

Hello,

FOSTERING NEWSLETTER



Welcome to March's Thinking about Fostering? Newsletter



For those of you who are new here, I'm Denise, the fostering team manager and I make sure that whether you're at the beginning of your journey or fostering regularly, you are supported and listened to. I work with foster carers, birth children of families who foster, and care leavers.

Our newsletter is for the many people who are 'thinking about fostering'. It's a huge decision to make. There are lots of different things to consider including your family, space at home, and what time you have available, just as a start!

At Leicestershire County Council, my team are here to help, advise and support you with information that will help you to decide if, and when, fostering may work for you. We are not here to encourage you to foster, but more to help you to decide if now is the right time for you to progress.


So, we'll be sending out case studies, stories of people's experiences of the application process and subsequently becoming carers along with many other interesting facts straight to your inbox.

Denise

LGBTQ+ Fostering and Adoption Week

(6-12 March 2023)

LGBTQ+
adoption &
fostering week
2023

This week is LGBTQ+ Fostering and Adoption Week, and along with New Family Social we're letting the LGBTQ+ community in Leicestershire know you CAN adopt or foster! 

[Find out more](#) this LGBTQ+ Adoption and Fostering Week from - could you care for one, two, three, or more vulnerable children?

As part of LGBTQ+ Fostering and Adoption Week, our fostering recruitment team will be popping up their stall at Fosse Park, this Thursday 9 March, to speak to Leicestershire's residents about fostering. We're particularly encouraging those from the LGBTQ+ community to come along and find out more.



We recognise the ever-increasing need for more of the LGBTQ+ community to explore both adoption and fostering.

This LGBTQ+ Fostering and Adoption Week, we're sharing our support and encouraging the LGBTQ+ community not to rule themselves out but count themselves in!



Inside Information (from one of our carers)

A foster carer is encouraging other members of the LGBTQ+ community to come forward and find out more about the different fostering roles.

Tristham has shared his experiences about the fostering process, which ultimately led him to care for an 'amazing' child who has come on leaps and bounds while in his care.

We asked him the following questions:

What was your experience like when getting in touch with us?

My experience totally fine, I remember it really well. The lady I spoke to was easy to talk to, she asked lots about my experience and background. It was really simple and easy, I had no problems. I remember logging in online and sending my details through, and I got a call only a few days later!

What was the assessment process like for you?

I didn't expect it to be as in-depth as it was! In the sense of, the assessment process included looking at long-term passed relationships – and I didn't expect this to be looked into. Of course, it's about finding out everything about you, speaking to employers and having a DBS check, etc, but it was all fine!

What is the support like as approved carers?

I've been to foster carer events, but not in a while! I go to locality meetings every so often, and I'm active on our private Facebook page for foster carers. I've also been asked to help run a male-only private group on Facebook. These groups help us all share experiences and ask questions.

As part of the foster carer groups, it's a great place to share information. I often come across new information accidentally and love to share it there with other carers. For example, I recently found that you can get a reduced banding on your council tax if you care for special needs children. So I love to spread the word for handy things like that for other carers to know and look into.

What's the best thing about being a foster carer?

Seeing the child/ren in our placement doing really well. The kid we currently have in our care is AMAZING and a completely different person from when they first came to us.

What would you say to those who might be thinking about fostering?

There's nothing wrong with asking! Any information can be given to you to help support you in finding out more information about fostering.

I do think that there's a misconception that when you foster it has to be long-term placements. When I speak to other people, I feel like they don't know there are more options than long-term placements. People need to know about the different ways they can foster, from respite to giving carers or relatives a break, to under 2's being able to stay in your room, parent and child fostering, and much more.



If you foster with us, you'll be part of Leicestershire County Council's fostering family with access to all the services and support that we offer. You can find out about the different benefits we offer as a local authority, on the [Why foster with us?](#) page.

We are also full members of [The Fostering Network](#) and [New Family Social](#), and if you joined our community of foster carers, you'd have access to all of their support and information too.

New Family Social are a UK charity, led by LGBTQ+ adopters and foster carers. They exist to help you decide if fostering is right for you and then support you on your journey to becoming carers.

We work with NFS to make the pool of available carers as wide as possible for the many children in our care in Leicestershire.

Some of the benefits you get as foster carers through NFS memberships are:

- Access to many **resources**, from **podcasts** to **forums** for information and training purposes
- **Events** and **local 'meet ups'** to really ensure you have the chance to be part of the wider fostering community

The Fostering Network is the UK's leading fostering charity and membership organisation, bringing together everyone who is involved in the lives of fostered children to make foster care the very best it can be. They offer support to those who foster, improve opportunities for fostered children and young people and provide expert guidance to all fostering services.

Some of the benefits you get as foster carers through The Fostering Network are:

Protection

- Members receive **market-leading legal protection insurance** that **covers the whole fostering family**

Support

- **Helplines** offering you independent advice on all aspects of fostering, from tax and benefits to delegated authority
- **Learning and Development** includes a wide selection of online resources, publications, and training, all of which are discounted
- **Discounts**, from help with mortgage advice, home insurance, and tax, to family days out and holidays

Connections

- **Events** that provide opportunities to hear about the latest developments in fostering and to meet others from the fostering community

- **Online Community** that provides a space for foster carer members to connect, and share advice, support, and personal experiences with each other
- A termly foster care **Magazine** and a monthly **e-Newsletter**

You can read more about the benefits of the membership [here](#).



Reminders

We hope you found this month's edition useful! If you'd like to find out more about fostering, our team are always happy to help.

You can attend one of our [Find out About Fostering events](#), which we hold virtually, every 3 weeks, and in-person, every quarter, give our team a call or a message, or take a look at our [Facebook](#) for any further information.

Don't forget, we are now offering out-of-hours services, with a member of the team being available for a chat on the phone, by text, or by email:

- Fostering Saturdays – the first Saturday of every month between 10 am and 12 pm
- Fostering Tuesdays – every Tuesday between 5 pm and 8 pm



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