



foster
with
Stockport Council

Become a fostering friendly employer

Could you be a fostering friendly
employer and help support
Stockport's children and young
people who are in care?



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What is fostering?

Fostering is a way of providing a family life for children who cannot live with their own parents. Often children and young people will return home once the problems that caused them to come into foster care have been resolved and that it is clear that their parents are able to look after them safely.

Others may stay in long term foster care, some may be adopted and others will move on to live independently.



Who are the children?

There are around 300 children in foster care in Stockport, of all ages (0-18 years of age) and from various cultural and social backgrounds, who are placed in foster care for many different reasons. Stockport has a need to place our older children, teenagers and brother and sisters in local fostering homes. All of our children have a variety of unique needs and our foster carers are required to provide our children and young people a safe, healthy and nurturing environment and help to guide them to live life to the full and make their own choices in life.

Fostering friendly scheme - ideas for employers

Our carers have an important role as part of the professional team around the child and need to be available to attend meetings about the child's care and training

A supportive and flexible employer will enable foster carers to balance their work and caring responsibilities. Companies such as Tesco and O2 have already signed up to the national scheme. The scheme gives local businesses the opportunity to support this work and Stockport's most vulnerable children and young people by making some simple changes

- Recognising the needs of foster carers in your employment policies
- Helping us celebrate fostering and foster carers.



How you can help

Time off for training

In Stockport, all our foster carers must go through a robust assessment process and intensive training before they can be approved as foster carers. Employers can support staff interested in fostering by giving them time off to attend pre-approval training which is approximately five days usually spread over a number of week. Stockport Council offers up to 5 days for the training needed to become a foster carer

Flexibility

Foster carers need to be able to respond to the needs of the children in their care. They are an important part of the team supporting the child and must be able to attend regular meetings about the children they care for. Access to flexible working, swapping shifts with colleagues or similar could really help foster carers to do this.

Emergency leave

The unexpected happens – providing foster carers with the same access to emergency leave as parents and recognising fostered children as dependents, will enable foster carers to provide a stable and secure home for the children they care for.

Jason's Story

I worked full time as a human resources manager in Stockport and my employer was fantastic when I approached them for time off for foster carer training.

When we first came to enquire about fostering my concern was to ensure that my job was not affected running alongside my fostering, plus I loved my job. I am also a firm believer in the fact that children should see their parents/carers going to work so am keen to keep working.

However, it can be very difficult juggling school runs, meetings with social worker or fostering panels to help me manage my working commitments to a high standard. I valued highly the support I got at work so that I could go to training days.



Help us celebrate fostering and foster carers by:

- Making information about how to become a foster carer available on noticeboards, intranet sites or internal publications.
- Hosting an information session for your staff (we'll help) about fostering and explain the support we offer.
- Providing space in your office or store during Foster Care Fortnight (held every May) to support the drive to raise awareness and recruit new foster carers.
- Helping us provide social events and support services for local foster families.

Benefits of joining the scheme

- Build on your company brand and reputation that you are fully committed to looking after staff and the local community.
- Show strong corporate social responsibility, Stockport people have a strong connection to Stockport and being seen to look after the wide community sends a clear message that you are a responsible company with long term commitment to the area.
- Supporting staff builds morale and helps to promote your commitment to work life balance.
- You will have access to advice and information and support on helping staff who are or becoming foster carers.



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Stockport Council will:

- Provide support on raising awareness of fostering internally at your company
- Announce your membership on the council's social media sites
- Advertise your support in our foster carer newsletter
- Listing and further information on your company in our foster carer log on section



Ready to join the scheme?

Please contact Stockport Council's fostering team

Go to the website:

www.stockport.gov.uk/fostering

Contact:

0161 474 3400

or email:

fosteringstockport@stockport.gov.uk

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