Foster for Coventry

Coventry City Council

Foster for Coventry
Coventry needs more foster carers for Coventry children

Thank you for showing an interest in fostering for Coventry City Council. The work carried out by Coventry foster carers means the children in our care can get the stability and support they need. Foster carers make a real difference to the lives of Coventry children.

Coventry City Council needs more foster carers to join our team who can help us to care for Coventry children who, for whatever reason, are unable to live with their birth family. Fostering for Coventry City Council means you are welcoming Coventry children into your home and giving them a safe, nurturing family environment whilst decisions are being made about their future.

There are different types of fostering which are explored in this brochure and Coventry currently has a need for foster carers for all types of fostering including short breaks, time-limited fostering and long-term fostering.

Like most local authorities, Coventry has a particular need for foster carers who could, with our support, care for brothers and sisters who should stay together, and who feel they could provide care and support for teenagers and children who have more complex needs.

We hope you find the information that you need in this brochure and look forward to answering any questions you may have about fostering for Coventry City Council.
Why do children need foster care?

Children of all ages, sometimes even newborn babies, may need to come into the care of the local authority. There are many reasons for this. Some children and young people may need a period of time in care while a crisis at home is being assessed and support is being put in place. Parents may need extra support to help them parent successfully and children will need to be cared for in a foster placement while that is taking place. Other parents may suffer from ill health and have no family or friends to care for their children while they receive treatment. Sometimes an adult’s dependence on drugs or alcohol will mean that they cannot put their children’s needs first and so those children will need to come into the care of their local authority. There are times when social workers and other professionals involved with the child will be so concerned about a child’s safety they may be removed from their home by the police or the courts. In these cases children may need emergency fostering placements which we provide through our team of foster carers.

Around half of the children that need foster care have at least one brother or sister and we always look at ways to keep brothers and sisters together.

It is important that children have as much stability as possible during what is often an unsettling time for them - so we generally want to keep children fairly local to their family, friends and school or nursery.

Many children are able to return home after a period in foster care, but some may move onto other family members who are able to care for them rather than their birth parents. Where it is not possible for a child to return to their own family, then we need to find a new permanent home for them. This is when we look for adopters or for longer term foster carers, depending on the needs of the children involved.

I would say to any foster carer to just be there for the children when they need you, because they’ve had a hard time and you can help give them the best life they can have.

Dan (young person)
What is fostering?

Fostering is about opening your heart and your home to children who, for whatever reason, are unable to live with their family. Foster carers provide safe, stable and nurturing homes for children and receive ongoing training and support to undertake this vital community role. Foster carers work closely with other professionals as part of our ‘team around the child’ to help children receive any additional services or help they need.

We look to match children with foster carers who can meet their needs, in regard to cultural and religious practices and provide additional training for foster carers in this area. We also work with foster carers throughout their fostering journey to explore what sort of age range, backgrounds and behaviours that children coming into care may have and match accordingly, providing support and training as required.

Children who need foster care will, most often, remain at their present school or nursery (if relevant) as often teachers or key workers are prominent and positive role models in children’s lives. Remaining in these familiar settings with their friends provides them with consistency and stability. Foster carers transport children to their school, manage contact with family members and other appointments as required. These are most often within the city boundary and we look to match children with foster carers who can undertake these tasks as a crucial part of their fostering role.

Fostering means that you are self-employed, but due to certain concessions the income for fostering rarely results in tax being payable and is disregarded for some benefits too. Read our handy ‘Tax and National Insurance Guidance’ leaflet to find out more.

Coventry City Council foster carers often say they feel a real part of a Coventry fostering community and, whether living in Coventry or surrounding areas, are automatically members of the Coventry Foster Carers’ Association which runs regular meet-ups, coffee mornings and social events. Alongside the official support (with your own dedicated social worker) and training package, there is also a wealth of informal support and social opportunities on offer. Our foster carers are also automatically members of The Fostering Network and New Family Social (a charity for LGBT carers) and can access their helplines, events and other activities.

Our foster carers attend training alongside social workers and other team members in our unique ‘team around the child’ approach. Foster carers are considered a crucial part of the team caring for children and are involved not only in decisions regarding the children, but also how services are delivered and improved, with a number of opportunities to get involved in groups looking at improvements across children’s social care, health and other areas foster carers are involved in.
Support and training for foster carers

Coventry City Council's support and training package places the child at the centre of everything we do. Foster carers are a crucial part of the 'team around the child'. Fostering with Coventry City Council and our 'team around the child' ethos means that you will get to know the different members of the team working alongside you, such as children's social workers, health colleagues, managers and, of course, your own dedicated supervising social worker.

Your supervising social worker will visit you at least every two weeks when you first start fostering, and then (according to your needs) about every four weeks. Their role is to ensure that you have the skills and support to be able to care for the children and to help you access any additional training or support services you may need. We also have a 24/7 duty line, staffed by our own team to help with any emergency issues if they arise.

All foster carers attend a 'Skills to Foster' course during their journey to becoming an approved foster carer. The training is led by our team and jointly delivered with people who have a wealth of different experiences in fostering, including existing foster carers and young people who have been fostered.

There are other training modules which cover a range of core subjects relevant to fostering and these are normally undertaken within the first year of fostering with support from your supervising social worker. This forms part of your ‘portfolio’ which is a way of acknowledging and building on your fostering journey and future options.

Most courses, particularly the 'core' modules, are undertaken as a group, therefore, allowing foster carers to discuss topics and situations and learn from each other as well as form new social support groups within the foster caring community.

There are also ‘online’ courses on specific topics which foster carers can undertake these can be handy as they can be completed at a time that suits their household.

Fostering is often referred to as a lifestyle career and although it is a very different type of role to a 'nine to five' job, it does offer career progression. You may wish to undertake additional training and become more specialist in your fostering, caring for children with more complex needs or children with specific issues which may benefit from you having some additional skills and knowledge. We will explore these options throughout your fostering journey, ensuring that you have the training and support to be able to meet the needs of the children and young people. We will always ensure that opportunities to progress your fostering career are available to you.
Different types of fostering

Children and young people are in care for a wide variety of reasons. They are looked after by foster carers who have the skills and experiences to support them. The type of fostering you could provide depends on you, your lifestyle and the needs of your own family.

In Coventry we need foster carers who can offer the following types of placement:

**Time-limited (or short-term) fostering.** This can mean anything from a few weeks to a period of several months or years. Short-term foster carers provide a temporary place to stay until the child can return home to their own family or a longer-term arrangement can be made.

**Short breaks fostering.** A short breaks foster carer cares for a child or children for a maximum of a week or two at a time, for example during school holidays, or at weekends - this is often the same child or children at regular intervals. Foster carers who offer short break fostering generally look after children who are already cared for on a full-time basis by other foster carers or at times their birth parents.

**Long-term fostering.** 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, whilst maintaining contact with their birth family.

**Parent and baby fostering.** These placements are for a new parent (most often the mother) and their child. The foster carer provides a safe, family-based placement for a new parent who needs some support in caring for child.

**Specialist fostering.** Sometimes we need to recruit carers to support children with complex emotional and behavioural problems and need carers who can provide skilled foster care in a family home setting. Due to the specific nature of these schemes we would recommend that you call our team or come along to one of our events to find out more.

"It doesn’t matter what a person’s background is - married, single, gay, straight, home owner or not - what matters is that foster carers can be understanding, can see things from the child’s perspective and be prepared to advocate and support the children and, despite any challenges that they may need to overcome, can recognise the potential in a child."

Sarah (Social Worker)
Time-limited (or short-term) fostering

Time-limited, or ‘short-term’ fostering means caring for a child or children in your stable, loving home 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.

About half of all children who need foster care have at least one brother or sister who we will place together with a foster carer whenever that is possible.

Children who come into care need stability, support and nurture while other professionals are working with their parents or relatives to assess, and if possible resolve, domestic or parental issues which are preventing children from living safely at home. Children might also need a time limited foster placement because their current foster carers’ circumstances have changed and they aren’t able to care for them any more, it could be that a more permanent foster placement is being found for them, or their parent or carer is unwell and there is no one else who can care for them at that time.

In some cases, time limited foster carer placements change into longer term arrangements if all parties agree that this is the best thing for the child.

Most placements occur in a planned way, with the approximate length of placement known. However, a time-limited foster carer who is awaiting a placement will normally, with their agreement, be placed on the register to be available to respond to urgent or short notice requirements for foster placements as there are occasions where placements are needed urgently and introductions are not possible. In both situations you will be fully supported by the ‘team around the child’ to ensure the placement is a success.

In time-limited fostering, a foster carer is relied upon to provide a safe, nurturing secure place to live while a child carries on their day to day life, continuing to attend their same school (if appropriate) and see their friends and family wherever possible.

Most foster care in Coventry are ‘approved’ to care for children aged 0-18, but based on their skills and experience some foster carers state a preference for a particular age range. During the assessment and matching we also take into consideration the needs of the children and also the fostering family and any children already in the household.

All time-limited foster carers have their own allocated social worker and access to 24 hour support. Foster carers will also, during a placement, work alongside the child’s social worker to assess the child’s support needs and to plan for the long-term future of the child.

Foster carers are a crucial part of the team of professionals who work with children to help them develop and reach their potential. Foster carers attend a number of meetings and act as an advocate for the child where needed.

Coventry needs more foster carers, including time-limited carers and we would welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you may have.

“I’m a single foster carer and have my own daughter - fostering has allowed me to spend more time at home with her.”

“We’ve been foster carers for a number of years now, some have been short-term placements and some have been long term. We have enjoyed the variety that time limited fostering has brought to our family.”
Short breaks fostering

Short breaks foster care is a fostering placement for a short, limited time only. A short breaks foster carer cares for a child or children for a maximum of a week or two at a time, for example during school holidays, or at weekends - this is often the same child or children at regular intervals. Foster carers who offer short break fostering generally look after children who are already cared for on a full-time basis by other foster carers or, at times, their birth parents.

Short break fostering is required in a number of different circumstances. For example, a ‘full-time’ foster carer may have urgent family commitments or a particular situation which means they are unable to care for the child or children as they normally would.

Children who require short breaks fostering most often have a disability, additional needs or a particularly challenging behavioural issue which means the parents or carers are under considerable pressure and would benefit from a break.

Short break fostering involves working closely with the full-time carer or parent.

Children are aware that the short break placement will only be for a short time period and that they will be returning to their usual home afterwards and often see their respite placements as a mini holiday or adventure!

Short break placements play a really crucial role in supporting children and their families and are a great opportunity to have the dedicated time and energy to involve the child or children in different experiences and opportunities which they may not have access to in their everyday home.

Crucially, short break care also helps the long-term stability of their normal placement or home by providing a ‘recharge’ moment for the family.

Short break fostering is extremely important to the wellbeing of many families and can make a real difference to children’s lives. Short break carers often care for the same child on a regular basis, so although not ‘full-time fostering’ it can be a long-term commitment and matching children with the right fostering family is very important.

Coventry needs more foster carers, including short break carers, and would welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you may have.

“We wanted to start fostering alongside our existing work commitments. Being short break carers means we can provide focused support for a young person and their family. We care for the same young person once a month, it’s fun and we feel it makes a real difference to us all.”
Some children need long-term foster placements when it has been decided that their parents or relatives are not in a position to be able to meet their needs now and in the longer term. It might be that for a variety of reasons, adoption is not an option and we need nurturing, long-term foster carers who can provide a stable, loving home for children and young people until they reach adulthood. Most children who need long-term fostering will be aged 10 and over, but sometimes they might be younger, especially if we want to keep brothers and sisters together. Around half of all Coventry children who require foster care have at least one brother or sister and should be placed together.

When children are placed for long-term fostering they usually stay with foster carers until they are adults, although there are occasions when they can return back to their families in a planned way. This type of fostering is, therefore, a long-term commitment. The children will probably move school to be closer to your home and so they can create friendship groups close by. Often, and with social worker support, foster carers help children keep in contact with significant family and friends.

As with all fostering schemes, foster carers have their own allocated social worker and access to 24 hour support. Foster carers will also work alongside the child’s social worker to assess the child’s support needs and to plan for the long-term future of the child, including preparing them for independence. Long-term carers continue to receive the weekly allowances, equipment, support and training as necessary.

Children needing long-term foster carers are carefully matched to make sure that the foster carers can meet their needs, both in the short and longer term, and that children will fit in with the fostering family. Coventry needs more long-term foster carers and would welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you may have.

My foster carers helped me a lot - if it wasn’t for them I’d probably be on the streets or doing other things that I shouldn’t.
Dan (young person)

We have been long-term foster carers for the same two girls for about 12 years. The highs are seeing the children flourish and achieve things that they would never have dreamed of... Being with them when they collect their exam results and seeing the happiness on their faces when they see their passes and they finally believe in themselves.

Some of the challenges are helping them believe in themselves. Trying to get them to believe that they can do it, they are worth it and that they are worthy of being loved and happy.
Parent and baby fostering

Parent and baby foster care placements offer a home to a baby or young child together with their parent - most often the mother. They are also sometimes known as mother and baby placements. The aim of this scheme is to provide a safe, family-based placement for a new parent who needs some support in learning to care for their child. It may be that the parent is young themselves and has not had an easy family life or support around them at home and lacks positive role-modelling from friends and family.

Parent and child foster carers provide the crucial support and consistency that a young parent needs with reassurance, guidance and support during the transition to parenting. As a foster carer, you would be helping them to develop their own parenting skills and confidence whilst ensuring the child was in a safe, secure and nurturing environment.

The foster carer does not necessarily provide parental care (except if required but helps and encourages the parent to develop their skills sometimes they describe this as ‘mothering the mother’ - and can include help with how to care for the baby safely and help the baby to grow and develop. The foster carer also has an important role observing and recording how the parent looks after the child and works with other professionals to identify additional support which may be needed in the future.

Foster carers receive support from their own allocated social worker and work alongside the young person and child’s social worker in meetings and in putting together information which can help in assessing how the parent is able to meet the child’s needs. For this a good level of English is required.

This kind of fostering placement is often an alternative to a more institutional mother and baby unit and usually results from a court referral, but not always. Placements generally last 12-24 weeks but may be extended if longer term support is needed. The parent and child benefit from experiencing parenting in a nurturing family environment and the young parents gain tremendously from the support and advice offered by the foster carer which at times can be the first positive experience of parenting and family life they have experienced. It also enables some young mothers to complete their schooling or to have a job.

Parent and child fostering can be very rewarding, but is also complex and challenging and due to this there are additional fees and allowances offered to foster carers who are able to offer their commitment to this crucial role. Parent and baby foster carers make a real difference to the lives of children.
In Coventry we are dedicated to ensuring our children, wherever appropriate, should be near to their family, friends and school whilst in foster care. Fostering for your local authority is shown to give children the best chance of staying local, which benefits the children by giving them as much stability as possible during what can be an unsettling time. It is also more practical for the whole fostering family to stay local by having shorter journeys to school, medical appointments, contact with family and other appointments.

Fostering for your local authority means that you are our first choice when we are finding foster placements for children. We always look to place Coventry children with our own team of foster carers before looking further afield. This means you are much more likely to have regular, local placements with us than an external agency. This also means that the crucial investments made into fostering remain in the city benefiting Coventry children, birth and fostering families.

Choosing which local authority to foster with may involve speaking to, or meeting the team, (we hold regular ‘meet the team’ information sessions across the city) to get an idea of what it would be like to work as part of that team. You may also need to consider how a particular geographical area may work better for you. For instance would you be able to transport children to school easily throughout that area?

We are committed to expanding our team of foster carers and have made significant changes and improvements to our fees, allowances and additional payments. As with most local authorities, we follow The Fostering Network’s advice on separating out a ‘skills fee’ (which is paid to foster carers for their role as a foster carer) and the ‘maintenance allowance’ (which is paid to carers to cover the cost of caring for the children). Both figures may need to be added together alongside other additional benefits and allowances which we can talk through with you if you need to make any comparisons.

If you are already a foster carer we would welcome the opportunity to chat with you about transferring to us and will work with you to explore the best way to welcome you swiftly to become part of our ‘team around the child.’

Fostering for Coventry means that we know we are helping Coventry children to maintain close relationships with their family and friends. As we are local, the children have short journeys to school and to visit their extended family.

There are local foster carer meet-ups, support groups, coffee mornings and lots of other activities. It’s a lot more social than I thought.

Fostering for Coventry means you are part of the team of professionals caring for the children.

Fostering for Coventry
I have been a foster carer with Coventry City Council for about 14 years now, I guess I didn’t have much choice about coming into fostering as my wife had already been fostering for nearly 20 years when we met!

We have had a number of different types of placement over the years and more recently we have been receiving young people who have come into the country without their family - known as ‘unaccompanied minors’ - fleeing war in their country of origin. It has been a joy to watch them master a new language, attend and complete a basic level of education and then go on to spread their wings knowing you are there if they need help and support. One young person we had could not speak a word of English when he arrived, didn’t know what running water, electricity or even a bed was. We supported him in completing a good basic education and to pass both his written and practical driving tests. He now has a full-time job and runs his own home which has been an amazing achievement for him.

There are challenges to fostering such as when you meet a child for the first time and there is an element of fear as well as stepping into the unknown. You only really begin to understand the child or young person after you have got to know each other better and they feel comfortable enough to feel part of the family (although this can also be when some learned behaviours reappear too!)

I have found there are particular challenges and rewards being a male carer. If a young person, particularly girls, have had difficulties with birth fathers, step fathers or other male role models in their life they can understandably be more wary around men and it can take a long time before the young person can learn to trust or accept me as a positive support for them. I think it is always important to consider why they might find some situations difficult, and have an empathy with them - ultimately you are fostering to make a difference and help support children and young people so the relationship and trust that you build with them will be led by them and it is in their own time that they feel ready to trust you and open up about their feelings. I think they also learn they probably get a fairer or easier deal from me!

The rewards of fostering far outweigh the challenges though and without meaning to sound too ‘twee’, you are making such a difference to Coventry’s children and young people. Seeing them make small but confident steps on their own journey, watching them grow and develop within the stability you give them. You can’t solve all their problems, or make everything better but you can give them a belief in themselves and be a role model for their future lives and own families going forward. That’s what makes it all worthwhile!
Adele’s fostering journey

I had worked with children and families previously and was looking for an opportunity to use my existing skills in a way that could offer me more flexibility and a better work/life balance. Being a single parent working full-time, I struggled with balancing work, parenting and childcare and simply wanted to be around for my child more. I also have an elderly parent and fostering affords me more time to visit her. I had thought about fostering many times before, but had never seriously looked into it until 2013 when I decided to research it and go through the process.

For me, one of the big issues was the financial support on offer as you can’t rely on the fostering allowance as it is only paid when you have children in placement. I left a permanent role so as a single foster carer the fostering allowance would be an important source of income so it was a huge decision. Finding out that some benefits discount fostering income, and the tax thresholds for fostering are different, meant that fostering could work for me financially too.

Meeting other foster carers at Skills to Foster has been an invaluable source of support to me. Although my social worker meets up with me regularly for supervision and I go on lots of training courses, there is nothing quite like having someone who is going through the same thing as you to be a listening ear sometimes!

When I moved on my first child to adoption, my foster caring friend and social worker helped me through the challenge of letting go. Being part of a team of foster carers means you can chat through the challenges and celebrate the successes. When a child is able to cope with something for the first time, or develops a new skill or confidence, they understand and can share that joy.

We have recently worked with Coventry City Council and the Coventry Foster Carers’ Association and set up a coffee and chat support group which social workers and other people come along to, as well as other Coventry foster carers. I think this is something that has really helped foster carers feel part of a close ‘team around the children’, working together to support Coventry children - and each other!

“I’m a single foster carer and have my own daughter - fostering has allowed me to spend more time at home with her.”
I first came into the care system when I was eight and initially had a couple of moves between foster households and extended family in the first years, and this was really unsettling for me. My mum, and then my dad passed away during this time and when I now look back at this period I realise how scary and confusing life often felt. Moving foster placements is not good as you have to start all over again with building relationships with people and it is hard to get used to living somewhere different. If you change areas and schools you also have to make new friends which is often harder when you can feel different because of your circumstances.

I moved in with my last foster carers when I was 14 and straight away they welcomed me and really made me feel part of the family. I was treated the same as their other children and they were, and continue to be, interested in me and my future. They encouraged me to do well in my studying and acted as a role model and mentor for me during those sometime tricky teenage moments!

Simple things foster carers can do are just be there for the young person, sit down at the dinner table together, treat them as part of the family and give them the chance to talk and open up about things that are troubling them. And they can take an interest in what they are doing, encourage them to believe in themselves and build their confidence and aspirations.

Children and young people who are in foster care are just like other children - but through no fault of their own they’ve had a tricky start to their lives - and they need to have people around them, foster carers, social workers and their family and friends - to help them work through some of the issues and learn to view themselves and their future in a positive way. For me, contact with my godmother has always been really important as she is a link to my mum and my identity - seeing everyone talking and working together to support you as a young person in care is really crucial to your understanding of your own sense of identity.

What’s great about my foster carers is that even though I have lived independently since I was 17 I have always been able to call them and ask them what often feel like simple questions, like ‘How do you register to vote?’, ‘How do you bleed a radiator?’ things that other young people finding their feet normally find out from their family.

I’m now 19 and I volunteer with a charity that helps people with disabilities go on holiday. Just this year I have started studying at university to become a social worker, although I’m hoping that once I’ve finished studying I will take a gap year and do some travelling before I start full-time work.

My foster carers have shared in my achievements, as well as my self-doubts and challenges, and continue to be a really important relationship in my life. I know my foster-dad was over the moon when I passed my first set of university exams and hearing the pride in his voice when I phoned him to tell him the results made me cry!

What I would say to anyone considering becoming a fostering household is that you need empathy and patience and to understand that things may take longer time for a child to develop. Because of stuff that has happened in their past it can take longer to process or feel comfortable with things.

Being in foster care has given me some really positive role models in my life. My foster carers have had a massive influence on my future. The experience in my foster family will help me be a good parent to my own family one day too. I would say that being a foster carer is a big commitment but I bet there aren’t many other roles where you can make such a huge difference to children and young people – and to your own life too.
I’ve been fostering for nearly 35 years, having come into fostering from a nursing background. My mum had worked in one of the old children’s homes in Coventry and so I had a good understanding of the care system too and really enjoyed working with children. Fostering was very different then, and I have been pleased over the years to see it considered much more as a recognised professional role with options for young people over 18 to stay more formally with carers if they wish.

Over the years we’ve had a wide variety of different placements which have all had their unique challenges and rewards. We have had parent and child placements, short break care, young children who have moved onto adoption through to asylum seekers in their teens and several teenagers who have stayed with us until their 20s.

There are of course different challenges to fostering. Most often children haven’t had much routine or stability in their lives and struggle with what may seem to others as straightforward issues such as showering and getting ready for school, eating a varied diet or getting ready for bed at an age-appropriate time. Some of the practical things need to be considered for fostering, such as getting children to school, taking children to contact with their family and being there for them when they want to talk - the ongoing training really helps you to understand how this might feel for a young person and how you can best support them.

A lot of the challenges though are actually similar to any parenting role – not wanting to go to bed on time or wanting to watch television instead of doing homework!

But the rewards certainly add up too! It’s great when you build up a good relationship with each other and they start to learn to trust you.

Sometime just little things like being able to let them choose new clothes and seeing them taking pride in their appearance. Seeing them gaining in confidence and starting to achieve in school and make positive relationships with people and after some time supporting them to start to make sense of their past and discussing it with you.

There are also the longer term differences that you know you are helping to make - for me a definite highlight has been becoming a proud ‘Foster Grandma!’ Helping a young person as they become a parent, knowing that because of your support and care that they will be able to care and do the best for their own, new family.

We have seen with pride children grow and develop into successful, confident young people, travel and work overseas, complete degrees, go into their dream jobs and become competent parents themselves – despite the difficult start they had had in life.

What would I say to someone on why they should consider fostering?

You will make a huge difference to the lives of children and young people who need a caring home whether it be for one night or 10 years!
**Your Fostering Journey**

**Welcome**

- **Initial visit - one of our team visits you at home**

**Social worker**

- **Social worker completes your assessment report and shares this with you**

**Agency Decision Maker**

- **Agency Decision Maker - makes the decision about approving you as a foster carer**

**Consider whether to continue**

**Social Workers Visits**

- **Social Workers Visits - your allocated social worker will visit you around 6-8 times to complete your assessment**

**Panel - You are invited to come along to the fostering panel who make a recommendation for you about fostering**

**Consider whether to continue**

**Checks and References**

- **Checks and References - we undertake a number of checks and references (such as medical / DBS)**

**Attend ‘Skills to Foster’ training course with other potential foster carers**

**Consider**

- **Consider whether to continue**

**Ongoing Training**

- **Ongoing Training - you continue with training, six core modules to be completed in the first year**

**You continue your fostering journey with ongoing support and training**

- **Panel**
- **Agency Decision Maker**
- **Checks and References**
- **Skills to Foster**
- **Ongoing Training**

**Approx 4 to 6 months to this point**

- **You are now a registered Coventry City Council Foster Carer and a member of the Coventry Foster Carers’ Association and Fostering Network**

- **You meet your supervising social worker who will provide you with ongoing support and also advice and guidance**

- **First of your placements - you, your supervising social worker, the child’s social worker and others work together as a team around the child**

- **Welcome**

- **Apply online**
- **Call us**

- **Tel: 024 7683 2828 | www.coventry.gov.uk/fostering**
What makes a good foster carer?

Foster carers bring all sorts of different skills and life experiences to fostering and we work with foster carers and the ‘team around the child’ to match the needs of the children with foster carers.

If you aren’t sure if you are eligible to foster, please have a chat with the team.

Coventry City Council foster carers need:

- A spare room (unless caring for babies under 2 years)
- Time and energy to care for a child (this will be different depending on their age)
- Generally good and stable physical and emotional health
- Some previous childcare experience, through family, work or as a volunteer
- The ability to transport a child or children to different appointments and school (if applicable)
- Spoken and written English (to be able to talk at meetings about the children’s needs and help children develop)

What are you good at?

Skills that also help make a good foster carer are

- Being a good listener
- Asking for help if you need it
- Being organised
- The ability to get on and work with different people
- Problem solving approach
- Being understanding of how other people might be feeling
- Patience
- And a sense of humour

Next steps

Thank you for your interest in fostering for Coventry City Council. Coventry needs more foster carers to help care for Coventry children.

We are here to help you with any more information you need to consider joining our team. If you have any further questions, or feel ready to start your fostering journey with us, please:

- Come along to one of our ‘meet the team’ information sessions. Details are on our website www.coventry.gov.uk/fostering
- Call the team on 024 7683 2828
- Email us at familyplacementservice@coventry.gov.uk

We can then arrange to visit you at home and start your fostering journey!

Time to make a difference.
Together we can give children a childhood.

Your home visit is booked for: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………

For more information call the friendly team on 024 7683 2828
www.coventry.gov.uk/fostering
Coventry needs more foster carers.

It’s time to make a difference.

FOSTER FOR COVENTRY