PILGRIMS CORNER FOSTERING

Children & Young Persons Guide Under 11's



Reviewed Jan 2026

We at PCFS have been asked to find you somewhere to live however we all know how hard it might be for you to come to a strange place and to meet new people for the first time. So, we have made this 'Children's Guide' for you to help you settle in and tell you about things.

If this is the first time you have lived with Foster Parents, you may have lots of questions. Even if you have lived in a foster home before, you may still have some questions. We hope that this book will answer some, if not all of your questions.



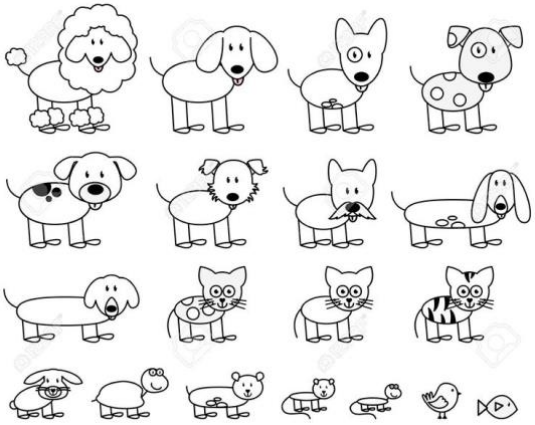


This book contains a lot of serious and important information. You might want to take a break every now and then and so we have included a Word Search at the back for you.

You might want to read this booklet on your own or you could ask a grown up like your Foster Parent to go through it with you. If you do not understand anything, talk to your Foster Parent. They will help you and explain things to you.

<u>What is a foster family</u>

Foster families have been carefully chosen to look after children. They do all the things that birth families do, such as keeping you safe, making sure you eat healthily, setting rules and helping you with things like going to school and attending health checks.



Some Foster Parents also have pets.

They may already be looking after other children and young people who cannot live at home with their own families. Therefore, you could be living with other young people who are in the same situation as you are.

The most important thing to remember is that they will treat you as one of the family.

When you arrive, your Foster Parents will want to get to know you as soon as possible and make you feel at home. They will want to know about what food you like to eat, your favourite games, hobbies – even what your favourite television programme is.

Your Foster Parent will explain how their family likes to do things as often this may be a little different from your own family. To help you with this there are some pages at the back of this book for you to fill in with your Foster Parents. *It is important and helpful to find out what you like. They are:

1. All about Me (that's you!)

2. Things You Might Need to Know

3. Important Things to Know

<u>Your Rights:</u>

There are certain ways you should be treated. These are called your 'Rights'.

- You have the Right to be safe, secure and protected from harm.

- You have the Right for grown-ups to listen to you and treat you equally and fairly
- You have the Right to be helped to express how you feel and what you want
- You have the Right to be offered Education, Health Care, play and leisure activities



- You have the Right to know why you live in a foster home and when you will next see your family
- If you have a disability you have the Right to any help you need with it.

<u>To keep you safe you will be expected to:</u>

Living with a foster family can be difficult sometimes as they may do things different from your own family or other Foster Parents you may have lived with. Although they will want you to feel at home, it is important for you to respect the way they do things.

Foster Parents have rules for everyone who lives in their home. Your Social Worker and Foster Parent will explain the main rules when you arrive. The rules should be fair and they are about keeping everyone safe.

So that your Foster Parents can keep you safe remember to:

- Talk with your Foster Parents if you are not happy about something
- Always ask your Foster Parents if you are allowed to go somewhere before you go and then agree the time you are expected home
- Do not talk or go off with strangers (these are people you don't know)
- Be kind to your Foster Parents and other people living in your foster home (this also includes any pets or animals)
- Ask if you want to borrow something
- Take care of your belongings – clothes, toys, books, games
- Always wear your seat belt in the car

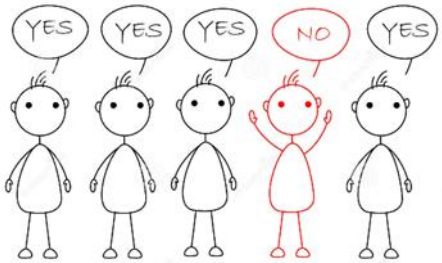
Your Foster Parent will tell you what will happen if you break a rule.
For example, not being allowed to watch TV.

<u>To keep you safe</u>:

Your Foster Parents are not **allowed** to:

- Hit you (this is called physical punishment) or harm you in any way
- Call you names
- Make you feel bad about yourself

- Stop you from keeping in touch with your family or other people important to you
- Stop you speaking with or seeing your Social Worker
- Stop you having meals
- Lock you in your bedroom or any other room
- Stop you from having any medical or dental treatment



- Keep your belongings or presents that may have been bought for you (providing they are not dangerous or harmful)
- Stop you taking your belongings with you to a new placement or if you go home
- Bully you by calling you names or making fun of you
- Search your clothes – (you should not be asked to take your clothes off for them to be searched)

Your Foster Parents want you to be happy, for example:

- They will help you go to school and help you with any homework
- They will help you to be healthy and fit
- They will have somewhere to keep your things (your belongings)
- They will help you to see your family and friends and other important people in your life
- Help you to follow your religion – if you have one. For example, they will find the nearest Church, Synagogue or Mosque so that you will be able to attend. If your religion says that you have to eat certain foods your Foster Parent will arrange this
- They will give you Pocket Money
- They will provide you with clothes
- They will take you on outings and encourage you to carry on with your hobbies and activities, for example: comics and puzzle books, football sticker books, swimming.
- Help you to develop your talents, interests and skills

SOCIAL WORKERS:

You should think of your Social Worker who is someone who is here to help you. Your Social Worker will visit you in your Foster Home and get to know you. Sometimes they will see you on their own. Sometimes they may see you with your Foster Parents. Sometimes they may take you out so you can have a longer talk with them.



Your Social Worker will need to tell your Foster Parents the important things about you and your family. Your Foster Parents must keep this information safe.

If you want to see or speak with your Social Worker speak to your Foster Parent. Your Foster Parent will phone your Social Worker for you. Your Social Worker will need to know if you have any problems so they will know if they have to make an urgent visit to you or plan a visit in a short while. We will write your Social Workers name and telephone number down for you at the end of this book.



SUPERVISING SOCIAL WORKERS:

Reviewed Jan 2026

All Foster Parents have a worker from PCFS who visits them and makes sure you are being looked after well. This person is called a "Supervising Social Worker".

The name of your Foster Parents social worker:

Your social worker and your foster parents supervising social worker may sometimes visit you together to make sure everything is all right. If anything is not right they will sort it out. They want you to be happy.

CARE PLANS:



All young people who are in care have their own special plan. This is called a 'Care Plan'. Your Social Worker will explain your Care Plan to you. It's about everything that is important to you such as when you will see your family, about your school and your health. It's about things you want to like carrying on going to clubs etc.

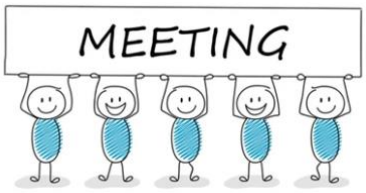
If there is anything in your Care Plan that you are unhappy with, tell your Social Worker they may be able to change it.

REVIEWS:

There will be regular meetings to check out how you are doing. These are called Review Meetings (or Child in Care reviews or Looked After Child reviews). Review Meetings are to find out:

- How things are going on in your life
- If there needs to be changes in how you are looked after
- What needs to be changed in your Care Plan

People such as your parents, Foster Parents or teacher will be invited to go to this meeting. You will also be invited to go to this meeting and have your say. If you don't want to go to this meeting this is OK. You can ask to speak with the Reviewing Officer on your own or you can tell your Social Worker or Foster Parent what you would like to say.



CONTACT:



Just because you live in a foster home, it doesn't mean that you have to lose touch with your family and friends. Everyone knows how important your family is to you. How often you see them and where you see them will depend on the reason you are being looked after. Everyone knows that it is important for you to keep in touch with your family and friends. Grown ups call this keeping in touch -"Contact".

Sometimes it is possible for you to speak with your family on the telephone. This is called "Telephone Contact" *And so*metimes you may get to send out letters and get some sent to you. This is called "Letter Box Contact".

HOW LONG WILL I HAVE TO STAY?

Some families have problems which stop them from looking after their children. This can be very upsetting and hard to understand. Some young people stay with Foster Parents for a short time. Sometimes this is longer because a lot of changes need to happen at home before you can go back to live there. You will be welcomed in a foster home for as long as you need.



Reviewed Jan 2026

Everyone will want you to go home to your family as soon as possible, but only if it is safe. Talk with your Social Worker and Foster Parents about this.

There are many young people going through the same thing as you. If you ever feel scared about what will happen to you in the future, tell your Social Worker and Foster Parent. They will do everything they can to help.

WHAT ABOUT SCHOOL?

The Law says that every child and young person between the ages of 5 and 18 should receive education appropriate to their age, ability and aptitude. However, you can choose to 'stay-on' at school until you are 19 years old. You can also go on to study at a University or Further Education College.



Your education is important therefore you will be expected to go to school. Sometimes, because you are living too far away from your old school, you may have to change schools. Please try not to worry about this. Your Social Worker and Foster Parent will help you with this.

When you go to school your Foster Parent will buy all the things you need such as; school uniform, books, pens and pencils. Your Foster Parent will take you to school. Depending on how old you are you may be able to make your own way to school or get a bus.

If your first language is not English, but you would like to continue to learn the language which is spoken by your family, then you should talk to your Social Worker about trying to find someone outside of school who can teach you.

When your school holds 'Open Evenings' or other events for parents to go to, your Foster Parents should attend. If it is possible for your parents to attend then arrangements should be made.

All young people that are being looked after will have to have a Personal Education Plan. This is often called a "PEP" for short. A PEP is a record of how you are getting on in school and helps you and your teacher to set targets for you. This is to make sure you get a good education. Having a PEP means that teachers and Social Workers can help you deal with the changes that are happening around you during your time in care.

YOUR HEALTH:

Whilst you are being looked after it is important to make sure that you are fit and healthy. It may be that you have missed out seeing the Doctor, Dentist, Optician or the school nurse.

When you come into care you will have a "Health Assessment". This is nothing to worry about. A doctor will meet you; measure your height, weight and heart rate. This is to make sure that you are healthy and that you get all the medication or treatment that you may need.

You will have a Health Assessment every year. There is no need to be scared about this. This won't hurt and it will not take long. It is a good chance to ask the doctor any questions you may have about your health.

You will also be helped to see the dentist regularly and have your eyes tested.

Remember …. Everyone just wants to make sure you are fit and well.



WHAT IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM?

If you have a problem or are in any way unhappy with the care or services you are receiving you must tell someone. You have the right to be listened to and taken seriously.

This person could be your Social Worker, your Foster Parents' Supervising Social Worker, the Complaints Manager at PCFS or maybe a teacher. You can speak to your reviewing officer or an Advocate



"An advocate is like a helper or a friend who speaks up for you if you need support or help. This can be any problem, something at school or at home or something in your life that you are worried about but you might be too shy to talk about it. An advocate would be the person who helps you to talk to the right person about your problem and makes sure they listen to you. They make sure your voice is heard and that you get the help you need."

PCFS can help you to speak to an advocate; we have Annie who works with children and young people and is independent from PCFS so just there to help you. Let us know if you need to talk to Annie or use the space on the leaflet **Cheer and Oh Dear's**. If you don't have one, then just ask for one (you will be offered one every time we ask you on how things are going)

There are contact details for these people and other people who might help you near the end of this booklet.

If you complain about anything, we will take your complaint seriously. Any complaint should be brought to the attention of the PCFS at the as soon as you can however, if it is of more serious nature, such as assault or abuse, then tell us **AT ONCE.** In this way we can assure the safety of all involved. If you are in any doubts regarding the level of your complaint then tell us anyway and we can help you with this.

No person involved with the complaint will be involved in any investigation.

PCFS STATEMENT OF PURPOSE - For Children and Young People in Care

Introduction :
This **Statement of Purpose** is written to help you understand what being a child in care is and how we will support you at **Pilgrims Corner Fostering Service (PCFS)**.
We want you to feel safe, happy, and cared for while you are with us.

Who We Are?:
We are **Pilgrims Corner Fostering Service (PCFS)**. Our job is to find kind and loving families to take care of children when they cannot live with their birth families. We will make sure you are safe, comfortable, and happy in your foster home.

How We Will Help You:
At **PCFS**, we will make sure that you:
Live in a **safe and loving home**.
Have a **foster family who cares about you**.
Go to **school and learn new things**.
Have someone to **talk to if you feel sad or worried**.
Get to **play, have fun, and make friends**.
Stay **healthy and happy**.



Your Foster Parents:
Your foster parents are special people who have been chosen to take care of you. They will:
Look after you and make sure you feel at home.
Listen to you and help you when you need it.
Make sure you feel welcome and valued no matter who you are
Help you with **school, hobbies, and activities**.
Work with other adults to make sure you get the best care.



Your Rights:
Everyone is unique, which means we all have qualities that make us different. You have the right to:
Be **treated kindly and with respect**.
Have **your own space and privacy**.
Speak up if something feels wrong.
Keep in touch with people who are important to you (if it is safe).
Be **part of decisions** about your life.



School and Learning:
We want you to do well in school and enjoy learning. You will:
Go to **school every day** and learn exciting things.
Get help with **homework and studying**.
Have the chance to **learn new skills and explore what you love**.

Staying Healthy:
Your foster parents will make sure you:
Eat **yummy and healthy food**.
See a **doctor or dentist** when you need to.
Play and do **fun activities to stay active**.



Keeping You Safe:
Your safety is the most important thing to us. We will:
Make sure your foster parents **know how to look after you properly**.
Check in with you to see how you are feeling.
Make sure you know **who to talk to** if you ever feel unsafe.

Who You Can Talk To:
If you ever need help or just want to talk, you can speak to:
Your **foster parents**.
Your **social worker**.
Someone from **PCFS** who visits to check how you are doing.
A trusted **teacher, family member, or friend**.
There are also other people who we have written about below on the **contact page**

Having Fun and Being You:
Living with a foster family is not just about being safe—it's also about having fun! We want you to:
Do things you love, like **drawing, playing sports, or reading**.
Make **new friends** and have fun adventures.
Feel **happy and proud of who you are**.

Final Words:
Moving to a new home can feel like a big change, but we will be here to **support you every step of the way**. You are not alone, and we want to make sure you feel **loved, listened to, and happy** in your foster home.

CONTACT PAGE

If you are unhappy with your care or the services you are receiving you can contact any of the following:

Your Social Worker:

Name:_____

Tel: _____

Your Independent Reviewing Officer:

Name:_____

Telephone number:_____

Email address: _____

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231
www.ofsted.gov.uk
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Chief Inspector:
Clive House
70 Petty France
London
SW1H 9EX

Telephone Contact
0300 123 1231

Email Address for the Chief Inspector
hmci@ofsted.gov.uk

You can contact anyone in the Fostering Team at:
Pilgrims Corner Fostering
The Gathering Space,
Highland Court Farm
Bridge
CT4 5HW
Tel: 01227 370808

PCFS's Children Advocate (someone independent who will listen to you) – Annie Sharpe
Please ask your foster parents or anyone at PCFS for her details.

Other Contacts:
Voice: Free Phone:08088005737, 02078335792
Email: info@voiceyp.org
Website: www.voiceyp.org / www.childcerntred.org

Child Line: 0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
www.nspcc.org.uk

Reviewed Jan 2026

Children's Commissioner:
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/about-us/contact/

Children's Commissioner for England
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Telephone: 020 7783 8330

Freephone for children: 0800 528 0731
Email: info.request@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Coram Voice
Freephone 0808 800 5792 to find out about your rights or to get support, or to be listened to
WhatsApp +44 (0)7758 670369 contact us using WhatsApp (add us to your contacts and send us a message free with WiFi)
Text 07758 670369 (you can send a text to this number and ask for someone to call you back, texts to this number are at your standard rate for sending texts, calls to this number cannot be answered)
Email send us an email message at help@coramvoice.org.uk.

Online you can fill in our online form to send a message to the Always Heard team

- Freephone helpline: **0808 800 5792**
- Email: **help@coramvoice.org.uk**
- Text: **07758 670369**
- WhatsApp (over 16's): **07758 670369**
- Online: **Always Heard**

All about me
I like to be called:
I like to eat:
I don't like to eat:
I like to wear:
My favourite TV programme is:
In my spare time I like to: (Attend clubs etc.)

Things you might need to know

Important things you need to know	
Name of my Foster Parents	
Other people in the house	
When will I see my family?	
The name of my new school is	
The date I will start school is	
The name of my Doctor	
The name of my Dentist	

Animal Word Search

G B R Z G R J N L G Z H T F K Y S U

A I G A U N I P O C L D N B R T N S

L Z R E B H K R D S C O A A P O O V

L T L A P B I C R N R G H W O C G B

I W Y L F L I F E O O A P E S U O M

G I O U L F E T G I C A E D B V Q C

A D Q A W O E L I L O D L J U E E B

T M O N K E Y N T C D O E J Y C N N

O H W X A A E O A L I N R S W J K V

R S Q T Y X U T I A L K D G D L O M

G U M R W X W Y G H E E E R R E K N

U S M O G R R A B A Q Y G D I R E E

U O F K H S Y R P C I H R A T B N A

ALLIGATOR	BEE	BIRD
CAT	COW	CROCODILE
DOG	DOLPHIN	DONKEY
DUCK	ELEPHANT	FROG
GIRAFFE	GORILLA	LION
MONKEY	MOUSE	RABBIT
RAT	TIGER	