

# Foster Carers' Charter - Solihull

## **Children Come First**

We recognise that children in foster care deserve to experience family life as fully as possible and be part of a loving foster family with carers who can make everyday decisions about the child's care as they would their own child, without the child feeling that they 'stand out' as a looked after child.

Children and young people must be given support to develop their own identities and aspirations so that they fulfil their potential, and take advantage of all opportunities to promote their talents and skills. Above all children should feel cared and feel listened to.

## **Solihull MBC and the Fostering Service must:**

- Recognise the importance of a child's relationship with his or her foster family. We know that children who experience good quality care in loving foster families are able to overcome early childhood trauma and neglect.
- Ensure children are placed with Foster Carers who want to make a difference to a child's life. Children tell us that when they have felt cared for and valued by their foster carers/families it has made a huge difference in their lives and often those positive experiences remain with them throughout adulthood.
- Provide foster carers and their foster children with full information about each other in a timely manner.
- Listen to and involve foster carers and their foster children in decision-making and planning.
- When placements are made we will make sure the right support is available. When doing so we will be sensitive to the needs of the foster carer and the child. This will ensure that foster carers have the support services and development opportunities they need in order to provide their foster child with the best possible care. This includes regular supervision, completing mandatory training and on going training. Foster Carers will also be able to have a buddy system and you will be part of the Fostering Network and the Solihull Foster Carer Association. The on going support, training and been part of the external fostering organisations such as the Fostering Network will keep carers up to date with knowledge and training.
- Foster carers will be invited to all necessary meetings about the child. So that carers are best equipped to provide a good standard of care to the children they care for. Foster carers will be treated as professionals and as key professionals in the child's life.
- Treat foster carers with openness, fairness and respect at all times valuing their skills and expertise.
- Make sure foster carers are recompensed on time and are given clear information about any support, allowances, fees and holidays they will receive including in cases of dispute with the service or during gaps in placements.
- Recognise that foster carers have a right to be treated fairly no matter what the circumstances. Foster carers will be consulted before changing terms and conditions and ensure openness in all discussions and communications.

## **Solihull Foster Carers must:**

- Provide positive adult role models, treat the foster child as they would their own child, and be a ‘pushy parent’ in advocating for all aspects of the child’s development, including educational attainment, physical and emotional health and wellbeing. Co-operate fully as part of a team with other key professionals in the child’s life, and attend meetings that are required.
- Support their foster child and do all they can to make the placement work. Take part in learning and development, use skills and approaches that make a positive impact and enable the child to reach his or her potential. Support their foster child to help them to counter possible bullying and discrimination as a result of their care status.
- Work openly and honestly as part of a team around the child they care for.

Revised September  
2018

