



# Foster Carer Training

With you every step of the way

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your fostering advice service

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There is no requirement for any prospective foster carer to have any prior training or qualifications as all training will be provided by the fostering service. All Fostering Service Providers are expected to ensure that approved carers are trained in the skills required to provide high quality care and meet the needs of each child or young person placed in their care.

The National Minimum Standards 2011(NMS) includes standard 20.1 – 20.11 that addresses the Learning & Development of Foster Carers with the stated outcome that:

***“Foster carers receive the training and development they need to carry out their role effectively. A clear framework of training and development is in place and this is used as the basis for assessing foster carers’ performance and identifying their training and development needs”.***

[Find out more about the National Minimum Standards here.](#)

This training will include:

- Pre-approval training usually completed as part of the assessment process by the fostering service and may take place in face-to-face sessions with other prospective carers or virtually. This will consider the role of the foster carer, the needs of looked after children and the role of other professionals
- Kinship/connected person/family and friends foster carers may be required to complete specified training as part of the approval process or following approval-ask the fostering service for a copy of the Training Policy that should clarify what is required and any ongoing training that will be needed. Family and friends foster carers should be able to access training provided to other carers but the fostering service should also provide training that addresses their particular needs (NMS 30.11)
- Short break foster carers may be offered specific training tailored to their role depending on the policy of the fostering service.

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- Induction training-each fostering service will have specific induction training for new carers (NMS 20.1) that may include safeguarding, recording skills etc.
- Ongoing core training-this may be a mix of mandatory and optional courses to assist foster carers in their ongoing development. The National Minimum Standards require safer caring training to be provided to all members of the fostering household including young people of sufficient age and understanding and ensures foster carers can apply these principles in a way that meets children's individual needs (NMS 20.9)

You may also be provided with the opportunity to attend:

- Ongoing specialist training linked to your role and development. An example of this may be specific training linked to a child's medical needs.
- Professional vocational training

If there are two adults in the household approved as foster carers there will be an expectation that both carers attend relevant training. Fostering services may have a Training Policy that will specify expectations in relation to training and this may include a stated minimum number of training sessions that carers will each need to attend.

Foster carers are required to maintain an ongoing training and development portfolio (NMS 20.4). Foster carers will also have a personal development plan setting how they will be supported to undertake ongoing training appropriate to their needs (NMS 20.5). The annual review of a foster carer will include consideration of training and development needs and the effectiveness of training and development received is evaluated and the personal development plans is also reviewed. (NMS 20.6).

Some training may be arranged to take place at evening and weekends for prospective foster carers. Training sessions may take place in face-to-face sessions or virtually and some training courses may involve online learning. If you need support in accessing virtual or online learning the fostering service may be able to assist with this. Foster carers who are attending training during the day and have children in their care may be able to access childcare provision please contact your supervising social worker to discuss what may be available. All training provided is required to fit into "a framework of equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice and is organised to encourage and facilitate attendance by foster carers"(NMS 20.11)



## The Training, Support and Development Standards (TSD)

All foster carers are required to complete the Training Support and Development Standards (NMS 20.3). There are different timeframes for completion with foster carers required to attain this within 12 months of approval and family and friends foster carers required to complete within 18 months of approval. There are separate workbook and portfolio requirements for foster carers, family and friends foster carers and short break foster carers. Check with your supervising social worker if you are unsure which workbook to complete. Fostering households may use the same evidence workbook so do not need to complete this individually but fostering services may wish to see evidence of engagement by both carers.

The Training, Support and Development (TSD) standards form part of a your induction in the role.

They provide a national minimum benchmark that sets out what foster carers should know, understand and be able to do within the first 12-18 months after being approved. You can present your evidence in a range of ways. The most important thing is that you evidence all of the standards under each of the headings.

The TSD standards are part of the Ofsted inspection criteria and in 2011 they became part of the National Minimum Standards too. Supervisors play a key role helping foster carers complete the TSD standards within the required timescales. Foster carers may be unsure of what's expected of them and sometimes feel overwhelmed, especially if they've not undertaken any qualifications in recent years.

There are a lot of useful case studies and examples on line, and your fostering service may set up a group for likeminded carers completing their workbook.

**[Contact us here.](#)**

**Don't be afraid to ask for help!**

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**Please see link to Department for Education website containing downloadable workbooks:**

*<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/training-support-and-developmentstandards-for-foster-care-evidence-workbook>*

*<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-foster-carers>*

**FOSTER CARERS:** *<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/training-support-and-development-standards-for-foster-care-evidence-workbook>*

**FAMILY AND FRIENDS FOSTER CARERS:** *<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/training-support-and-development-standards-for-family-and-friends-foster-carers>*

**SHORT BREAK FOSTER CARERS:** *<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/induction-guide-for-the-short-break-workforce>*

Training may be linked to the foster carer skill/fee/ reward payments in some fostering services. Foster carers can ask to see copies of the relevant policies in relation to this such as the Training Policy or the Payment Policy that will include details of criteria for calculating any payments (NMS 28.5). If a foster carer moves to another fostering service, then details of training undertaken and the extent to which agreed training and standards have been met are made available when requested by the new fostering service and the carer is able to take their training and development portfolio with them (NMS 20.11).

## **Family and Friends Carers (Kinship Carers)**

The term "Kinship Care " means the care given by relatives or friends aged 18 or over, to children with whom they have an existing relationship.

As family and friends (kinship) carers, you may often take care of children at short notice and in difficult circumstances, therefore the deadline for them to complete the standards has been extended. Those who are new to fostering a family member or a friend's child have up to 18 months to complete the standards.

A shorter version of the TSD standards workbook is available to use with family and friends (kinship) carers. This may also be used with Support Carers.

The workbook you fill in depends upon the type of carer you are. Links to the different types of workbooks and information about how to complete them can be found here:

### **Family & Friends Foster Carers**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/training-support-and-developmentstandards-for-family-and-friends-foster-carers>

### **Short Break Carers**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/induction-guide-for-the-short-breakworkforce>





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