

# Foster carer

Foster carers look after children and young people who can't be looked after in their own homes.

**Salary:** Variable average per year

**Hours:** Variable per week

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## 1. Entry requirements

Becoming a foster carer is open to you, whatever your marital status, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation.

You'll need:

- a spare bedroom for each child
- British citizenship or permanent leave to stay in the UK
- to be aged 21 or over

You'll be assessed to make sure you can meet the needs of each child or young person placed with you. This process could take up to 6 months. During this time you'll be:

- learning skills and getting ready for fostering
- attending groups to learn about the needs of children coming into foster care
- having visits from a social worker

If there are 2 adults in your household who want to become foster parents, you'll both need to pass the assessments. You'll also have to pass [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) (DBS) checks.

[Fosterline](#) service has more information about fostering.

[GOV.UK](#) has more information about becoming a foster carer through your local council.

## 2. Skills required

You'll need:

- the ability to build trust quickly

- to be able to get on well with people at all levels
- patience and understanding
- communication skills to talk at the right level to children of different ages
- able to stay calm and positive in difficult situations and not take things personally
- record-keeping skills

### 3. What you'll do

Your day-to-day duties may include:

- welcoming a child or young person to be part of your family
- giving day-to-day care to meet physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs
- setting suitable boundaries for behaviour
- helping with schoolwork and a positive attitude to education
- keeping young people safe from harm and abuse
- working with other professionals
- putting forward the views of young people in your care, even if you disagree
- involving parents where possible
- helping the young person move on, in a positive way, to their next setting

### 4. Salary

Starter: Variable

Highly Experienced: Variable

The amount you'll receive in fostering fees varies with the type of placement and the age and needs of the children.

You may receive more fees and allowances working for an independent fostering agency.

### 5. Working hours, patterns and environment

During a placement, you'll be on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, just as you would with your own family.

You'll work in your home with support from professionals.

A driving licence and car would be useful, but not essential.

### 6. Career path and progression

With experience, you could set up your own agency.

#### Related careers

You may be interested in:

- [Residential support worker](#)
- [Social worker](#)
- [Family support worker](#)
- [Healthcare assistant](#)

- [Youth worker](#)