

LONG TERM AND PERMANENT FOSTERING



**“We can’t believe we
are being rewarded for
completing our family.”**

FOSTER
MIDLOTHIAN



2 Permanent Fostering

What is the difference between long-term and permanent fostering?

Permanent: A placement secured by a Permanence Order.

For a child this means that the care planning process has concluded that they will thrive best if they are cared for away from home on a permanent basis. A Permanence Order, which is applied for by the local authority through the courts, can provide the local authority, child and their carer with the legal security, the stability and the time for strong relationship bonds and a sense of belonging to develop.

Long-term: A placement which has been in place for longer than 24 months not secured by a Permanence Order. (This should be an exceptional situation and an indicator that the placement requires close scrutiny) Agencies must differentiate between long-term placements where:

- An Adoption order is being sought
- A Permanence Order with authority to adopt is being sought
- A Permanence Order is being sought
- Child's care plan indicates that the placement will be maintained into adulthood (18+ years of age) without a Permanence Order being sought
- Child's care plan indicates that alternative placements are being sought (including with birth family)

- The child's care plan gives no indication of the placement's objective or expected duration and therefore requires close scrutiny

Children who require Permanent or Long-Term Fostering tend to be among the most complex. There will be a variety of reasons why it is assessed that Adoption is not the best option for a child, usually to do with ongoing contact with birth family and siblings, legal complexities, or the age of the child at the point at which permanency planning is concluded. As children get older, the Local Authority has a legal duty to seek their views in relation to planning for their future- a child may not want to be adopted.

Nearly all children who are in need of permanent fostering are children already in the care of Children's Services, usually living in an interim foster placement.

Louise (8) and Natasha (6): are half sisters. Their mother has a long history of depression and drug misuse. She also has a pattern of becoming involved in relationships with violent partners. The children have been cared for by their grandmother who has her own health problems and can no longer offer long-term care to the girls.

Louise and Natasha are confused, unhappy children. The school has expressed concerns about Louise, her lack of concentration and recent deterioration in behaviour which can

include hitting out at other children. Natasha is a very anxious little girl who has started to violent tantrums since her grandmother was admitted to hospital.

The Children's Hearing has supported Midlothian Council's decision to seek permanent care of these sisters with a foster family.

Jamie (9): Jamie's mother has learning difficulties and, while there is no doubt that she loves Jamie, she has been unable to protect him or to provide the emotional and physical care which Jamie needs. Jamie is living with an interim foster family and a recent attempt to return him to the care of this mother has failed. Jamie's development is delayed and he is struggling to accept that he will not be able to live with his mother. Jamie needs a permanent family which would allow him regular, monthly, contact with his mother.

Children who have had disrupted lives can be very demanding to care for. Helping a child overcome the impact of neglectful early life experiences, or to cope with loss and separation can be rewarding but is also a real challenge. This is why Midlothian Council is committed to providing ALL carers with ongoing support.

Who can provide a permanent family for these children?

There is no such thing as the "ideal" kind of family. We are more interested in what you have to offer a child than

your marital status or income level.

The Family Placement Team would like to hear from people who have the time and the commitment to stick with these children and offer them stability as they progress to adulthood and independence.

Age limits are less rigid than the importance of looking at the whole picture of an applicant's health, maturity and what they have to offer a child. In general, however, applicants will be over the age of 25 and the age gap between you and the child will need reflect the age of the child(ren) you are considering adopting.

Disclosure Scotland enhanced checks will be undertaken along with a medical check, personal references and an employer's reference (if applicable).

It is important you are honest with yourself and the Social Worker about your feelings, all of us find some sorts of problems more difficult to face than others. We know there is no such thing as the "perfect" family, everyone has different strengths and weaknesses. It is our job to fit the strengths of a family and the needs of a child as closely as possible.

It is also essential that you discuss your interest in fostering/ adoption with any children and your extended family. Fostering/ adoption will have an impact on everyone in your family.

What happens next?

If you would like to find out more please contact the Family Placement Team and you will be visited at home by a Social Worker from the Family Placement Team who can discuss any queries you have in more detail.

Support

If you are approved as a foster carer you will have your own supervising social worker, from the Family Placement Team, on hand to give advice, guidance, supervision and support. You will also have the opportunity to attend regular support groups with other foster carers and take part in ongoing training.

The children you are looking after will also have their own social worker and you will have an invaluable role in the regular meetings, which will include the child's teacher and other professionals, to look at the child's care plan.

Equipment

The Family Placement Team will provide you with the essential equipment you might need, from our local contractors/suppliers; this includes beds, towels, stairgates, pushchairs etc for the young people you look after..

COMMUNICATING CLEARLY

We are happy to translate on request and provide information and publications in other formats, including Braille, tape or large print.

اگر آپ چاہیں تو ہم خوشی سے آپ کو ترجمہ فراہم کر سکتے ہیں اور معلومات اور دستاویزات دیگر شکلوں میں مثلاً بریل (تاریخہ افراد کے لیے) ہم سے بریل کی کھائی) میں، ہیب پی یا بڑے حرف کی کھائی میں فراہم کر سکتے ہیں۔

Zapewnimy tłumaczenie na żądanie oraz dostarczymy informacje i publikacje w innych formatach, w tym Braillem, na kasecie magnetofonowej lub dużym drukiem.

ਅਸੀਂ ਸੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਨਾਲ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਅਤੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੁਸ਼ਟਕ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ, ਜਿਹਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਰੈਲ, ਟੇਪ ਜਾਂ ਵੱਡੀ ਛਪਾਈ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹਨ।

Körler için kabartma yazılar, kaset ve büyük nüshalar da dahil olmak üzere, istenilen bilgileri sağlamak ve tercüme etmekten memnuniyet duyuyoruz.

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Contact 0131 270 7500 or email: enquiries@midlothian.gov.uk

For more information please contact the duty worker at the Family Placement Team on: **0131 270 5678** or **Family.PlacementDuty@midlothian.gov.uk** www.midlothian.gov.uk/fostering