

An information guide for  
children and young people  
aged up to ten



## Children's Guide

Aged up to 10 years

Read this  
booklet to  
find the right  
help for you!

# Welcome to your new foster family and to the National Fostering Agency

We hope you are going to like living with your foster carers for a while and don't feel too scared or upset.

You may be a little bit confused as to why you are staying with a foster carer and not your own family, but hopefully your social worker will have talked to you about this.

This little book has lots of useful things in it and has been made especially for you.





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My details



My name is:

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I live at:

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My phone number is:

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My Birthday is:

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My School is:

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My Supervising Social Worker is:

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In an emergency please contact:

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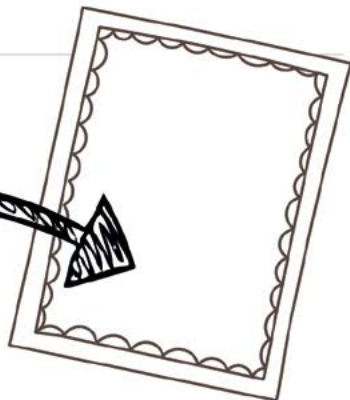
My Foster Carer is called:

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This is  
me





## Who are NFA and what do they do?

The people who work at NFA help find foster carers to look after children who can't live at home.

NFA have lots of foster carers in Great Britain. They look after children just like you, to make sure you are happy and safe.

Your social worker will still visit you at your new foster home and will speak to your foster carer and NFA Social Worker to make sure you are ok.

If you want to know anything else about NFA, you can ask your foster carer, call NFA office on:

**0121 788 0477**

or have a look on our website:  
**[www.nfa.co.uk](http://www.nfa.co.uk)**

### **Your Social Worker**

Your social worker is someone that has been specially trained to work with children and their families. They will visit you regularly and keep in touch with your family and your foster carer. YOUR social worker is there to help YOU and YOUR family.

### **NFA Supervising Social Worker**

An NFA supervising social worker is someone who looks after the foster carers and makes sure that they are looking after you and that you are OK. They will talk to you and YOUR social worker.

### **Information about me – my file**

NFA have to keep information about all the children who live with their foster carers to make sure you are looked after properly. If you ever want to see any of the information about you, ask your foster carer or social worker, or contact NFA office on 0121 788 0477.

Your social worker will also have information about you, and you can ask them to see this as well. You are also allowed to write notes in your file if you want to – ask your social worker about this.





## My foster home

We hope you are going to enjoy living in your new foster home. Your foster carer may have children of their own, there may be other children being looked after or you may be the only child in the house.

While you are living at your foster carers, it is your home. We want you to be safe, happy and be able to try new things. Maybe there is something you have always wanted to do or have enjoyed before. Let your foster carer know.

If you have any problems or worries, remember you can always tell your foster carer or your social worker. If you don't think you can tell them, there are other people you can talk to. Look at the pages at the back of this book to find out more.





## Can I use the telephone?

### YES

You can use the telephone to call your family and friends so long as your care plan says it is okay.

You need to let your foster carer know that you are going to be using the telephone.

**The telephone number at my foster carers is:**

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## Pocket money

You will get pocket money every week. Ask your foster carer how much you will get and when.

You could save it at the post office or the bank. If you would like to open a bank account, you can talk to your foster carer or your social worker about this.

How much pocket money will I get?

£

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Which day will I get my pocket money?

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**You may choose to save some of your money each week for special occasions such as holidays!**





You can tell your foster carer what you would like to eat and your foster carer will talk to you about what foods are good for us to eat. You will be able to go with your foster carer to do the shopping so that you can choose some of your favourite foods.



**My favourite foods are:**

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You will be able to have your own bedroom, it's your bedroom and you can arrange your toys and other things just as you want to.


Your foster carer will always knock on your door before they come into your bedroom, unless they are worried that you may be doing something dangerous that might hurt you. If so they may come into your room to make sure that you are safe.

**What is my bedtime on a school night?**

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**What is my bedtime on a non-school night?**

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Some children like to have a light on whilst they go to sleep. Let your foster carer know



### **My family**

There may be lots of different reasons why you are not living with your family at this time, but we know that they are still very important to you.

Your social worker and foster carer will help you to understand why decisions are made and what happens now.

You may be missing your friends and family and wonder when you will be able to see them again.

Talk to your social worker and your foster carer about this and ask if you can visit, telephone, email or write to friends and family.

### **My religion**

If you would like to go to a church, a mosque, a synagogue or any other place to practice your faith, your foster carer or social worker will help you.

**My religion is:**

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**I would like to attend:**

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**What time and on what days?**

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There will be meetings with your social worker and sometimes members of your family. But most importantly, with YOU.

Sometimes you may choose to tell your foster carer what you want or what you are feeling and they can tell the meeting.

But you can decide if you want to go to the meetings or not – just talk to your social worker or your foster carer about this.

These meetings are to check that things are going ok and that you are happy with your new foster family. They will also talk about other things like your school, your health and how long you will live with your foster carer.

### Your feelings

We want you to be happy with your foster carer, and to tell them about your worries, when you are unhappy and when you are happy.

Whilst you are living with a foster carer you will have a care plan which says what is going to happen and how you will be looked after.

If you don't think you can tell your foster carer how you feel, talk to your social worker or you can call one of the numbers at the back of this book.

### Your Rights

Whilst you are living with your foster family it is important for you to know that you have rights and there are certain things that your foster family should support you with. We have given some examples to help you understand your rights.





## You have the right to:

- Be listened to and consulted with
- Follow your chosen culture & religion
- Have contact with your family and friends (if safe to do so, talk to your social worker about this)
- Telephone your social worker if you need to
- Eat a special diet/foods that are part of your culture/religion
- See your social worker if you need to - and in private
- Have pocket money
- See a dentist and doctor when you need to
- Go to school and have a state education
- Have suitable clothing to wear
- Private time (privacy)
- Your own bedroom
- Complain
- Share your views



### Talking to me

You have the right to be “consulted” about decisions that are made about you. This means people will ask you for your views and listen to what you say. It doesn't mean you will always get what you want, but you will be told the reasons why.

### If you have a complaint or need to talk to someone...

If you are not happy with the way you are being looked after you must tell someone. You should tell us how you feel so we can try and sort it out.

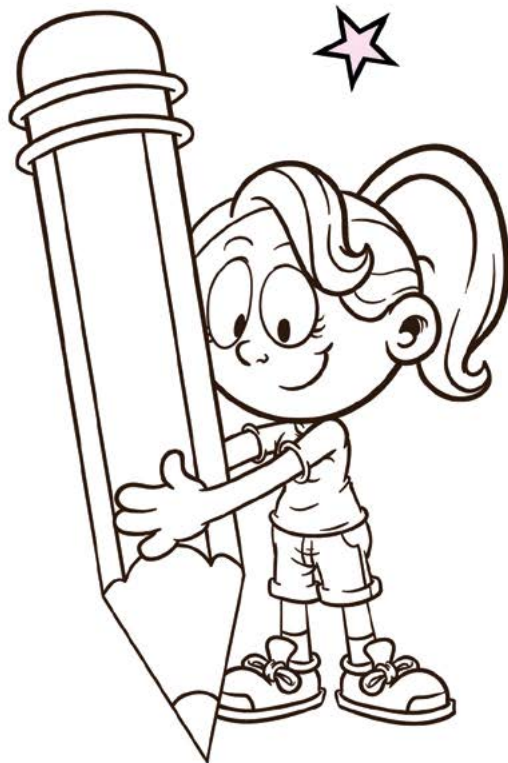
If you cannot tell anyone it may be easier to **fill in a complaints leaflet at the back of this guide** so that your voice can be heard.

or email: [MidlandsAdmin@nfa.co.uk](mailto:MidlandsAdmin@nfa.co.uk)

If you do have a complaint, NFA will deal with it quickly, thoroughly, positively, in confidence and treat everything you have to say seriously.

The complaints system does work and we have changed the way we do things by listening to children and young people and taking on your views.

You can also tell your foster carer, social worker or your parents if you have any problems.





## Independent Reviewing Officers

Independent Reviewing Officers (usually shortened to 'IROs') are people working with children in care as well as their social workers. Each child in care should have an IRO. It is the IRO's job to check that the local authority is doing what they should be doing for children while they are in care, to go to all the children's reviews and to make sure they are done properly, to check on the child's care plan, and to make sure the local authority has listened to the children's wishes and feelings. If you want to speak to your Independent Reviewing Officer ask your social worker how you can contact them.

## Independent Advocate

You have the right to have an advocate. This is a person that you can talk to about issues and problems that you might have, when you feel that you are not being listened to, or you wish your views to be taken into account. Your advocate will come and talk to you and can speak for you and help you take part in decisions about your life. It doesn't mean you will always get what you want but your views will be listened to.

## Children's Rights Officer

The Children's Rights Officer can help with your problems, show you how to sort out any complaints and explain your rights. Your social worker can give you information about how to contact the Children's Rights Officer from the area that you used to live in, their advice is completely independent. The Officer won't talk to anyone else about the things you tell them (unless you ask them to, or unless you or someone else would be in danger if they said nothing).





### **My School**

It may be that you go to your usual school or you may have a new school closer to your new house. Your social worker and foster carer will talk to you about this.



**My school is called:**

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**My school teacher's name is:**

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**My friends at school are called:**

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## My Friends

While you are at your foster carers we hope you will make friends that you may want to invite to play or to tea. Talk to your foster carers about your friends coming to visit.

Remember: If you are going to play with a friend it is important that an adult knows where you are at all times or else we will all be worried about you.

If your foster carers do not know where you are they may have to tell the police, your social worker and maybe your family.



**My friends are called:**

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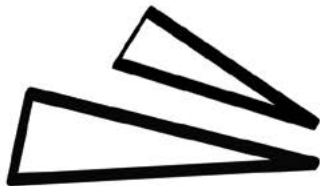
## Bullying

We want you to live together happily and safely at your foster carers. We know that sometimes bullying can happen, and so that we can learn friendlier ways to behave we will try to understand the feelings of all children involved.

If someone is making you feel sad or unhappy, we want you to tell someone. You can tell your social worker, a teacher, your foster carer or the NFA social worker. They will talk to you about this and try and sort the problem out.

It is important that you are able to share what is making you sad and what is making you happy. You may choose to tell someone by drawing a picture, writing it down, or talking to them.

If you feel that you are still unhappy and not being listened to you can contact NFA on 07917 276764 by texting or phoning.





## Keeping Safe

### **When you are playing outside**

When you are outdoors playing with friends or with an adult you must NOT talk to strangers.

### **When you are near animals**

You must not approach or stroke an animal that you do not know.

### **When you are on the computer**

If you are on the computer, make sure you do not give anyone your address or phone number. ALWAYS let your foster carer know if anyone has asked you for your address or phone number. NEVER arrange to meet anyone you contact through the internet.





Q: What does "British" mean to you?

A: The word "British" simply means anyone who is born in Britain.

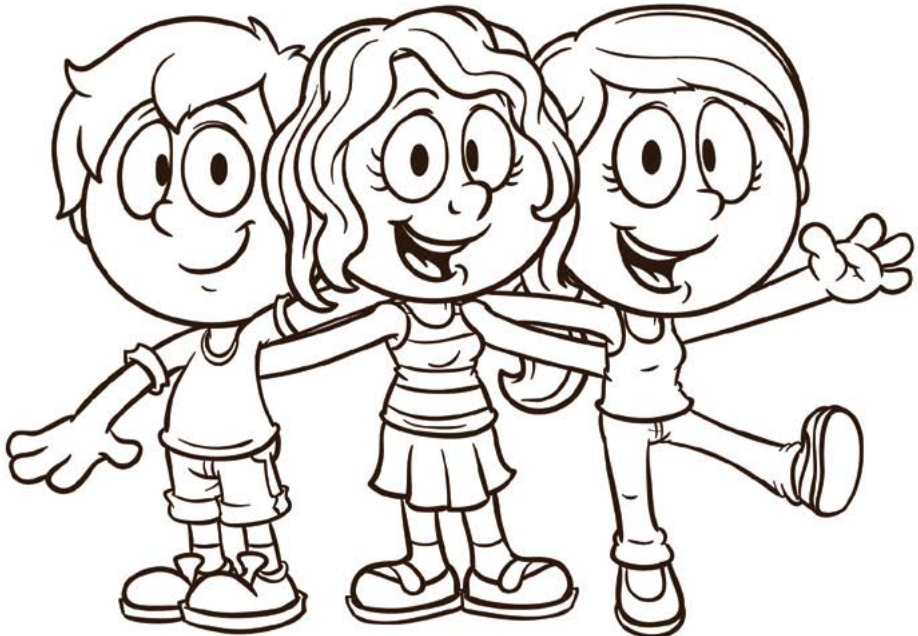
IT DOESN'T  
MATTER WHAT  
COLOUR.

Race Equality means that all people (of any colour), have the right to be treated fairly and that everyone should have the same chance.

#### **EQUAL RIGHTS NO MATTER WHAT!**

There are many different religions celebrated in Britain. For example, Hindu, Catholic, Muslim, Protestant, Sikh, Jehovah's Witness, Judaism and Buddhism.

Bullying happens when people don't understand why someone is different from them. But we all have something in common, we are all human! We should treat each other how we would like to be treated.






The word “customs” is used to describe how people from different countries and backgrounds do things. It’s really interesting to find out how other people live, what they believe, what they eat and what they wear.

When children come to Britain from other countries they sometimes feel frightened, uncomfortable, sad and lonely.

Everything is new to them. You could make them feel better by welcoming them and making them feel happy to be here. You could play with them, talk to them, make friends and invite them to tea. Find out about them, and tell them about you.

A large, jagged, black-outlined starburst shape is centered on the page. Inside the starburst, there is red text and a list of bullet points. The starburst is decorated with four yellow stars and four paper airplane icons, two on each side.

**If you would like to find out more about race, equality and diversity, you could:**

- Ask your teacher
- Look up books on race and diversity in the library
- Look at the contacts list at the back of this book



### What will happen if I say something?

Someone from NFA Group will contact you to talk with you about your comments or concerns and look at how we can try and sort things out.

If you have a complaint, we might need to speak to the people who your complaint is about – so we can get everyone's views. But we will talk to you about this first.

Also, if you would like to access the support of an independent advocate, for guidance and support – let us know and we will arrange this.

The thing to remember most of all is – you have the right to complain, a right to voice your opinions and views and you will not get into trouble for telling the truth.

Fill in this form and post it to **Lorraine Edington, NFA Group, Frays Court, 71 Cowley Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 2AE** who will try and get your complaint sorted within 10 working days (20 days if complex) and will keep you updated as to what's happening.

- You can also telephone on: **01895 200300**
- or email on: **ledington@nfa.co.uk**

Besides NFA Group, you can also complain to the Children's Commissioner/Ofsted/Care Inspectorate for England, Wales or Scotland, these teams are there to help and advice children who live away from home.

Their details are on p24 of this guide.





**Write your worry, complaint or comment on this page so we can try and help you:**

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My name is:

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My Foster Carer's name is:

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Today's date is:

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I would like you to contact me by... (tick one)

Letter     Email     Phone

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Don't forget to let us have your email address or phone number so we can get in touch... write it here:

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## Who else can I contact?

- **Children's Commissioner for England – Anne Longfield**

Telephone: 0800 528 0731

Email: [help.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:help.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](http://childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

- **Children's Commissioner for Wales – Sally Holland**

Telephone: 0808 801 1000

Email: [post@childcomwales.org.uk](mailto:post@childcomwales.org.uk)

Website: [childcomwales.org.uk](http://childcomwales.org.uk)

- **Children's Commissioner for Scotland – Bruce Adamson**

Telephone: 0800 019 1179

Email: [inbox@cypcs.org.uk](mailto:inbox@cypcs.org.uk)

Website: [cypcs.org.uk](http://cypcs.org.uk)

- **Ofsted (England)**

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

- **Care Inspectorate (Wales)**

Email: [cssiw@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cssiw@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0300 7900 126

- **Care Inspectorate (Scotland)**

Email: [enquiries@scswis.com](mailto:enquiries@scswis.com)

Telephone: 0345 600 9527

- **Children's Advocacy Rights UK**

Telephone: 0808 800 5792

Email: [info@coramvoice.org.uk](mailto:info@coramvoice.org.uk)

- **Childline**

Telephone: 0800 1111

Website: [childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk)



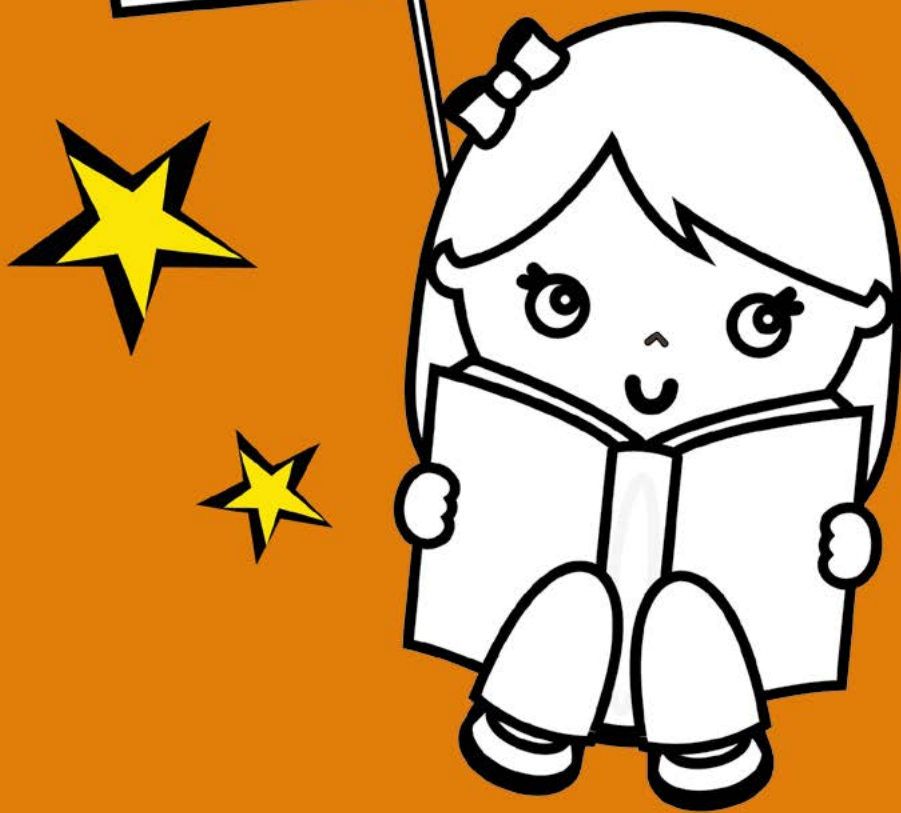






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**This document can be  
made available in other  
languages upon request.  
(English)**

