

GLF's guide to fostering

Can you change a
child's life for the
better?



greater london
fostering.

For more info
call James on
020 8347 8741



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The Ofsted logo features three stylized human figures in yellow above the word 'Ofsted' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Below it, the words 'Outstanding Provider' are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.



Linda

Hi, If you're reading this, then our guess is that you're thinking of becoming a foster carer, which is great news.

There is currently a big shortage of foster carers across London, Essex, Kent and Surrey, and you could be just the person or family that a foster child or young person needs.

I'm Linda, the founder and director of Greater London Fostering (GLF), and along with James (pictured below), have created this short guide to explain what fostering is, and how you can become a carer.

Hello there, we're GLF's recruitment and community officers. It's our job to talk to people thinking about fostering. Through hundreds of conversations, we've come up with the top 5 questions that people ask.

They are:

1. What is fostering?
2. Can I foster?
3. How do I become a foster carer?
4. What support will I receive?
5. Why foster with GLF?



James

If you need any more information, don't hesitate to contact us by phone, email or on Facebook.

We also have lots more information on our website:

www.greaterlondonfostering.org

East London Office
11 Burford Road
Stratford
E15 2ST

West London Office
Aurora
71-75 Uxbridge Road
Ealing, W5 5SL

South London Office
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SE19 1NL


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1. What is fostering?

Fostering is about continuing a family life for a child or young person when they can no longer live with their birth family.

Foster children may stay a few days, a few months or occasionally for many years. Children come into care for a range of reasons but many have experienced abuse and neglect.

These experiences often affect behaviour and their ability to trust people so foster carers must be patient and understanding.

An important part of a carer's role is to support children with their education and learning and prepare them for independence.

Foster carers work as part of a team , you will have a supervising social worker, who is there to support, supervise and empower you.



2. Can I foster?

A lot of people that contact us to become foster carers worry that they won't be eligible.

They often think that their living situation, employment or relationship status will be an obstacle, but they are often mistaken.

We need carers from all backgrounds as long as you:

- Are committed to helping children and young people to reach their potential
- Do not have any criminal convictions against children or of a sexual nature.
- Are over 21 year old
- Have at least 1 spare bedroom

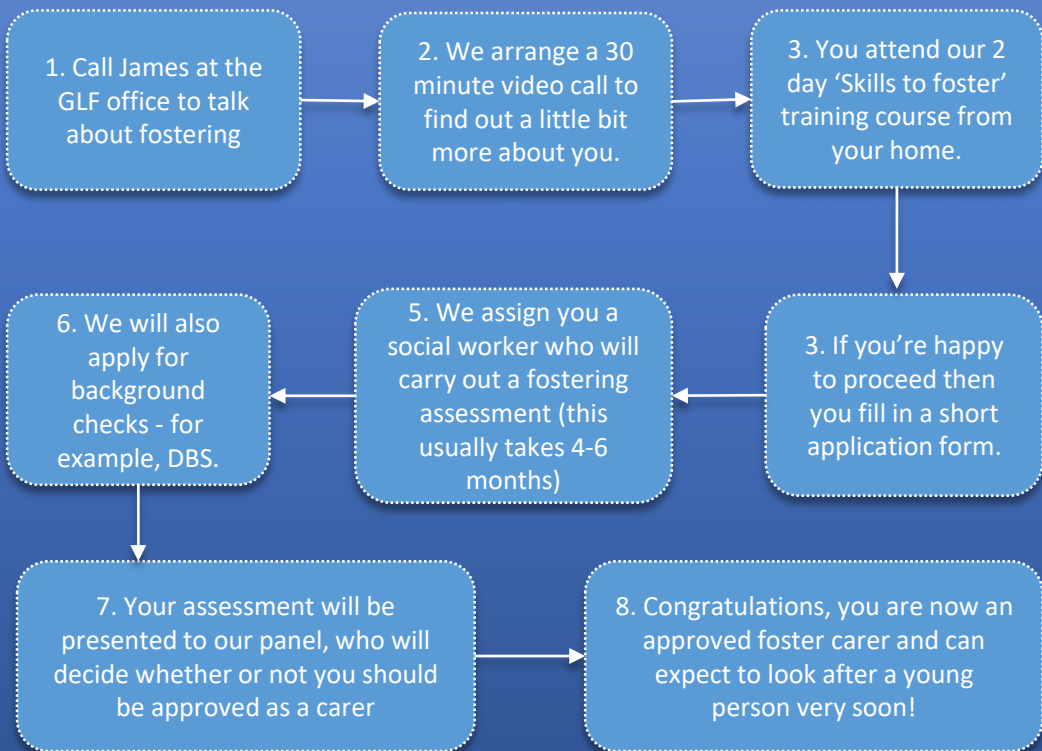
Then there is nothing that excludes you from being a GLF foster carer.

After talking to you, and meeting you via video call, we'll be able to make a final decision about whether we think you have the skills, experience and time to be a foster carer.



3. How do I become a foster carer?

There is an application process which all potential foster carers have to go through, regardless of who you choose to foster for; and this is it:





4. What support will I get?

Every fostering agency will offer you a different level of support, This is some of the things we offer our foster carers:

A supervising social worker, it's their job to work directly with you, normally this means a monthly visit, and weekly check in phone calls. If you need them more (especially when starting out) they will be there for you.

An emergency line which is answered 24/7, in case your supervisor is unavailable

A great financial package:
£450 for children aged 11 and over
£425 for children under 11
You may also receive more for taking children with more difficult issues – up to £625 per week.

Lots of events during the year to entertain you and the children. For instance, trips to the zoo, bowling, foster carer meals out.

A training programme which makes sure you have the right skills to be a confident foster carer.

Virtual support groups, which help you connect with other foster carers, giving you informal peer support.



5. Why GLF?

Choosing who you foster for is a very important decision, and one you should spend some time thinking about.

The first choice you will have to make, is whether you foster for an independent agency (like GLF) or for a local authority.

Both have their advantages, but the reason we were founded was we felt we could better support carers, and children outside of the constraints of the government.

We think we can better focus on what really matters by being an independent agency, which is our foster carers and children. We can make decisions quickly, with minimum bureaucracy, which means introducing new ideas.

For example, we have a team committed to promoting positive aspirations of the young people we care for - the Positive Aspirations Taskforce, who ensure that we encourage and support all our young people's aspirations no matter how small or large they may be.

Ultimately, the thing that sets GLF apart is that we're a community. We have 130 foster carers across the South East and over 20 years of experience to share. We know fostering isn't easy so we support our carers every step of the way.

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Would you like to get started?

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or email:

James.cleary@greaterlondonfostering.org

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The logo consists of three lowercase letters 'g', 'l', and 'f' in a stylized font, each inside a small colored circle (red, blue, and yellow respectively).
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