

Foster 
for Walsall



Become an Emergency Foster Carer

for Walsall Council



Walsall Council

**Fostering
Friendly**
The Fostering Network

In a moment of crisis, could you provide the care and support a vulnerable child urgently needs?

Walsall Council's Fostering Service are looking for people to join our team and become therapeutic foster carers for our newly created Emergency Fostering Scheme. As an Emergency Foster Carer you will help make a real difference to the lives of some of Walsall's Children in Care. We are looking for people with the skills and experiences in working with young people to provide therapeutic, empathetic care to children (usually aged 10-18) who are likely to have faced significant trauma, abuse or neglect and who are need of a home in an emergency.

What is the Emergency Fostering Scheme?

The Emergency Fostering Scheme provides access to a foster home in an emergency situation or out of office hours for children who are in crisis and where immediate safeguarding measures are required to keep them safe. The scheme can also be used to avoid children spending unnecessary time in custody. The nature of the scheme means foster carers need to be available at short notice to care for children. This will often be in the evenings, through the night, weekends and bank holidays.

As some children who come to live with you are likely to have had previous multiple home breakdowns, been traumatised by previous experiences of abuse and neglect, and have associated emotional, behavioural and attachment difficulties, caring for children on the scheme therefore means having patience, empathy and understanding that their life experiences and changes in situation can mean that they need additional support in feeling safe and settling into your home.

How is the Emergency Fostering Scheme different from Mainstream Fostering?

This scheme is different from Mainstream Fostering because:

- Foster carers recruited and approved via this scheme will provide temporary emergency care to any child needing a safe place for a maximum of 10 days and ideally a shorter period. Children in this situation will be dealing with uncertainty and may also be traumatised and will need extra support.

To be eligible to be assessed for the Emergency Fostering Scheme you should be able to demonstrate that you meet the following criteria:

- At least 2 years' experience of caring for or working with children and young people whose behaviour can be challenging
- One carer in the household will be home-based (recognition of this is reflected in the financial package)
- Insight and understanding about trauma, abuse, neglect, and potentially of autism and/or mental health issues



- With our support and training, the ability to manage and support a young person who is likely, due to their experiences, need a significant amount of your time to help them regulate.
- Ability to work positively as part of a wider team of professionals
- Adaptability and willingness to learn and implement new approaches
- High level of empathy
- Commitment and motivation to care for a child who might have had multiple home breakdowns
- Have the time, patience and commitment to meet the individual needs of the child and make a difference to their life

Emergency Foster Carer Key Responsibilities

We are committed to giving all children the opportunity for family life wherever possible. As an Emergency Foster Carer you will have the motivation and ability to provide a level of nurture and support to help them in a time of crisis. An Emergency Foster Carer will need to be available 24/7 whilst on rota to care for any child in need, so this type of fostering is not recommended for those with other commitments, such as paid employment outside of the home or other caring responsibilities.

When actively on the duty rota, carers will be ready to take a child when needed (within an hour). The other carers who will be resting might be contacted as a last resort by the Home Finding Team or Emergency Duty Team social worker, for example when another carer is ill and a replacement is required to cover their absence.

Emergency Foster Carers will need to be approved for all age ranges (0-18 years) and any gender. All children must be provided with their own bedroom. The Emergency Foster Carer must be willing to accept the responsibility to care for any child deemed suitable by the Fostering Service or an Emergency Duty Team social worker/Team Manager. Emergency Foster Carers must be available when on active duty and cannot refuse to take a child unless there is a clear risk identified and evidenced.

You will need to attend meetings and to work in partnership with a range of other professionals as a significant member of a team around the young person. In addition, you will be required to attend ongoing professional training and development courses and support groups. An ability to work with other professionals and participating in our bespoke training and support programme for the scheme, based upon a DDP model of support and learning.

In return the scheme offers:

Emergency Foster Carers will receive:

- You will have the support of a dedicated supervising social worker.
- Training, personalised to your needs and rooted in Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy
- When the office is closed, you will have access to 24-hour support foster carer telephone support service and/ or help and advice from the emergency duty team.
- A fee payment of **£500** per week, even if no children are living with you as an Emergency Foster Carer. If you are caring for 2 children, a second fee payment will be made on a pro-rata basis.
- The weekly child's allowance, which will be paid pro-rata for the number of days the child(ren) is with them. This varies according to the age of the child.
- 35 days off rota per year for which the payment of **£500** per week is paid when off rota.
- Council Tax exemption if the Emergency Foster Carer lives in Walsall.
- Option to join a Mockingbird Hub.
- If required, receive help from the Support & Stability Team and/or Turning Point Service.

