

A Children's Guide to Match Foster Care



Hi! My name is Matt Foster
and I am here to tell you all
about Match Foster Care.

This booklet is yours to keep
and to write in.

This booklet belongs to:

.....

I am this many years old:

.....

What is a Foster Parent?

Foster parents are special people who have been carefully chosen to look after children.

They will look after you, set rules, help you with things and help to keep you safe!

Your Foster Parents are part of the Match Foster Care team.

Why do I live with a Foster Parent?

When a child cannot live with their own family, they can move to a foster home where they will be safe.

Children live with Foster Parents for all sorts of reasons, but it's not because of anything that you have done.

What about what I want?

Your social worker should find out what your wishes and feelings are. They should think about this when they are making decisions about your life.



Here is a picture for you to colour.

What is a wish?

Wishes are things that you want to do, want to happen or want someone to do for you. Can you tell me one of your wishes?

.....

What are feelings?

Feelings are about being happy, sad, ok, worried, angry or frightened.

How are you feeling?

.....



Who is who?

You will have your own **Social Worker**. They work for the Local Authority, not Match Foster Care. It is their job to make sure that you are ok. They are there to help you. They will visit you often to talk about what is happening in your life.

Your foster parents have their own **Social Worker**. They work for Match and their job is to make sure that you are being looked after properly and to help them if they need it. They will also visit you to make sure that you are happy.

Match Fostering Support Workers will also visit you to make sure that you are happy. You can talk to them about your wishes and feelings if you want to. They will do fun things with you, like arts and craft.

My Social Worker is.....

**The Match Social Worker
is.....**

**My Fostering Support Worker
is.....**

Every family has rules. These are about how to treat each other, about listening and keeping safe. What are the rules in your house? You can write them down to help you to remember.

Our house rules are:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....





"Can you draw a
picture of your
foster family?"

A large empty rectangular box with a blue border, intended for drawing a picture of a foster family.

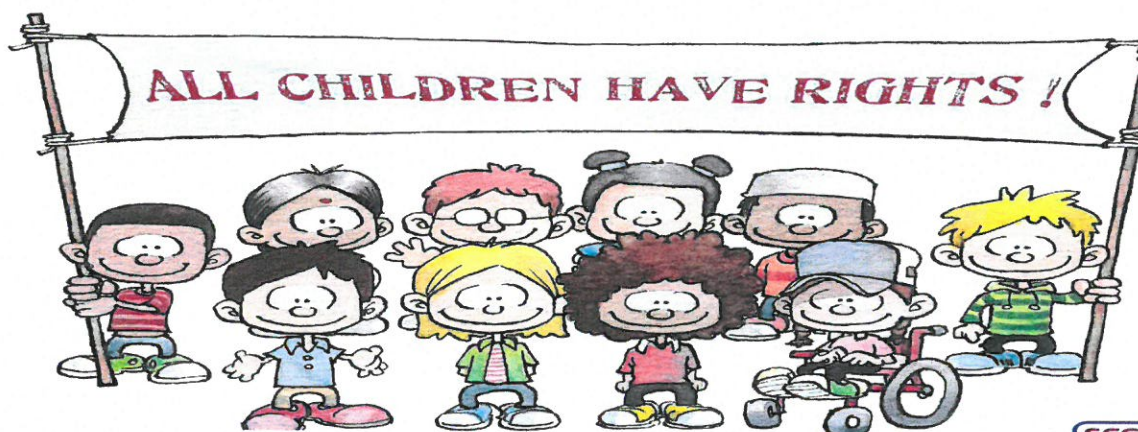
Who is who in this picture?

How will people look after me in my foster home?

All children should be treated a certain way, no matter what. These are called your "RIGHTS".

- ✿ You have the RIGHT to be SAFE, SECURE and PROTECTED.
- ✿ You have the RIGHT for adults to listen to you and treat you fairly and equally
- ✿ You have the RIGHT to be healthy and go to school.
- ✿ You have the RIGHT to enjoy your RELIGION and CULTURE
- ✿ If you have a disability, you have the RIGHT to any HELP you need with it.

Please let your social worker, foster parent or someone from Match Foster Care know if you think someone is taking away any of your RIGHTS.



Who decides what will happen?

While you live with your Foster Parents, there will be a special meeting all about you. This is called your 'Review'. All of the important adults in your life will get together to make important decisions about you and to create a 'Care Plan'. If you would like to go to these meetings, you can ask your social worker.

Before the meeting, you will be asked what you think and what your views are. **Remember**, the meetings are all about YOU, so it is important that you are able to say how you feel and what your wishes are.

If you have any worries you can talk to your social worker, foster parent or someone from Match Foster Care.

The person in charge of the meetings is called an 'Independent Reviewing Officer.' They should come to see you at home so that they can get to know you.

You can also talk to them if you have any worries, or tell them the things that you are really happy about.



My Independent Reviewing
officer is
called.....
.....

When will I see my family?

Just because you live with foster parents does not mean that you have to lose touch with your family. Your foster parents understand how important your family is to you and will enjoy hearing all about them!

Your social worker will speak to you about when you can see your family and how often.

How long will I have to stay?

Your social worker, with the help of the other adults, will make a decision about when and if you can live with your family. They will need to make sure that your family can look after you well and keep you safe. It might take a little while for them to work this out. Once they have made a decision, they would usually speak to the judge about it, who would have the last say.

Your social worker will tell you and your foster parents about what they think will happen.



What about School?

School is very important because it is where you learn new things, make friends and take part in activities and hobbies.

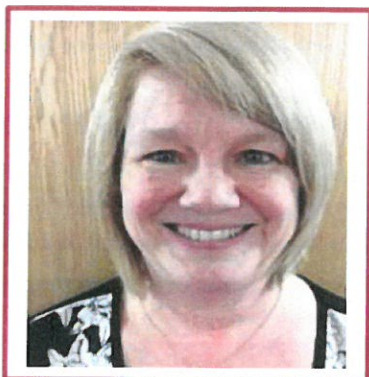
If possible, everyone will try to make sure that you can still go to the school that you are used to. If you have to go to a new school, everyone will make sure that you know all about it before you go and that there is someone there to help you.

Your teacher will already know that you are living with Foster Parents, but it is your choice if you tell anyone else. If you are having any problems, worries or if you are being bullied you must tell your teacher, social worker, foster parent or someone from Match foster Care. They will sort this out for you.

There will be meetings at school about your education. These are called PEP's. There will be a chance for you to come to your PEP if you want to. You could even bring along a piece of work that you are proud of for everyone to see.



What about my health?



This is Debbie. She is our Nurse. Her job is to support you with your health.

Your Foster Parents need to make sure that you are fit and healthy..

When you first move in with your foster parents you will see a special doctor who will make sure that you are ok and healthy.

Every year Debbie will come to visit you to check that you are healthy and that you are going to all of your health appointments, such as the Doctor and Dentist. She will give your foster parents a special blue book; this book is a record of your health so has to be kept very safe.

"You can talk
to Debbie
about your
health at any
time"



Match Foster Care says "It's all about you"

You are very important to us. We are really looking forward to learning more about you. We will help you wherever we can and listen to your wishes and feelings.

We will plan lots of fun activities for you to do and will visit you at your foster home.

If you do something special, we would love to hear about it so that we can celebrate it with you!

If you have any ideas about how you would like us to support you, please tell us!

What if I have a problem or I am unhappy?

We want to know if you have any problems at all or if you are worried about ANYTHING! There are lots of ways that you can tell us what you think or if you want to complain.

You may want an Independent Advocate who is someone that is not part of Match Foster care or the Local Authority. They can visit you to discuss your wishes and feelings. They can share these at meetings or help you to make a complaint.

Nobody is allowed to hurt you or make you feel scared.

If someone hurts you or makes you feel uncomfortable or scared, then you must tell someone. Some good people to tell are Foster Parents, Social Workers or Teachers.

Some people you could call if you need help are:

Match Foster Care Office:

Tel: 01905 770500

Website: www.matchfostercare.co.uk

Ofsted:

Tel 0300 123 1231

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Children's Commissioner for England

Tel: 0800 528 0731

Website: <http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk>

ChildLine (24 hour helpline for children in distress)

Tel: 0800 1111

Website: www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC

Tel: 0800 800 5000

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

The Who Cares Trust (The national charity for children in care)

Tel: 020 7251 3117

Website: www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk