

Support offer for Connected Persons



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A Connected Person, is someone who is a ‘relative, friend or other person connected with a child or young person’. They are likely to have a pre-existing relationship with a child/young person who is looked after by the local authority.

The Children Act 1989 defines a relative as a:

“grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent”.

A Connected Person could be someone who has known the child in a professional capacity, the parent of another connected child, or other adult (extended) family member or friend.

Connected Person Carers play a unique role in enabling children to remain with people they know and trust if they cannot, for whatever reason, live with their parents.

Our Fostering team which has a dedicated Connected Persons team provide a range of support and advice, training opportunities and promote our Fostering Strategy, designed to recognise a carer's developing experience in their fostering role. Find out more about what we offer:

Dedicated social worker allocated to each Connected Person

Every connected person has their own supervising social worker. Your allocated social worker will undertake your Connected Persons assessment and will support you throughout this process, this will include regular visits; the support that is provided can be increased where required.

Our supervising social workers have considerable experience in working with children and young people. They can provide help and support and will also link with the child's social worker. Your supervising social worker can also attend meetings (such as Looked After Child Reviews) with you and understand and complete relevant paperwork, attend court hearings (should you need this). You can keep in regular contact with your supervising social worker by phone. As a connected persons carer, we will provide you with the fostering handbook, containing information about being a carer, safeguarding everyone in your household, the expectations of a placement and relevant policies and procedures.

The fostering team

Our fostering team comprises two services which include Mainstream foster carers and Connected Persons. If your supervising social worker is unavailable during office hours, you will always be able to talk to another member of the team to discuss any queries you may have.

Out of hours support

Out of hours (5pm on a weekday) and at weekends, if you require any additional support, please call the Emergency Duty team on 0191 2006800 who can put you in contact with the on-call Fostering Duty Worker.

Membership of the Fostering network

You can be an individual member of the Fostering Network, the National organisation for foster carers, on an individual basis.

Training

We provide ongoing training and professional development for all connected carers to help them carry out their caring tasks. Feedback from carers who regularly attend training opportunities has been that the experiences gained to enhance the skills they require to meet and promote the needs and welfare of children/young people in their care. As a connected carer, we expect that you would be actively involved in further training and would expect regular attendance at both core training and support and development groups.

Support and development groups

We hold a support and development groups which you will be invited to, if you have any question about what we offer please contact your supervising social worker.

Attending groups and meeting with other Foster Carers can be a good way of sharing experiences and provides an opportunity to talk about what's working well, what is working not so well and what needs to change.

Local support groups for Foster Carers exist across the region, please contact us for further information about any of the support groups listed below:

- **Social work led support groups.** These groups are led by a social worker and meet monthly in various locations across North Tyneside.
- **Foster carer led support group.** Some foster carers organize these groups independently of the team, groups meet monthly in various locations across North Tyneside.
- **Children who foster group.** This group meets every six weeks and it is aimed at children aged 6-18 who are family members of foster carers, this could be your own children, nieces, nephews, and or grandchildren.
- **Teenage support group.** The group meets monthly and is to support foster carers who care for teenagers.
- **Solihull support.** The group meets monthly at Riverside Centre, North Shields. The group is to support carers who have completed the Solihull training to continue to gain ideas and support on how to put your learning into practice.
- **Fostering committee events.** These events are held throughout the year and are offered by members of the fostering committee.
- **Quarterly event.** This event is offered quarterly throughout the year and is attended by fostering team managers. Guest speakers are also often arranged to attend, and the team at Employment Training Skills North also provide an opportunity for our carers to have free treatments and a pamper.

If there are any additional development and/or support groups that you feel would benefit you on your journey as a Connected Person, please contact your supervising social worker to discuss these.

Core training

We have half-day and full-day training sessions, called Core Training, which are held frequently throughout the year. Topics include areas such as:

- Child Protection
- Attachment
- Safe Caring
- Recording
- Valuing diversity and promoting equality
- First aid

Additional training

We encourage all carers to identify their individual training needs and to suggest topics on further training which would be beneficial.

We offer additional training on current topics, including (this list is no exhaustive):

- Solihull Parenting Programme
- Court skills
- Care4me
- Lifestory Work
- County Lines

Fees

Band Levels	Fees
Band 1 - Accredited Carer	£110.00
Band 2 - Advanced Carer	£380.00
Band 3 - Specialist Carer	£550.00

Additional Premiums – per child	Fees
Siblings (3 rd & 4 th child only)	£75.00
Disability	£50.00
Mother & Baby (only mother LAC)	£90.00
Teen (13+) accredited carers only	£60.00
Out of Hours placement	£50 (one off)

Allowance

Caring for children can be an expensive business. The allowance rate for 2019-20 is as follows:

Age	Weekly Standard Fostering Allowance
0 – 4	£134.50
5– 10	£148.00
11 – 15	£184.00
To Carer for 16+	£194.00
To Young Person 16+	£15