youngest child needs to be at least two years old. As a general rule of thumb there should be at least two years difference in age between your child and the child you foster.
- Given what is known about the effects of passive smoking on children, and about the importance of role modelling we do not accept applications from people who smoke or vape.
- Certain pets including some breeds of dog are considered dangerous and we consider them incompatible with the needs of the children we place.

At Scottish Adoption and Fostering we are keen to provide the full range of foster care services including Permanent, Long Term, Interim, Emergency and Short Breaks. We are also keen to utilize our expertise in adoption to recruit foster carers who would like to offer concurrency or foster to permanence options for children.

# What is the Process?

## 1

### Initial Enquiry

Once you have browsed the website, if you have any questions please contact us by phone 0131 553 5060 or email [info@scottishadoption.org](mailto:info@scottishadoption.org) and we will respond within two working days.

To take forward your application to become a foster family with us please complete our Initial Enquiry Form. Your form will be passed to a member of the team who will be in touch to talk through your application. This is a chance for you to consider whether fostering is right for you, and whether we are the right Agency for you.

## 2

### The Prep Group

All foster carers attend a Prep Group where they learn about some of the skills and information that you need to be a good foster carer. Although we recognize this can sound a bit daunting, the feedback from prospective adopters who attend a similar group has been consistently positive about the experience. We run Prep Groups as and when needed. The groups run on different days and times to give you choice and flexibility and may include a mixture of potential foster carers and adopters.

# What is the Process?

## 3

### Home Study

Once you have finished your Prep Group at Scottish Adoption and Fostering, if you wish to proceed you will immediately be allocated a Senior Practitioner to undertake an assessment of your suitability to foster called a home study. You will be asked to work closely with your worker to prepare a report for presentation at the Fostering Panel. This report explores issues such as family background, personal values, relationships, experience of children, motivation to foster, the needs of care experienced children and consideration of what you feel you could offer any children that you look after.

As part of this assessment, you will be asked to have a Medical Examination, carried out by your own GP. This is like those needed for life insurance purposes. Its aim is to give a general indication that applicants have a reasonably normal life expectancy and there are no serious medical factors, which need considered.



**We are also required to undertake several checks and references:**

#### **Police Check (PVG Certificate)**

A PVG check is carried out to ascertain if there are any serious criminal offences, which may rule out the placement of children. The PVG check will show convictions, spent or otherwise. You will be asked to provide all previous addresses.

#### **Local Authority.**

This is a check by the local authority where you live, or have lived, as required by Adoption Agency Regulations, to establish that there are no known reasons why a child may not be placed with you. The check applies to all members of your household who are aged 16 or over.

#### **References.**

We ask you to give us the names of six referees, usually close friends and relatives, who know you well and are willing to support your application. Referees will be asked to provide a written reference. Your worker will contact at least three of these referees.

In addition, we would request a written reference from your current employer. For applicants with nursery or school age children we would also require a written reference from the child's school or nursery.

#### **Employment and Finance.**

The Agency will wish to be sure that we have adequate information on your career history and current financial situation (including mortgage details or rental agreement) to ensure appropriate security for any child you look after.

# What is the Process?

## 4

### The Panel

At the beginning of your Homestudy, we will have agreed with you a date for your Panel. Your completed assessment report will be presented to our Fostering Panel which you, along with your worker will be invited to attend. The Panel will consider the report and make a recommendation about your suitability to be a foster carer including the categories of fostering that you are approved to provide (e.g. permanent, interim, etc.) and the gender and age range of any children. Our Agency Decision Maker will then consider the recommendation and make a decision about approval. If we don't approve you, there is a right of appeal.

Our panel members include adoptive parents, care experienced adults, local authority social workers and a medical adviser.

## 5

### Matching

Following your approval, we will begin to explore possible matches with you. Our referrals of children for fostering come mainly through our links with Local Authorities in Scotland.

## Support Commitment

Through the matching and placement process and beyond, we will advise and support you every step of the way. We offer a range of support including learning and development opportunities, support groups, groups for children and young people and opportunities to come together in less formal ways.



# Types of Fostering

There are many different types of fostering that foster carers can choose to specialise in, each with their own challenges and rewards. It is important to explore which type of fostering will be most suited to you and your family.

Foster carers are usually trained and approved to look after children for a certain period of time. Here are some of the different types of fostering – you may find that your fostering service has different names for some of them.

FOSTERING	DETAILS
<b>Emergency</b>	Emergency foster carers will need to be prepared to take a child into their home at any time of the night or day and have them stay for a few days. This type of fostering is unplanned and used at short notice, for example, if a lone parent is taken into hospital and there is no one to care for their child. Longer-term plans must then be considered.
<b>Interim</b>	This can mean anything from an overnight stay to a period of several months. Short-term foster carers provide a temporary place to stay until the child can return home to their own family or a longer-term fostering placement or adoption arrangement can be made.
<b>Long-term</b>	Sometimes children will not be able to go back to live with their own families for a number of years, if at all. Long-term fostering allows children and young people to stay in a family where they can feel secure, often while maintaining contact with their birth family.
<b>Permanent</b>	Permanent Foster care offers children a safe, stable and secure environment for the rest of their childhood and beyond. This term refers to a placement secured by a permanence order. A permanence order removes the need for the child's care to be overseen by the children's hearing system and the order can last until the child reaches the age of 18. It transfers the parental rights (such as the right to decide where the child resides) to the local authority. In certain circumstances, parental rights can be shared between the carer and the local authority.
<b>Short break</b>	Also known as 'shared care', this covers a variety of different types of part-time care. Short break carers might have a child to stay for anything from a few hours each week to a couple of weekends each month, giving their own family or full-time foster carers a break.

**\*Information Sourced from the Fostering Network**

# Finances

There are no “charges” made by Scottish Adoption and Fostering to yourselves at any stage of the application or placement process. We will cover the cost of your PVG but if you have lived abroad for periods of time you will be asked to undertake police checks/provide evidence yourself in relation to the countries you have lived in. There may be a cost involved and some countries insist on fingerprint evidence too.

As a foster carer you will be paid a fee and an allowance. The fee is money that we pay you in recompense for your time, knowledge and expertise as a foster carer. The allowance covers the expenses you will have as a foster carer including purchasing clothes, toiletries, etc. for the child you are looking after and a contribution to household costs. You will receive double allowance for 4 weeks in the year to cover costs of birthday, Christmas and summer holiday. You will be helped to set up a savings account for the child and consider giving them pocket money from the allowance.

AGE OF CHILD/ YOUNG PERSON	FEE PER WEEK (£)	ALLOWANCE PER WEEK (£)
0 to 4 years	285	200
5 to 10 years	285	210
11 to 15 years	285	210
16+ years	285	275

\*NB correct at December 2023 and for standard placement, additional payments made for enhanced and solo placements.



# Our Services

## Working in Partnership with you

If you choose Scottish Adoption and Fostering as your agency, we guarantee you a service that is personal, responsive, highly professional and tailored to meet your individual needs. Scottish Adoption and Fostering staff will guide and support you through each stage of your fostering journey from your initial contact through to your first child who lives with you and beyond.

We offer a range of Support Services and are available to offer on-going advice. If you are interested in making an enquiry, please complete our Initial Enquiry Form which can be found on our website.

We work closely with **New Family Social** to support our LGBTQ+ families



# Our Services:

**At Scottish Adoption and Fostering we can support you and your family through the following groups and services:**

- **Fostering Preparation Groups**
- **Practical skills for attachment** – this training aims to equip prospective foster carers with tools that will allow them to build attachment with the children placed in their care.
- **Individual support for specific issues**
- **Early Days Programme** – 4-6 Theraplay technique sessions which also help to build positive attachment. Run by our Occupation Therapist and Music Therapist where they focus on regulation, sensory experiences, attachment and movement-based activities.
- **Art Therapy** – We have three art therapists who provide individual or family session to help build positive attachments and to encourage self-exploration and self-expression.
- **Music Therapy** – Sessions can be dyadic (child and parent together) or individual for children and young people, with the parent offered support and communication alongside as appropriate. Some parents also undertake their own therapeutic process separately.
- **Adult Counsellors** – Sometimes foster carers require their own support. We have two adult counsellors who can provide individual or couples counselling to our foster parents.
- **Therapeutic Life Story Work**
- **WISE UP Programme** – a workshop that provides adopted and fostered children with the tools to handle comments and questions about their life story.
- **Transition Groups** – for foster carers and children to help the transition from nursery to primary school and primary to secondary school.
- **Peer Support** – Individual peer support from an experienced adopter or foster carer.
- **Children's Groups** – We run groups for children aged 7+ years. We believe that group work with our young people has many benefits. For example; increasing social confidence, improving communication skills, reducing stress levels, creating positive peer friendships.
- **Family Fun Days**

# Thank you for your interest in our fostering services.

## Contact Us

Please reach out to us via phone or email if you have any questions. We would be delighted to help!

To make an initial enquiry about becoming a foster carer please visit our website.

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