

The Parent & Baby Fostering Scheme – Keeping Families Together



WHAT IS THE PARENTING AND BABY FOSTERING SCHEME?

In Parent and Baby fostering, specially trained and supported foster carers support and advise the parent(s) who are placed with them in how to care for their baby.

The purpose of the scheme is to try to keep families together by giving the parent(s) an opportunity to learn how to safely care for their babies. The aim is to return the families to their own homes with support where possible.

WHAT DOES PARENT AND BABY SCHEME FOSTERING INVOLVE?

- A care plan will be identified in agreement with the Child Care Social Worker, with clear goals for each particular placement. Other professionals may be involved such as family support workers, health visitors or assessment social workers who will work with the carer to try and achieve the best results for the parent and child.
- Carers will be supported by their own Supervising Social Worker from the Fostering Support Team. Regular meetings will be held at the carers' home in order to monitor the care plan.
- Parents will be expected to care for their child. Carers will however be expected to take action if the baby is at risk for any reason.
- In return carers receive an allowance to cover the cost of having a parent and baby in their home.



WHAT KIND OF QUALITIES/QUALIFICATIONS DO PARENT AND BABY FOSTER CARERS NEED?

Carers will need to have good interpersonal skills, patience, understanding and previous practical parenting experience, in addition to the following:

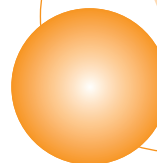
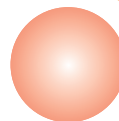
- Ability to work well with parents and professionals
- Ability to recognise and report issues concerning any risk to the welfare of a baby or child
- Ability to give concise and clear instructions and receive information in both written and verbal formats
- Flexibility and tolerance
- A good sense of humour

WHO CAN BE A PARENT AND BABY CARER?

Carers will need to offer a large room which allows the parent sufficient space and privacy and will need to be willing to share their bathroom and kitchen.

The following would not prevent an applicant from applying to become a carer on the scheme:

- **Age** – there is no upper age limit, although you must be at least 21 years of age. With all applicants, whatever your age we will need to ensure that you are fit and healthy enough to carry out the tasks involved.
- **Disability** – every application will be considered and an assessment made as to the nature and severity of your disability with regard to fulfilling the obligations of the scheme.
- **Gender**
- **Sexual orientation**
- **Relationship status**
- **Home owner status** – You can apply to foster regardless of whether you own or rent your home. However you will need to show that you are in secure housing. The house must have enough space to accommodate your own family and the parent and baby. You will also need to inform your landlord and your insurance company of your intention to foster.



WHAT WOULD STOP SOMEONE BEING A PARENT AND BABY FOSTER CARER?

You cannot become a foster carer if you have a criminal record which includes offences against children. However, other previous convictions do not necessarily exclude you from fostering but consideration would have to be given about your ability to provide the care required.

Due to the emphasis on supervision and observation, one person must be available during the day to support and monitor the parent. So if you live in a household where yourself or your partner both work full time in a nine to five job and are unavailable during the day, this type of foster caring may not be appropriate for you.

HOW DO I BECOME A PARENT AND BABY FOSTER CARER?

1. Application forms for the scheme can be requested from the Fostering Recruitment Team on 0800 0933699 or are contained within fostering information packs where available.
2. Once your application form is received, a social worker from the fostering recruitment team will contact you to arrange to visit you at your home
3. During this initial assessment visit you will be asked to provide information which will allow us to advise you as to whether or not you may be a suitable Parent and Baby Foster Carer.
4. You may be asked to provide consent for us to begin some checks, such as health reports from your GP, references from employers etc
5. If all is well at this stage, you will be invited to attend a preparation training course which is run over 3 days and usually takes place on Saturdays.
6. Once you have attended the course your social worker will let you know if there are any issues which need to be addressed or whether you will continue onto the full assessment phase where you will be allocated an assessing social worker who will visit you at your home to gather all the necessary information about you and your family. *(Although this may sound rather daunting, we ask you to remember that our responsibility is to ensure that the children in our care are safe and that carers and parent and baby placements are matched appropriately).*



7. When the assessment is complete the social worker will make a recommendation to the fostering panel as to whether or not you should be approved as a foster carer. You will have the opportunity to read the report and make your own comments.
8. The fostering panel which is made up of a selection of people who have links and experience with fostering and the community, will then agree or disagree with the recommendation made by your assessing social worker and the final decision about whether you are approved as a foster carer will be made by the Head of Children's Services.
9. The outcome will be confirmed to you in writing.

WHAT HAPPENS THEN?

- After approval you will be introduced to your supervising social worker who will be your support and guide throughout your time as a foster carer with this service, and will be involved in placing parents and children with you.
- You will work with the Fostering Support Team who will be responsible for your placements.
- You will be given the opportunity of further ongoing training, as well as access to help and support from experienced foster carers who offer their knowledge and experience via the Foster Carer Mentoring Scheme.



CONTACT DETAILS

If you would like to receive an application pack or would like to have an informal discussion about becoming a Parent and Baby Carer then please contact the Fostering Recruitment Team on 0800 0933699.

Alternatively you can write to:

The Fostering Recruitment Team
Lime Grove House
Lime Grove Avenue
Carmarthen
SA31 1SW

Or visit the website www.fostering@carmarthenshire.org.uk

IF YOU WOULD LIKE THIS IN LARGE PRINT,
BRAILLE OR ON AUDIOTAPE, PLEASE
TELEPHONE 01267 228925.

INFORMATION ABOUT SERVICES PROVIDED BY
CARMARTHESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CAN
BE FOUND ON THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE:
WWW.CARMARTHESHIRE.GOV.UK

