



NORTH LONDON
ADOPTION
AND
FOSTERING
CONSORTIUM

Remand Fostering Information Pack

What is a remand foster carer?

Remand foster carers provide short-term care for young people between the ages of ten and seventeen whilst their case is resolved in the Youth Court. The length of a placement can vary between a few weeks and a few months. There are also some placements which are for only one or two nights; these are an alternative to young people spending the night in a police cell before appearing in Court the next morning. During each placement you will be expected to look after the young person and help ensure they keep to any bail conditions the court makes and accompany them to court appearances. It will be an advantage for you to have had experience of teenagers and/or the youth criminal justice system.

In addition to the standard training opportunities available to our foster carers, remand foster-carers will receive specialist training and support from the Youth Offending Team [YOT] in helping young people through the court system and make positive changes in their life.

What kind of person becomes a remand foster carer?

Like the young people they look after, remand foster carers come from many different backgrounds however, they all have one thing in common in that they care about young people and want to help them through a difficult time in their lives.

You can be single or a couple but should have no children under the age of sixteen living with you. We welcome applicants regardless of ethnic background, culture, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation and disability.

Remand foster carers must be available at all times to offer placements which will always occur at very short notice. You do not need to own your own house but you must be in a secure housing situation and have appropriate space for a young person. You must have enough room in your home to foster a young person, at least one spare bedroom.

What might prevent me from becoming a remand foster carer?

You will need to live within approximately one hour's travelling distance from the Consortium boroughs. We welcome carers from both inside and outside the boroughs. These limits enable contact to be maintained between young people, education and their families.

You can't be a remand foster carer if you have a criminal record for offences against children. Having criminal convictions doesn't mean that you can't foster but consideration would have to be given whether they might affect your ability to provide proper care.

What are the rewards?

Remand fostering isn't all about giving, you and your family will also benefit from the experience. You will be making a difference to the lives of young people, often seeing their confidence and self-esteem grow.

What kind of help will I get?

You won't be left to cope on your own. You will be supported, at all times, both by a Fostering Service social worker and a YOT practitioner. There will be regular visits to assist in ensuring that the placement is going well and ongoing training on a wide range of subjects to do with foster care and the criminal justice system will be provided.

What about financial help?

You will receive a very generous weekly allowance to cover the day to day expenses of caring for and assisting a young person, and a weekly retainer between placements. More details about payment will be made available when we contact you.

How do I become a remand foster carer for The North London Fostering Consortium?

We hope that the information in this pack has been useful in giving you an introduction to remand fostering. If you would like a further initial discussion, please contact Peter Stevens on 07596 442526 or email him at peterghstevens@btinternet.com. There are five stages to becoming a remand foster carer.

1 Initial home visit

This will involve workers from one of our Fostering Recruitment and Assessment Teams and YOTs coming to your home to discuss remand fostering. They will inform you of the tasks and expectations involved, as well obtaining some information from you, which will enable them to assess whether you might be suitable for the role.

Following the meeting you will have time to think about whether you are still interested in becoming a remand foster carer and the workers will also discuss your case in their teams and with their managers. If all agree to proceed, we will ask you to complete an application form.

Once completed, we:

- Invite you to the next preparation training group
- Allocate you to a social worker for a full assessment
- Start to request checks and references

2 Preparation training

The group is attended by all prospective foster carers and aims to increase understanding and knowledge about the legal framework, the physical and emotional needs of looked after children and young people and working with Children's Services and families.

For remand foster carers there will be additional training run by the YOT, which will focus on the criminal justice system and how to work with young people who have been remanded into the care of the local authority by the Youth Court.

3 Full assessment

A social worker will visit you over a period of three to four months to complete an assessment of your ability to be a remand foster carer and to prepare you for the role.

As well as talking to you, they will also speak (with your permission) to other people who know you in order to obtain as full a picture as possible of you and your family.

The social worker will write a report that is presented to the fostering panel, which will recommend whether or not you are approved as a remand foster carer. You will have the opportunity to read the report and say whether you agree with it.

4 Checks and references

We need to be absolutely sure that we only place vulnerable children in the care of adults with whom they will be safe. Therefore we carry out a number of checks and references, many of which are a legal requirement. These include a medical report from your GP, a criminal records bureau disclosure, at least two personal references, checks with social services, housing and schools. We also carry out a health and safety check of your home.

5 The fostering panel

Once the report, training and checks are completed, you will be invited to attend the fostering panel. The panel is composed of people from the local authority, as well as independent members, all of whom have expertise in the needs of looked after children. On the basis of the information that they have been given, they will

recommend whether or not you are approved as a remand foster carer. This may seem like a long process, but it is important to remember that our first priority is to ensure the safety of children and young people in care.

What happens after approval?

You will be allocated a supervising social worker from one of our fostering teams who will provide you with ongoing support. You will sign an agreement which sets out the expectations of the remand foster carer and the department. We also ensure that you receive written information about policies and procedures and any equipment that you need, such as beds and bedding.

When a placement is needed, you will receive a phone call from the fostering team or from the out of hours social worker. Given the nature of remand fostering the placement will usually be required immediately. As well as your supervising social worker, there will also be a worker from the YOT involved to support both the remand foster carer and the young person. Both of these workers or someone from their teams will be on hand to answer questions and give advice.

What other training and support will I receive?

All foster carers are expected to undertake regular training to ensure they develop their knowledge and skills. There are also regular support groups and a 24 hour support service.

What should I do now?

If you would like to apply to become a remand foster carer or just want to find out more, contact Peter Stevens, Manager, North London Fostering Consortium on **07596 442526** or email peterghstevens@btinternet.com

Useful contacts

British Agency for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF)

Skyline House, 200 Union Street
London SE1 0LX
Tel: 020 7593 2000

The Fostering Network

87 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8HA
Tel: 020 7620 6400
Email: info@fostering.net

Youth Justice Board for England and Wales

11Carteret Street
London SW1H 9DL
Tel: 0207 271 3033
Website: www.youth-justice-board.gov.uk

The NLAFC Remand Fostering Service Foster Carer Job Description

Aim of the Remand Fostering Scheme:

- (i) Provide courts with a community based alternative to remanded young people going into secure accommodation. This includes Remands into Youth Detention Accommodation, by maintaining access to five specialist foster families.
- (ii) Provide a high level of supervision for young people assessed as presenting some risk of offending during the remand period.
- (iii) Foster carers recruited to the Remand Fostering Scheme will need previous experience of working with young people with complex needs.
- (iv) Carers need to be non-judgemental and have the commitment to make a difference to a young person's life.

Remand Scheme Foster Carers will:

- Supervise and care for a young person on remand in their home.
- Work intensively with up to two young persons if two carers are at home full time, or one young person where one carer is at home full time subject to a risk assessment by the supervising fostering social worker. (Not usually take other task-centred child/ren's placements)
- Enable, guide and support young person to develop their skills in communication, negotiation, conflict resolution, social relationships, day-to-day organisation, understanding and using Restorative approaches.
- Report any child care or safeguarding concerns immediately to the young person's social worker and the supervising fostering social worker.
- To act as an Appropriate Adult for the young person, when required.
- To respect and support the young person's specific ethnic and cultural requirements.
- Adhere to the role and task expectations set out in the placement agreement or review meetings.
- Keep detailed records and communicate objectively and fully as to observations made.

- To appear in court and provide evidence as to the young person's progress or in relation to any breach of bail, if required, following liaison with the Youth Offending Team (YOT).
- Make and evidence judgements about both the particular young person's needs and progress to professionals and meetings.
- Work closely with YOT and other agencies.
- To transport/escort the young person to and from court appearances; police stations; solicitors offices etc.
- Make a commitment to additional training requirements and monthly support and development group meetings.

Limits of approval:

Because of the demanding nature of remand fostering, special care is needed to ensure that remand households can provide adequate supervision to remand placements.



The NLAFC Remand Fostering Service Person Specification for Foster Carers

Aim of the Remand Fostering Scheme:

- (i) Provide courts with a community based alternative to remanded young people going into secure accommodation. This includes court ordered Remands into Youth Detention Accommodation, by maintaining access to five specialist foster families
- (ii) Provide a high level of supervision for young people assessed as presenting some risk of offending during the remand period.

Remand Scheme Foster Carers:

1. Supervising and caring for young people:

- The ability to understand and provide a high standard supervision and care to 'Looked After' young people on remand which promotes healthy emotional, physical and sexual development as well as their health and educational development.
- An ability to communicate appropriately with people who are important to the child – YOT; school; Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) etc.
- To facilitate contact with family and friends where appropriate.
- To undertake work with young people towards achieving specific goals with appropriate supervision and consultation from team members.
- To manage challenging behaviour, if required, and to help young people develop appropriate social behaviour, encouraging positive behaviour.
- An ability to set appropriate boundaries to manage young people's behaviours.
- A knowledge of young people's development and an ability to communicate with young people appropriate to their age and understanding.
- To observe and keep accurate records, separating fact from opinion.
- To promote the educational attainment of looked after young people by ensuring school, college or work attendance, liaising with these establishments, participating in young-person focused events and supporting achievement.

2. Providing a safe and caring environment

- An ability to work within a risk assessment framework.
- An ability to help children keep themselves safe from harm or abuse and to teach them to seek help if their safety is threatened.
- To support young people to maintain their bail conditions.

3. Working as part of a team

- An ability to welcome the young person into your family and to form a real relationship even if only for a short time. To help the young person move on in a positive manner by assisting and supporting them and working alongside the local authority's plans.
- An ability to work with other professional people, working to Placement Agreements and contributing to the individually devised Bail Support programme for the young person. To also contribute to the broader planning for the young person at the local authority's planning meetings. To attend any meetings such as medical, education meetings, court and act as advocate for the young person.
- To attend the monthly Remand Foster Carer Support Meeting, meetings with YOT staff, fostering social workers and other professionals.
- An ability to communicate effectively by maintaining written daily recordings and to verbally convey information about young people as required.
- To translate your awareness of discrimination e.g. gender, race, sexuality, social status etc. into anti-discriminatory practice.
- To attend all training as required in the Remand Foster Carer Training Programme.

4. Own development

- To take responsibility for your own development, recognising your role and abilities and to be able to identify your own training needs.
- The ability to appreciate and reflect of how personal experiences have affected yourself and your family and the impact fostering is likely to have on you all.
- A willingness to share issues experienced in the placements and seek support and help when needed.
- An ability to develop and maintain links within the community which provide support.
- To sustain a positive relationship with the young person and maintain the quality of family life, even in periods of stress.
- To become familiar with the local authority's policies and procedures and to work within the legal framework.

For more information please contact:

Peter Stevens

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North London Fostering Consortium

tel: 07596 442526

email: peterghstevens@btinternet.com



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