



**Supports Foster Carers to provide Safety,  
Stability and Hope to Children**

# About Us

*"This is a good fostering agency where children and young people experience positive outcomes and are safe and well cared for as a result of a good quality service and robust safeguarding systems."*

*Ofsted Inspection Report 2014*

## ***Anchor is a not-for-profit Independent Fostering Agency***

*Our Head Office is in Medway, Kent. We have teams of staff and foster carers in Kent, East Sussex, South London, North of London and the Midlands.*

*Anchor was co-founded in 2002 by two qualified social workers who are still Directors. Our agency is small enough to know all our foster carers and children personally, and large enough to have an effective professional structure.*

***Our mission is to provide children and young people in foster care with safety, stability and hope.***

*Through our committed foster carers and their families, hardworking staff and other professionals we offer a child-centred fostering service with a family focus.*

*We provide regular holiday and social activities for families and their foster children plus a comprehensive 24/7 support, 21 days paid holiday, free training and a generous reward package for foster carers.*



“In the beginning, when we were thinking of fostering, it was hard to know who to work with. Do we go with local authority or an agency? After many phone calls and meetings with agencies Anchor came to visit. After we had our first meeting with Anchor Foster Care all the worries and doubts were gone. We had this amazing image in our head of how we were going to help, and we knew Anchor were the right agency for us.” - Foster Carers, Sam and Jamie

# What is Fostering?

*Fostering means providing a home for children and young people who are not able to stay with their families for any reason. Foster carers and their families provide more than a home – they provide love, and a nurturing and stable environment for children and young people to develop.*

## **This could mean:**



*Taking in children and providing them with a loving home through to the age of 18, or supporting children for a few months or years. It could also just mean offering respite care during weekends or holidays.*

*Setting realistic boundaries to provide a stable family life whilst respecting the individual culture, needs, abilities and feelings of each child.*

*Supporting children's education, health and social development outside the home. Foster carers are likely to have contact with the child's family and other professionals such as teachers and therapists.*

***"I don't see them as foster children, they are part of my family."***

***Teresa & Desmond,  
Foster Carers***



# Who Could I Foster?

*"I'd like to be a foster carer when I grow up. I want to look after other children, just like Sally takes care of me now. She is amazing, and I really love my new home."*

*Marianne,  
Foster Child aged 14*

***Thousands of children and young people of all ages and different backgrounds come into care each year, so new foster carers with diverse skills and backgrounds are always needed.***

*You could foster any child or young person from the age of 0-18. It is more likely that you will care for a child or young person who is between the age of 5-18, as the majority of our placements are within this age range. We do discuss this with you at one of our visits, and we ask that you are open minded about age.*

*You could also foster a parent and their child. These are called parent and child placements and are usually a young mum and baby. It is rare but it could include both parents or just the male parent. These are usually assessment placements for up to 12 weeks to see if the parent can cope on their own.*

*Whatever their background, age or ability, these children deserve a safe and stable home and good parenting.*





“Sometimes you have to teach the mother to be a mother. The best part for me of doing parent and baby is seeing a change. It’s such a great feeling. I worked with a mother and baby where the baby was on the risk register. Within 6 months the baby was off the risk register. They now have their own place and the mother has a job. It’s very rewarding helping the mother knowing that they can go on to be independent.” - Foster Carer, Vivien

# Types of Placement

*Our dedicated referral team know our carers well, and use this detailed knowledge and experience to help ensure best matches. The right match reduces the number of times a child moves home and contributes to a much better future for the children in care. A child in care is called a 'Placement'.*

*Our placements are on two levels, standard and specialist, depending on the needs of each child or young person. The types of placements we offer are:*

**Assessment Placements** – Including parent & child up to 12 weeks for assessment

**Long-term and Permanent** – until children reach 18 years old

**Short-term** – up to two years

**Respite (Short-break)** – a few days or weeks maybe during holidays

**Emergency** – care at short notice for a few days or weeks

**Bridging** – up to two years during a care transition

**Sole** – when a child needs to be placed alone

**Unaccompanied Minors** – for displaced migrant children

**Specialist** – including therapeutic and disability

*Anchor has contracts with local authorities, meaning we receive hundreds of 'Referrals' every week for children and young people to potentially match and place with our carers.*



***"One particular strength of Anchor is its placement stability, which compares favourably with other independent fostering agencies. For the last three years the percentage of unplanned endings was below the national average."***

***Ofsted Inspection Report 2014***

# Can I Foster?

**Anyone can foster.** As long as you are over 21, have a spare room and can provide safety, stability and hope. Many people are quick to assume that they may not be able to foster. Having a criminal record, manageable health issue or disability does not exclude you from applying. You can find out more when talking with our recruitment team.

*Warmth, kindness, energy, commitment, humour and empathy are good attributes for foster carers.*

*Most importantly, you must be able to offer a home and family environment that is safe, stable and offers children and young people hope for the future.*

*"I thought I was too old to apply for fostering at 64, but I've loved every single solitary second. I'm now 77 and I've fostered three teenagers successfully to adulthood."*

*Joyce,  
Foster Carer*





# Now let's bust some of these myths:

*I'm in my 20's,  
can I foster?*



*I'm single,  
can I foster?*



*I'm over 55,  
can I foster?*



*I have children,  
foster?*



*Do I have to  
have a spare  
room to foster?*



*I haven't  
got children,  
can I foster?*



*I wasn't born  
in the UK,  
can I foster?*



*I rent  
(private/council)  
can I foster?*



# The answer is **YES!**

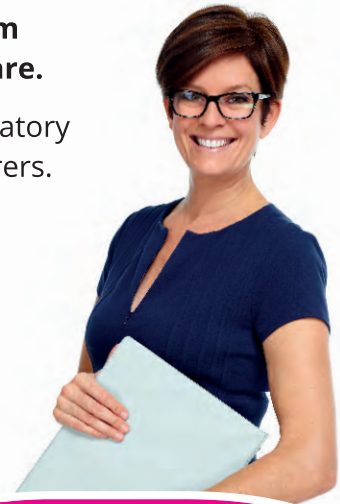
# What Training can you expect?

**The children and young people that come into care have suffered from separation, loss or abuse, and may not understand why they are in care.**

We provide a top quality comprehensive training schedule including mandatory training, plus a variety of specialist training, free of charge to our foster carers.

During assessment, foster carers complete 3 days of training, including Skills to Foster, The Role of the Foster Carer and Child Protection & Safeguarding. After approval this is followed by further mandatory training in First Aid, Safeguarding, Valuing Diversity and Managing Challenging Behaviour.

We also train all our carers in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention For Families, (TCIF) so carers are better prepared and fully supported in handling difficult behaviour. We also offer other specialist training when needed.



*Training is very important for the development of carers, so all carers are required to complete and renew training periodically.*

*"The training is brilliant. I love training, it keeps me going. Every little training benefits both me and my children."*

*Sabeela,  
Foster Carer*

# What Support can you expect?

*Anchor is a small, family-run and family-focused agency. We know all our foster carers, their families and our foster children well, and we offer a highly personalised support service. We celebrate birthdays, special occasions and achievements with flowers, gifts and recognition for all our carers, children and staff.*

***We provide a generous fostering allowance of up to £736 per week depending on the type of placement.***

*Anchor will assign you a dedicated Supervising Social Worker (SSW), who will visit, support you, attend meetings with you, and contact you regularly.*

*We pay for carers' membership of The Fostering Network, giving you access to advice, insurance, legal advice and support services.*

***Our carers are never left to cope alone in a difficult situation. There is always a Manager and SSW on duty to help.***

***We provide regular support groups and social activities for carers. We run regular holiday, half term and seasonal activities for children and provide our carers with 21 days paid respite each year.***

*We provide professional training before and after approval, and on-going support from dedicated Anchor staff 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.*

# What Happens Next?

We will check you are in an area we are recruiting and if you have a spare room.

**We will then ask you some questions to start your enquiry.**

If you are happy and we are happy, we will proceed to arrange an initial visit.

**We will come for an initial visit to meet you, see your spare room and answer any questions.**

We will get you to complete an application form and take copies of proof of identity.

**Once we check and accept your application form you are 'In assessment' with us.**



**Interested in Fostering? Give us a call now! 0800 328 3119**



The assessment is in 2 parts.  
Stage 1 (Police & other checks)  
Stage 2 (Form F assessment of your suitability to foster with a qualified assessor).

**Stage 1 & Stage 2 are usually done together. We aim to complete the process in 4 months.**

You complete a 3 day compulsory Skills to Foster training course.

**During the assessment you will have a visit from a manager who will discuss the types of placement of children that may best suit you and your family.**

Your allocated assessor present you and your assessment report to our fostering panel for recommendation.

**Once recommended by panel, the last step is for the ADM (agency decision maker) to make a decision of approval.**

**“The best part of fostering is when I can give my love and help the children grow up, I enjoy it with all my heart. It’s very hard work, 24 hours a day, but if you love children you will really enjoy it.”**

Zahra & Ali,  
Foster Carers

***You are Approved!***

# Transferring to Anchor

*There are different reasons why existing foster carers transfer to Anchor. Some carers need more support and better training. Others find their agency has become impersonal and commercially biased after being taken over by a bigger company. Other carers are moving house or looking for a better pay and benefits package.*



***“I transferred to Anchor Foster Care for the amount of support, rewards package and specialist training. The support cannot be faulted, you never feel as if you are on your own. The training has been like liquid gold to us.”***

***Shirley,  
Foster Carer***

*Anchor is a well-established, friendly, family run, not-for-profit independent fostering agency. This means we do not focus on making profit or paying shareholders dividends. We invest our income in our carers and our children, giving priority to each carer and child's individual needs. We have a good Ofsted report with outstanding features and our staff are friendly, professional and long-serving.*

*"The main difference at Anchor Foster Care is the staff they employ. They are really understanding and empathise with carers.*

*We work hard, we are professionals, and we are respected as such by Anchor. Anchor will tell you when you are doing a good job. Most employers only phone to complain. It's like a big family."*

*John,  
Foster Carer*

*We offer a highly personalised support package, professional training and development opportunities. We also arrange specialist training for more complex behaviours, serious disabilities, parent and child, and other specialist placements.*

*The assessment period for transfers is usually shorter than for new applicants. There are some training exemptions, and we can access information and references shared by your previous fostering service. We aim to make your transfer smooth and simple, especially if you have children placed with you. Anchor follows the guiding principles on transferring placements from The Fostering Network.*

*If you are considering transferring to Anchor Foster Care, contact us today to speak informally and in complete confidence to an experienced member of our team on: **0800 328 3119**, alternatively fill out the enquiry form on our website: **[www.anchorfostercare.co.uk](http://www.anchorfostercare.co.uk)** or message us on Facebook: **Anchor Foster Care**.*

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